

IUCN SUI Review - Part 1

Narrative of SUI's Technical Evolution and Institutional Development

Introduction

In concert with IUCN's broader Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative, the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) is undertaking an evaluation of its effectiveness and impact since the launch of the SUI in January 1995. Formation of the Initiative was catalyzed by Recommendation 19.54 of the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly (January 1994) and the subsequent recommendations of a Task Force on Sustainable Use convened in June 1994 to advise the Director General and Chair of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) on the Union's future work in regards to sustainable use.

The purpose of this evaluation is to assess the effectiveness and impact of the SUI since its launch in January 1995.

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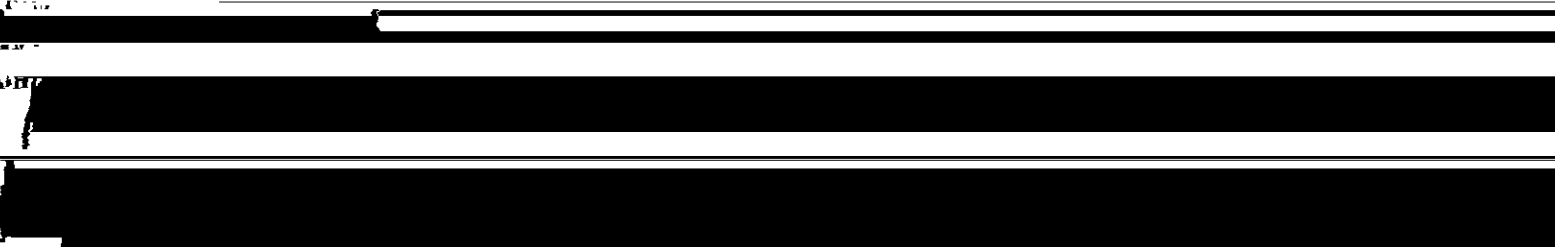
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The Narrative History

This report represents the first element. It is meant to be descriptive and objective. The

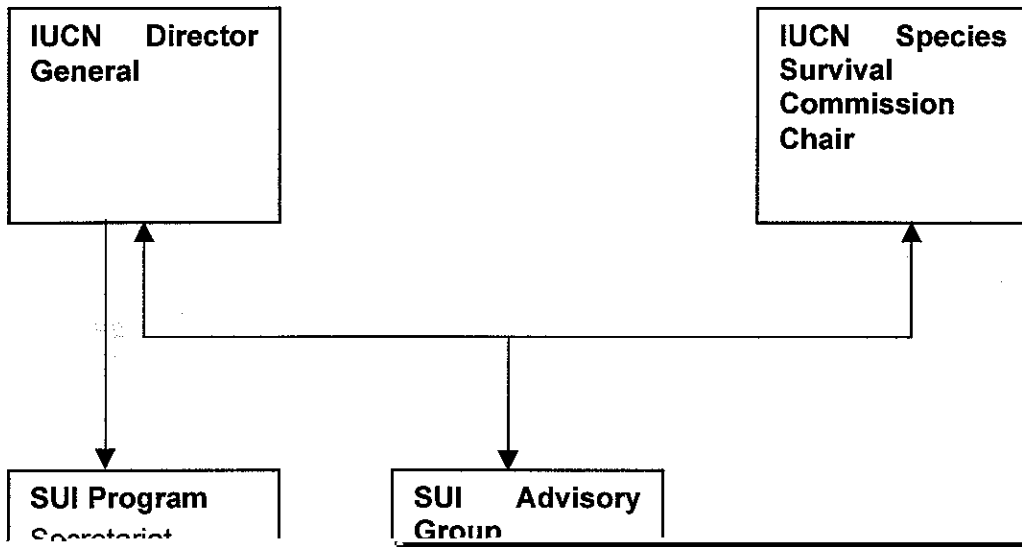
Following the 19th General Assembly, the SSC Specialist Group and the counterpart Sustainable Use of Wildlife Program jointly sponsored a Task Force meeting in response to



- The SUSG network should be regionally driven, open and transparent, and responsive to regional needs³. The following priorities in terms of regional networks establishment under

the SUSG Network were suggested: Central America, South America, Southern Africa,

Figure 1: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - The Initial Design



The SUI Advisory Group met for a second time on 19 June 1995 in Harare, Zimbabwe. This meeting was immediately followed by the "First Meeting of the IUCN/SSC SUSG Steering Committee" (20-21 June 1995), and the Third Meeting of the SUI Advisory Group (22 June 1995). The following observations are drawn from the records of all three meetings.

