

## UK COMMITTEE FOR IUCN-UK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 56<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 21st November 2008

By teleconference

0930-1300hrs



**Present:** Chris Mahon, Stuart Brooks, Sally Cunningham, Alistair Gammell, Mike Pienkowski, Joanna Robertson

**Secretariat:** John Henson Webb

### 1. Chair's welcome

CM welcomed the participants to the teleconference.

### 2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Vin Fleming, Mark Huxham and Trevor Salmon.

### 3. Minutes of the previous meeting

A number of amendments had previously been received from MP and CM requested one further amendment. Once incorporated the minutes of ExCo55 would be adopted.

### 4. Chair's scene setting

- **Progress with UK Committee Strategy**

CM introduced Paper 56.1, noting that this was a first draft and that substantial gaps remained to be addressed. Consensus was required to take some actions forward. CM requested ExCo agree the background principles for the continuance of the Strategy. CM noted that he had received some amendments already, but requested further ExCo input. It was recognised that some of the Strategy content was aspirational (even ambitious) but this related to its long-term development. One change suggested was a return to 'nature and natural resources' in the vision statement rather than the use of 'biodiversity'.

**Action 56.4.1 ExCo to send any further amendments to CM by December 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Action 56.4.2 CM to redraft strategy for further discussion at ExCo 57**

In discussion it was suggested that Section 3 be developed as this would provide a direction for the Strategy. It was considered important for the UK Committee to assist the IUCN in regard to delivering both the European and Global programmes through achieving relevant contributions in the UK, such as tackling a significant conservation issue and staging one high-profile event each year. The latter would be separate to any AGM/Members' meeting, perhaps aimed at ministerial level.

CM noted that he would be providing the broad principles of the Strategy to those members attending the IoD meeting on December 5<sup>th</sup>.

### 5. 4<sup>th</sup> World Conservation Congress in Barcelona

- **Congress feedback**

CM briefly reported on his impressions of the Congress, noting specifically that it had been useful in re-establishing the UK National Committee presence, in part assisted by the Reception which was considered a success. The Congress had provided a massive learning experience and an opportunity to interact with the IUCN at a global scale.

AG also considered the Reception to be a success, being well attended and with a number of IUCN election candidates present. The USB memory sticks were well received. John Robbs had disparaged the Congress, so AG suggested challenging the UK Government for their 'corrections'. This could be put in the public domain and stakeholders asked to comment. Action who?

AG noted his disappointment regarding the IUCN governance issue. Procedure was for Resolutions to go before the Programme Committee, then before Congress for acceptance or rejection; which, for reasons unknown, did not happen at Barcelona. AG suggested that the Programme Committee did not provide a strong lead on the process and initially reject when it was most appropriate. CM noted that he would draw this to the attention of Julia Marton-Lefevre who would be visiting in December for the Institute of Directors (IoD) meetings.

SC noted that the UK Committee could focus on the outputs from Barcelona that it could assist with. SB provided a brief personal view of the Congress, noting that, despite the bureaucracy the event left him enthused about the work of the IUCN. He also considered the UK Committee Reception a success.

JR noted that Barcelona had been a huge learning opportunity with a very egalitarian attendance; providing a good model to apply to other global-level conferences. The number of Motions and the percentage adopted was staggering.

## **6. December 5<sup>th</sup> Business meeting**

- **Objectives**

CM noted that the meeting with Julia Marton-Lefevre (JM-L) offered an opportunity to broaden the UK Committee's base and sphere of influence. The concept was to test the water with various organisations in a semi-formal setting and establish contacts which could be strengthened through further activities. After consultation ExCo agreed on provision of a more expensive buffet option. The cut-off between the two December 5<sup>th</sup> meetings would be the lunch and the Secretariat reported that IoD had agreed to clear lunch at 13:15.

## **7. December 5<sup>th</sup> Members' meeting**

- **Draft Agenda**

CM noted his intention to send a 'Communication from the Chair' letter to UK Committee Members which amongst other items would provide details on the Members' meeting. The title for the meeting would be 'A Diverse and Sustainable World', taken from the Barcelona Congress. The intention was for the meeting to be interactive and to provide feedback for JM-L to consider. The principles behind the new UK Committee Strategy would be promoted and initial Member feedback sought. JM-L could also be asked to endorse the broad principles of the Strategy.

