

Evaluation Abstract

Title, author and date of the evaluation report:

Regionalisation and Decentralisation Review, Discussion Paper, prepared by the IUCN Regionalisation & Decentralisation Core Team (Mine Pabari, Andrew Deutz and Sebastian Winkler), November 2002

Name of project, programme or organizational unit:

IUCN's Regionalisation and Decentralisation (R&D) Process

Note: The evaluation focuses on reviewing the concept and philosophy of an ongoing process. It does not examine a particular project, programme and/or organizational unit.

Objectives of the project, programme or mandate of the organizational unit: N/A

IUCN area of specialisation: Organizational

Geographical area: Global

Project or programme duration, length of existence of organisational unit:

1994 – onwards. While IUCN's R&D process can be traced back to the 1980s, the development of the *Strategy of IUCN* in 1994 is considered the first major attempt to rationalize the organization's functioning.

Overall budget of the project, programme or organizational unit: N/A

Donor(s): N/A

Objectives of the evaluation:

- *Discussion Paper* which intends to stimulate reflection on possible solutions and prepare for a change management plan.

The current Background Paper is based on literature review and a number of selected interviews. Five sources of performance-oriented documentation were used: three external reviews, five strategic reviews, one country office review, the Compass Study (1998), and the Report of the Bangkok Meeting of Regional Directors (April 2002).

Phase 2 (January 2003 – onwards) will focus on implementation of the recommendations and priorities identified in Phase 1 that fall within the mandate of the Secretariat.

Questions of the evaluation:

- What were the driving forces (external and internal) behind the R&D process; and
- What R&D Strategies and Processes were proposed and implemented on the ground?

Summary:

Historical Review:

Section 1 provides a brief historical overview of the external and internal forces which drove R&D processes over the last 50 years and describes in detail the R&D strategies and processes proposed in the 1990s, with the Strategy of 1994 providing the starting point and benchmark for the review.

A general pattern has been observed in the evolution of regional and country offices:

- From mainly representational and advisory role to an increasing focus on development of member and partner relations, and increased member involvement in programme development and implementation;
- From single-sector projects to more integrated projects and overall regional/country programmes and technical network development;
- From reliance on HQ guidance and support, to greater local technical and managerial capacities;
- From the need for investment to substantial financial resources from unrestricted/general programme funds, to a substantial level of self-sufficiency based on project and regionally raised programme income.

Synthesis of Performance Issues:

Section 2 summarizes performance issues that have reoccurred in IUCN reviews and studies, classified into ten major categories. Each section contains a review of the current status of the measures taken.

Some excerpts are presented as follows:

1. *Progress Made in Regionalizing and Decentralizing:*
 - Need for a strategic approach, particularly in planning to identify the needs of target sectors and the most appropriate and cost effective means of meeting those needs;
 - Lack of clarity in rationale, mandate and purpose of different components of the Secretariat.
2. *Programme Development and Implementation:*
 - Need to strengthen the capacity for capturing lessons learned;
 - Need to maintain a balance between global perspectives and local priorities;
 - Inadequate capacity in economic and social analysis, and gender programming;
 - Need to demonstrate the linkages between conservation and development at the field.
3. *Membership Development and Services:*
 - Lack of tangible benefits to members, given the little difference in the services provided to members paying dues and partners who do not.
4. *Financial Viability and Security:*
 - Improving cost control systems to ensure that management and administrative operations are cost effective.
5. *Operational Systems and Capacities:*
 - The balance of representation of nationalities of staff both at headquarters and regional offices;
 - Inadequate gender balance at middle and higher levels.
6. *Management, Leadership and Vision:*

- Need for vision, leadership and business planning, and for improved management mechanisms to support regional programmes.
- 7. *Policy Development:*
 - Weaknesses in the links between policy and field activities.
- 8. *Quality Control, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning:*
 - Need for principles and standards to support a high quality of programme and project delivery.
- 9. *Commissions:*
 - Need to enhance funding opportunities for Commissions through close collaboration with regional programmes and headquarters.
- 10. *Governance*
 - Need to clarify and understand the relationship