- Institutional Framework: Further clarification was secured on the institutional framework for SUI. In particular, it was agreed that:
 - the SUSG Steering Committee serves as an agent for inter-regional coordination and

... information and management framework development

- ~~Fundraising: The GST would pursue fundraising in parallel with regional efforts by District~~

Figure2: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - June 95

IUCN Director
General

IUCN Species
Survival
Commission
Chair

Progress through the First WCC

The record of SUI's development and progress since January 1995 is captured in the reports of the Advisory Group and SUSG Steering Committee Meetings. This record has been

supplemented by the personal comments of various members of the SUI management structure.

Over its first year of operation, the SUI was focused on the development of Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups (RUSG) and the institutional management systems

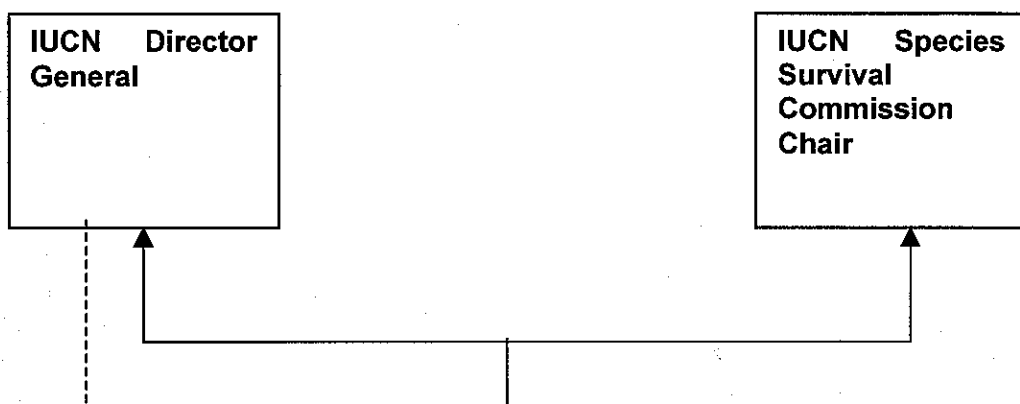
For the report on the SUI's performance at the WCC, the SUI was credited with

- with considerable success coming in terms of the second objective of promoting an understanding of sustainable use. Through the report back to members in response to Recommendation 19.54 entitled "Factors Influencing Sustainability", the Sustainable Use Workshop and the performance of "Guardians of Eden" at the WCC, the SUI was credited with generating substantial intellectual and emotional support for the paradigm of sustainable use. This support was aptly demonstrated in Resolution WCC 1.39 which provided membership endorsement of and continued support for the SUI, postponed further investment in testing the Guidelines produced for the 10th WCA and requested the SUI to prepare a Report on