**Action 56.7.1 Secretariat to revise December 5<sup>th</sup> agenda**

**Action 56.7.2 SC to contact Defra economist regarding possible attendance/presentation for December 5<sup>th</sup> members' meeting**

**Action 56.7.3 JR to contact Roger Thomas regarding attendance on December 5<sup>th</sup>**

## **8. 2009 AGM**

- **ExCo nominations**

It was reported that both Martin Spray and Mark Huxham would not be standing for re-election, though the latter had indicated that Scottish Environment LINK (ScotLINK) were seeking another representative to stand. SB noted that as a Wildlife Trust representative (until March 2009) he could also represent ScotLINK, and this association would be maintained subsequently as his new employer, the John Muir Trust, was also a member of ScotLINK.

SB noted that he would approach Stephanie Hillborne regarding WT representation and that interest had also been expressed from RSWT regarding the provision of Secretariat services.

**Action 56.8.1 SB to liaise with Stephanie Hillborne regarding WT representation**

AG noted that since Barcelona he no longer had *ex-officio* status on ExCo and therefore after the January 2009 AGM membership would need to be via co-option. However he retires in July 2009, so RSPB may be seeking a replacement. SC noted that in 2009 TS would continue to have responsibility for IUCN but that SC or another Defra representative may deputise when he was unavailable for a specific meeting.

CM indicated that the Strategy gave mention of a more proactive approach to filling vacancies on ExCo.

JR noted that she retires from CCW in January 2010.

**Action 56.8.2 ExCo to approach/consider potential recruits**

- **Subject / Theme**

The AGM is scheduled for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009, with Bristol the chosen location. After discussion the theme of conservation issues and the media was agreed upon, considered appropriate given Bristol's media links, with the potential for speakers from the BBC Natural History Unit. SB noted that RSPB Scotland had High-Definition footage of ospreys available should it be considered useful.

**Action 56.8.3 Secretariat to develop agenda for 2009 AGM / Members' meeting**

CM suggested engagement with the IUCN Commissions (e.g. CEC) but noted that this may be seen as competing with them. A more generic approach to a bigger issue would be preferable, with the Commissions offered an opportunity to assist. In discussion on who could be approached it was suggested that UK 'lead' names for each Commission be obtained.

**Action 56.8.4 Secretariat to determine UK 'lead' person(s) for each IUCN Commission**

The UK Committee Strategy and Work Programme were on the AGM agenda, with cross-cutting rather than be specific issues to be put forward for consideration, e.g. climate change, economics of biodiversity. The Membership could be asked for their input, with a focus on issues relevant to each country of the UK.

ExCo 57 would be held in Bristol prior to the AGM.

## **9. UK Overseas Territories**

MP reported that the largest recent issue was the House of Commons Environment Audit Committee report regarding biodiversity loss, which was critical of the UK Governments failures to address loss in the OTs. MP expressed a hope that Defra could use the report to move the issue forward.

### **Action 56.9.1 MP to provide Secretariat with link to report**

MP also reported that a number of Caribbean islands had suffered due to the effects of several hurricanes this season. On Cayman Brac the cumulative effect on an endemic parrot species was not yet known.

The next in a three-year cycle of OT conferences was being held in May/June 2009 on Grand Cayman.

CM noted an opportunity at the AGM to raise the issue of the OTs and spread the message to the media people present.

## **10. Activities 2009**

- ***IUCN Programmes – Global and European***

CM noted that AG would be asked to interpret the Programme documents at the AGM.

### **Action 56.10.1 Secretariat to contact AG regarding attendance at the 2009 AGM and possible presentation regarding IUCN Programmes**

### **Action 56.10.2 ExCo to familiarise themselves with IUCN Programme documents for discussion at ExCo 57**

- ***Future Parliamentary Seminars***

CM noted that ExCo needed to continue to look for possible subject areas and issues. MP reported that the UKOTCF were looking to continue discussions with UK Government departments on potential topics.