Organizational Developments after the 1st WCC

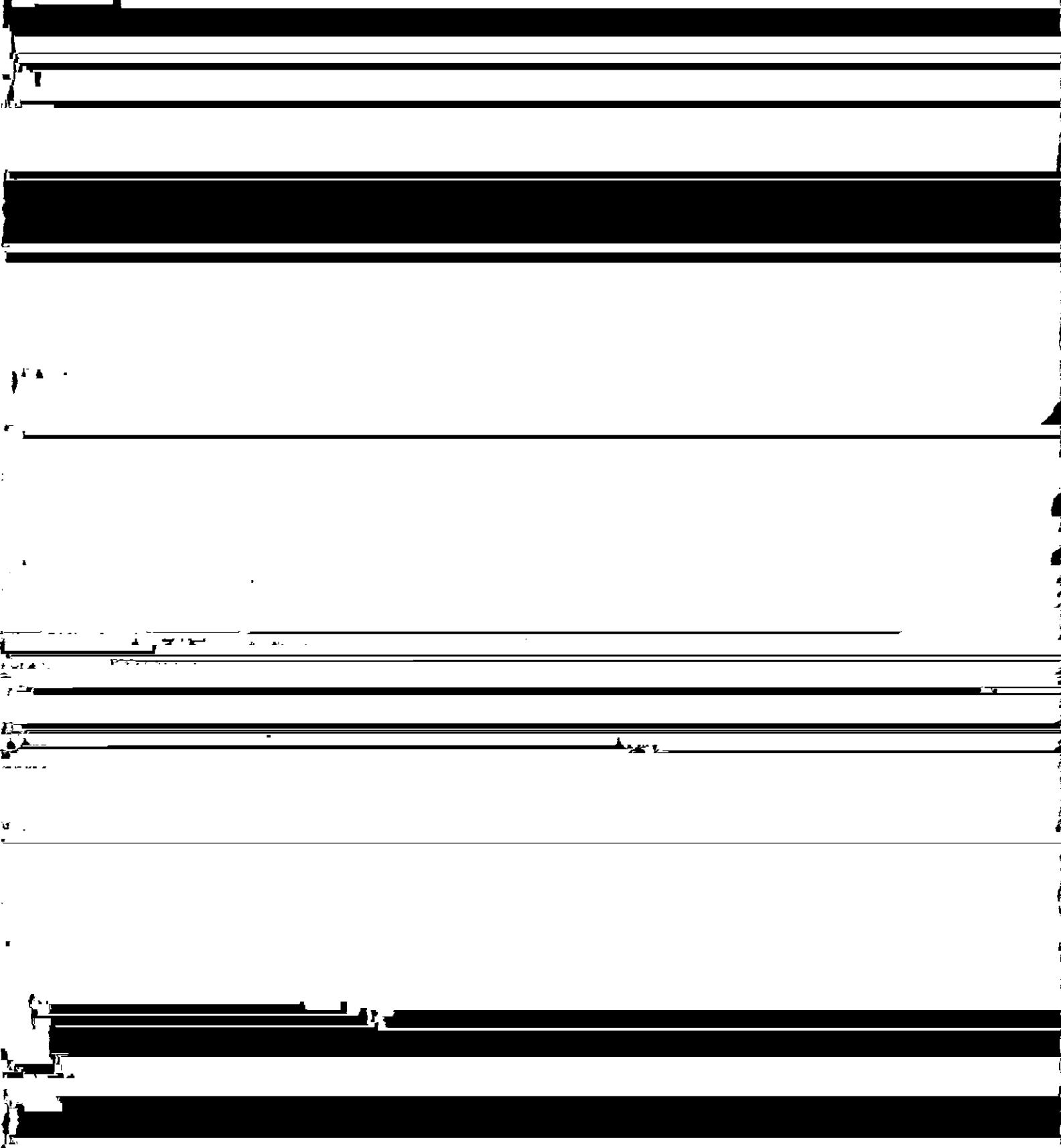
Following the first phase, a number of new factors influenced the SUI. First (no doubt generated by the previous success), the number of RSUSG's expanded rapidly to 14 groups by July 1998. With increased numbers, and without pressing production targets, the SUSG Steering Committee demanded increased decision-making power for itself - in line with the

Figure 3: IUCN SUI - Organizational Evolution - April 97



Technical Evolution after the 1st WCC

Two critical planning meetings took place in the first four months of 1997, which sought to



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Global Environment Facility, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological

Appendix 1: Summary of the process and underlying assumptions for the IUCN SUI Review

The Process

Information for the first two descriptive elements will be gathered through a review of the

prepared to finance the SUI over the long-term so long as the SUI maintains its global comparative advantage and demonstrates its operational effectiveness.