### **(Action 55.7.1) MP or a UKOTCF colleague would discuss with TS, CM and others regarding the possible Westminster House debate and report back to ExCo – to be carried forward**

- ***Business and Biodiversity***

CM noted that ExCo would perhaps have a better idea of how to proceed after the business meeting at IoD on December 5<sup>th</sup>. He noted that Pavan Sukhdev had offered to assist during 2009 if the opportunity arose.

- ***ICOMOS***

CM reported on discussions with Adrian Phillips regarding provision of secretariat services for ICOMOS/IUCN-UK. He noted that ExCo had apparently previously agreed for the UK Committee Secretariat to take this on as part of an agreement to rotate responsibility between the two organisations. CM asked if anyone wished to lead on ICOMOS for ExCo.

### **Action 56.10.3 SC to discuss ICOMOS lead with Defra colleagues**

### **Action 56.10.4 SB to determine if lead on ICOMOS available through John Muir Trust**

### **Action 56.10.5 CM to reply to Adrian Phillips regarding details of provision of ICOMOS Secretariat**

- ***Sibthorp Trust***

CM reported a call for closer ties between the UK Committee and the Sibthorp Trust. AG noted that the Trust had diverged from UK Committee and was not carrying out its benefactors wishes of providing support. Roger Crofts' suggestion was both timely and useful, providing support to the IUCN UK Committee through events, etc. In return the UK Committee Secretariat would extend its service to cover the Trust. It was recognised that this might have an effect on costs and so it would be discussed with any organisations which put in a tender for the Secretariat contract. It was also

noted that the Chair of the Trust could be co-opted to ExCo, while ExCo members might need to be Trustees.

**Action 56.10.6 CM to inform Roger Crofts of IUCN UK Committee support for closer relationship with Sibthorp Trust**

- **Wildinart**

After discussion it was decided that the UK Committee would not pursue this issue directly. It was suggested that Wildinart could be mentioned to the UK Committee membership and the Countdown 2010 Secretariat in case anyone wished to pursue this. However, the UK Committee would be marking 2010 (the Year of Biodiversity) in some manner.

**Action 56.10.7 Secretariat to distribute information on Wildinart to UK Members and Countdown 2010 Secretariat**

- **Requests for presentations**

CM noted that he had been approached and agreed to provide a presentation on IUCN at University College London. CM asked ExCo to consider any information items that could assist in putting together future presentations should a similar situation arise.

## **11. Secretariat Report and contract renewal**

- **Tender**

SB reported that Stephanie Hillborne of the Wildlife Trusts had decided not to bid for the Secretariat contract. The Secretariat noted that there had been no other bids so far.

- **Members**

CM noted that he would be writing a follow up letter to go to non-members.

## **12. Countdown 2010 Focal Point activities**

The Secretariat reported that those attending the December 5<sup>th</sup> business meeting would be invited to sign a Declaration after the event had taken place. Academic institutions were also to be approached, but drawing up a list of those with large environmental or earth science schools was proving problematic as the information was not readily available.

## **13. Financial Report**

The UK Committee finances were considered to be in good order. The process of getting cheque signatories for the Cooperative Bank was proving rather lengthy.

## **14. Actions and matters arising**

It was noted that all actions were either discharged or ongoing and would be carried forward.

### ***Policy for ExCo communications to Government***

This item related to addressing situations where only part of ExCo wants to take forward a particular issue. In the instance covered by the letter Defra expressed a wish to remain neutral. SC noted that Defra had been content with the wording in this instance, but would want to have the option of addressing each issue on merit rather than a set response.

**Action 56.14.1 Secretariat to draft a brief policy statement summarising exclusion option**

## **13. AoB**

There were no other items of business.

## **14. Dates and topics of future meetings**

- **Dates for 2009**
- **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January – ExCo 57 (Bristol)**
- **Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> January – AGM & Members' meeting (Bristol)**

**Action 56.14.1 ExCo to let the Secretariat know their availability during 2009**