- The optimal strategy for implementing the SUI in order to maintain its comparative advantage and demonstrate its effectiveness is through a decentralized approach based on numerous "Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups" in sum constituting the

IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative Review

~~Section 4.2 - IUCN SUI Review - Survey Report~~

As part of the review of the IUCN SUI, a survey was distributed to the IUCN Sustainable Use Specialist Group Steering Committee (SI II Executive Committee - 4; RSI ISG Chairs - 15) all

Table 2: Area of Greatest Achievement - SUI's Three Goals

Respondent	Regional Level			International Level		
	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding	Improve Understanding	Promote Understanding	Apply Understanding
1	X			X		
2	X			X		
3	X			X		
4	X			X		
5			X		X	
6		X	X	X		
7	X			X		
8						
9	X				X	
10				X		
11	X			X		
12		X	X	X	X	
13						
14	X				X	
15		X			X	
16			X			X

Discussion on Achievement Assessment:

Most respondents indicated that the Sustainable Use Initiative has achieved greatest impact in its efforts to improve the understanding of factors that contribute to the sustainability of uses of wild species and ecosystems. This was followed by...

A number of respondents provided elaboration on the achievements of the SUI to date. These

- ◆ The creation of the diverse network of Regional Sustainable Use Specialist Groups (SUSG) has contributed to advancements in the understanding of sustainable use, and the

Question 2

Of the three objectives, which is the most critical to the future work of the SUI in the regions, and at the international level? (Mark one box at each level)

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Internationally: Improve Understanding Promote Understanding Apply Understanding

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and policies.

Individual respondents offered the following additional comments -

- ◆ SUI should broaden the analytical framework beyond wild species to include non-wild biodiversity, and pursue work at the ecosystem, species and genetic levels.
- ◆ SUI should become a key advisor to the Convention on Biological Diversity and its SBSTTA working with other IUCN elements (Global and Regional Programs and Commissions).
- ◆ SUI should start to coordinate with other programs and seek to understand the wide variety

the many skilled people with SU [knowledge and experience] in its varied forms that lie outside the SUI umbrella. The SUI has appreciably more to gain from getting these people "in" than the people themselves have from being "in."

Question 4

Which of the following are the key WEAKNESSES of the SUI which might constrain achievement of the accomplishment described in question 2 above? (Please mark between 1-4)

chair, and one or two professional support staff that continually liaise and exchange information with the regional SUSG's. The regional SUSG's need to be supported to feed the Union, as a whole, lessons about sustainable use as a conservation strategy.

- ◆ The management of the initiative (both of the SUSG's and the Support Team) needs to be re-oriented to achieve further integration with the rest of the IUCN. When this integration happens, the real potential of SUI and the Union emerges.
- ◆ The SUI is limited by the overall management, the lack of strategic planning, and the lack of transparency and accountability. The adoption of a Constitution for the SUSG may change this situation on a regional level, but only if this is constantly monitored, evaluated and followed up on. Nothing like this is currently in place on the global level.

Question 5

(Question only for Regional SUSG Members and Regional RCO staff) Is there an effective operational relationship between your Regional SUSG and the local IUCN Secretariat

Question 6

Is there an effective operational relationship between the SUI and the rest of IUCN's global programme? Yes No If No, Please briefly describe the constraint or problem below.

Table 8: Operational Relationship - SUI and IUCN Global Program

Survey Respondents	Effective	Not Effective
1		
2		
3		X
4		X
5		X
6		X
7		X
8		
9		
10		X
11		X
12		X
13		X
14		
15		X
16		X
17		X
TOTAL	0	12

The unanimity amongst those who chose to respond is striking given the wide range of responses to previous questions. However, the justification for this negative assessment varies considerably depending again on where respondents sit in the relationship (IUCN Secretariat or elsewhere). Regional variation in justification is present as well.

The following comments were provided -

- ◆ I cannot reply for the whole of IUCN's global program. We have related with SUI in our work on the CBD and this has been effective both in the provision of input and support to the inter-governmental process that we want to influence, and to provide SUI a channel to deliver their knowledge to a most influential audience.
- ◆ Problems in the relationship are due to the personalities involved, lack of transparency and accountability, and (financial) disincentives to collaborate in the overall management structure of the Union.
- ◆ Since IUCN HQ appeared to try to see off the SUI in the autumn of 1998, one can hardly answer this question in the affirmative. However, only those concerned can say where the problem lies. For a voluntary member to comment would be mere speculation.

Question 7

Is there an effective operational relationship between the SUI and other IUCN Commissions and Specialist Groups? Yes No Please clarify your answer below.

Table 9: Operational Relationship - SUI and IUCN Commissions

Survey Respondents	Effective	Not Effective
1		
2		
3		X
4		X
5		X
6		X
7		X
8		
9	X	
10		X
11		X
12		X
13		X
14		
15		X
16		X

The two positive assessments cited relationships between the SUI and the SSC as being effective, and one of those also identified a developing relationship between the SUI and the

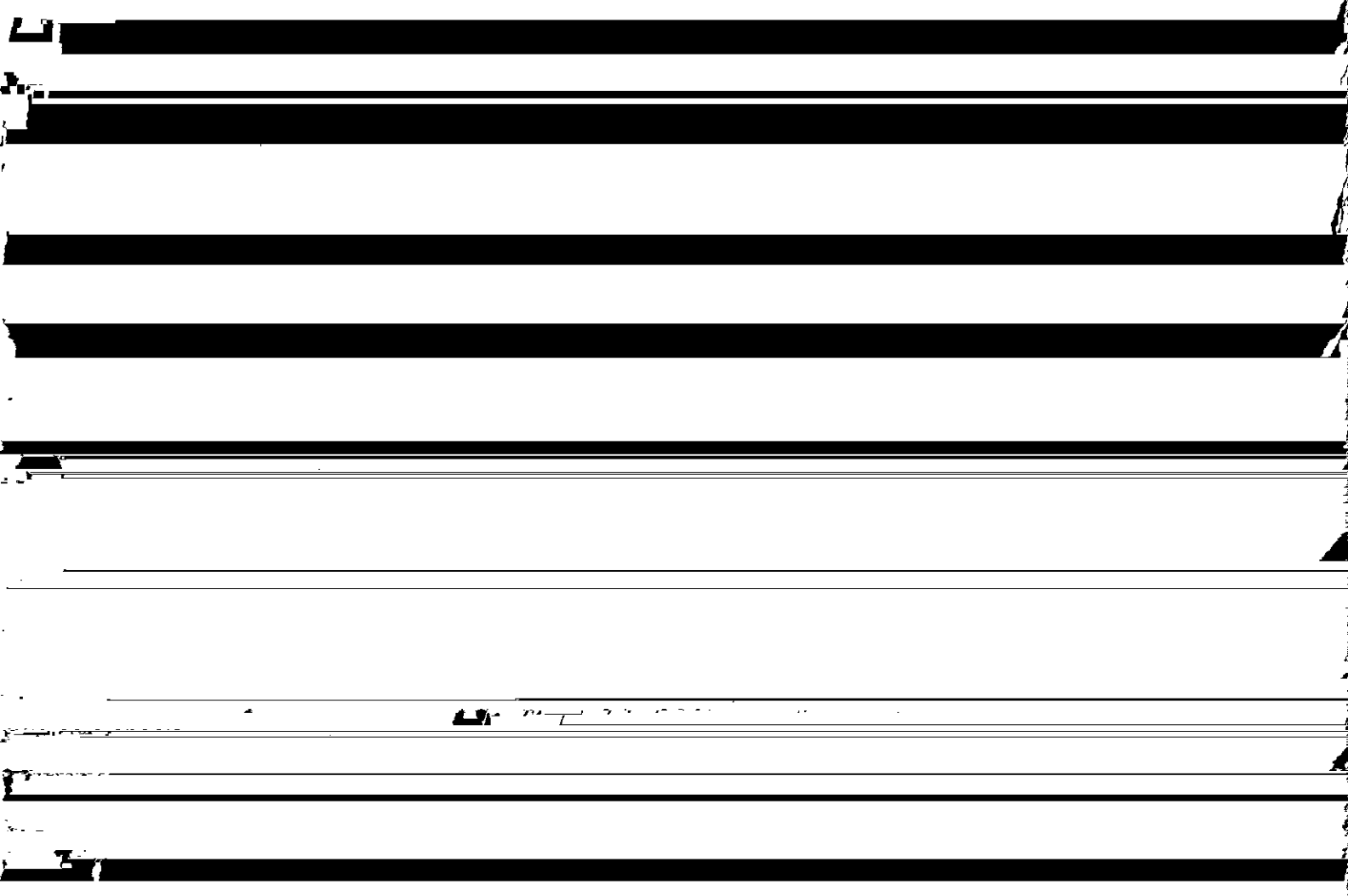
often cannot be provided due to the already heavy pressure on the volunteer network....it is critical that SUI brings more scientists engaged in active research in various Specialist Groups into the process.

- ◆ SSC and SUI have seemed to be on rather different tracks, and SUI has gone out of its way to avoid becoming part of SSC.

Question 8

What is the most appropriate way to organize sustainable use activities within IUCN?

Revised question specialist groups of the SSC "What is the most appropriate way to organize sustainable use activities within IUCN?"



The following additional comments were provided -

- ◆ The global program support service to the SUSG compromised the SUI's ability to move to the cutting edge by its emphasis on compromise, consensus and process. However, some

- ◆ In my opinion, the strength of the SUI and its future potential has little to do with “projects” or even initiatives conceived and undertaken by the “top”. It is in providing a forum within which SUSG members (Chairs at least) can get together and start to work on global policy documents which have the potential to affect major change at all levels.
- ◆ Fundraising, financial and administrative support is critical, but if this is not supplemented by leadership that guides the Chairs into action towards achievement of the global objectives, they will be very lost and little will be achieved.



IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative Review

Part III - Future Implications and Concluding Observations

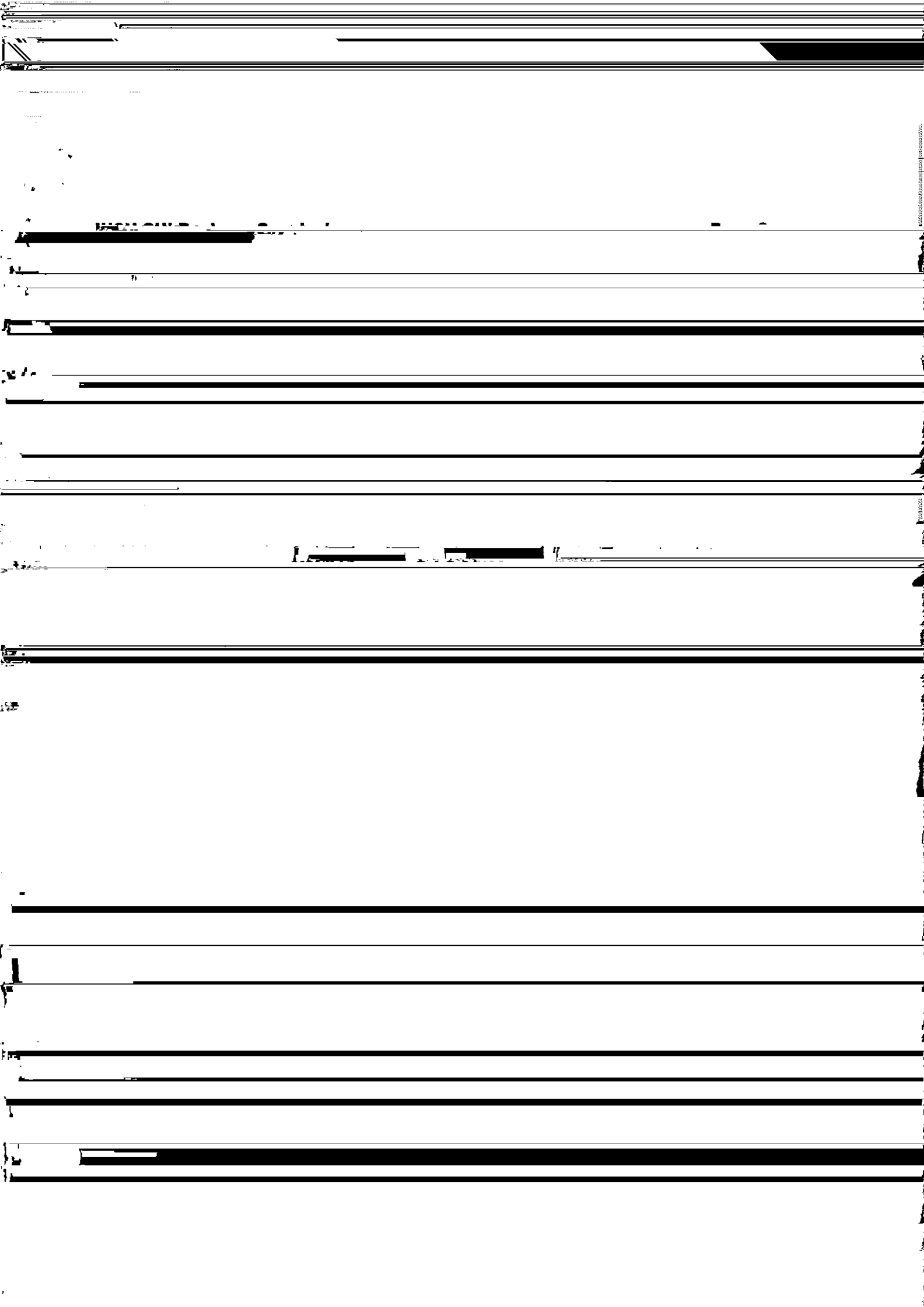
Introduction

This review of the IUCN Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) consist of the following three elements:

Part I: Narrative history of the SUI covering its i.) rationale, mandate and objective; ii), the work plans and products of the SUI over the period January 1995 to June 1999; and iii) the

amongst the membership for a more service-oriented Union, as well as a push by the principal financial supporters to increase the field level impact of their contributions. Twelve months after the launch, the Union faced consecutive reductions in the global program budget, linked in part to shifts in donor agency relationships and to a decline in the value of the Swiss Franc. During this period, several regional and country offices increased local fundraising, and asserted greater independence in program decision-making.

As a result, the Initiative appears to have suffered in a number of ways. Support for the Initiative varies considerably across different global programs, as well as throughout the network of regional and country offices. There is great disparity in appreciation for, and understanding of, the technical focus on the sustainable use of *wild species*. With the concurrent emphasis on decentralization and regionalization, several offices / programs decided that it is their right not to support nor participate in an initiative outside the central concerns of their particular program. In some regions, the political tensions related to sustainable use drove membership recruitment



5. SUI Membership

The inclusion of IUCN's membership in the Initiative should take place through the Sustainable

Individual Regional SUSG's also need to improve their own local fundraising efforts. These local efforts need to be coordinated with, and should received support from, relevant regional and country offices.

End Note:

None of the alternative solutions - from maintenance of the status quo, to shifting the SUI to a new Secretariat global program, to creating a Commission on Sustainable Use - have all the necessary factors to achieve the intended integration.

The experiment suggested above is timely in that it not only addresses immediate management needs for an effective Sustainable Use Initiative but will also generate guidance on long-standing challenges of global program development, financing, implementation and monitoring which constrain the Union from realizing its full potential.

The recommendations developed above have not informed, nor been informed by, the results

