



26-30 June, 2023

Krkonoše Mountains National Park and Jizera Mountains Protected Landscape, Czechia





WPALF (2023). Report of the 2023 meeting of the World Protected Areas Leaders Forum, Krkonoše Mountains National Park and Jizera Mountains Protected Landscape, Czechia. 26-30 June 2023.

This document has been produced under the auspices of the World Protected Areas Leaders Forum. The contents therein do not necessarily represent the view of individual members, agencies, or governments.

The 12th WPALF meeting was organised by the Nature Conservation Agency of Czechia and the management of Krkonoše Mts. National Park and Jizera Mts. Protected Landscape, in cooperation with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

Tomas Ruzicka (Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic) and Jakub Kašpar (Krkonoše Mts. National Park) provided the necessary leadership in organising the 12th WPALF meeting. The members of the WPALF and IUCN fully recognise and applaud the efforts of staff from Krkonoše Mts. National Park and Jizera Mts. Protected Landscape for hosting participants and for their dedication to protecting Czechia's important natural areas. WPALF is grateful to James Stuart for facilitating the meeting, and to the IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas team for their support to the Czech hosts in all aspects of preparations, convening WPALF membership, and supporting international travel and logistics for participants.

This report was prepared by the Czech hosts, IUCN and IUCN WCPA in consultation with the 2023 WPALF participants.

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On 26-30 June, the World Protected Areas Leaders Forum (WPALF) took place in the Krkonoše National Park and the Jizera Mountains Protected Landscape Area, generously hosted by The Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic and the Krkonoše Mountains National Park Administration. The first WPALF meeting to be convened in-person since 2019, and the first ever hybrid virtual-in person event, this year's meeting acted as an important opportunity to revisit the role and purpose of WPALF, along with key thematic priorities of protected areas leaders from around the globe.

Protected Area Agency Leads and technical specialists attended the meeting that included educational field trips interspersed with discussions. Inspiring field trips to the Krkonoše arcto-alpine tundra ecosystems, restoration zones at the Jizera peatbog (Ramsar site) and the Jizera Mountains Beech Forests (UNESCO World Heritage Site) highlighted conservation success stories in the Czech Republic.

The discussions helped develop a clear Terms of Reference for WPALF clarifying its objectives and its structure. Discussions included a focus on two broad themes - 1. Global leadership and the future of WPALF and 2. The Kunming-Montreal

Global Biodiversity Framework. Discussions prioritised themes for future WPALF meetings recognising the opportunity to share global experiences in key topics such as mainstreaming protected areas across economic sectors at the national scale, leveraging additional resources for protected area management and focusing on approaches for economic evaluation of protected areas.

The progress of the [2021 Protected and Conserved Areas Joint Statement on Climate Change and Biodiversity Crises](#) was also considered. The ambitions of this Joint Statement remain valid and participants recognised the need to refresh and revisit this work and to consider what mechanisms are best suited to unlock our ambitions to address the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Humankind is seriously impacted by the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change and there's an urgent need for transformative action. Protected and conserved area systems are strategic priorities to meet global biodiversity and climate targets. Adequate and sustained financing for protected and conserved area systems is critical to reverse declining trends in biodiversity and to address climate impacts.

The meeting of the World Protected Areas Leaders Forum (WPALF) began on Monday, June 26, at Špindler v Mlýn, Krkonoše, and ended on Friday, June 30, at the Hejnice Monastery.

The main topics of the meeting were measures to protect the world's biodiversity and climate, but also to explore local Czech life and conservation projects. With experts from all over the world (the meeting was attended by colleagues from Singapore, Malaysia, Great Britain, Finland, Benin, Bhutan, Australia, Canada, Uzbekistan and Romania) we discussed the problem of tourism numbers visiting some parts of the Krkonoše and the Jizera Mountains. WPALF participants greatly appreciated the projects of correction of the hydrological regime on the ridges of both mountains - installation of dams on peat bogs or in peat spruce stands, which return water to biotopes historically drained by amelioration channels. We also discussed current topics of Czech nature conservation, such as the upcoming declaration of the Kivoklátsko National Park, the Soutok Protected Landscape Area and the Ore Mountains Protected Landscape Area. Foreign colleagues were greatly impressed by the Krkonoše tundra, as well as the Jizera Mountains peat bogs and Jizera Mountains beechwoods.

The meeting also resulted in the joint Krkonoše – Jizera Mountains Declaration, in which WPALF participants point out that investments in nature protection and restoration are a necessary condition for the world to cope with the current dual crisis of

climate change and the loss of biodiversity.

The 2023 WPALF participants are from

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12th WPALF event, 26-30 June 2023, Krkonoše Mts. National Park and Jizera Mts.
Protected Landscape, Czechia

The World Protected Areas Leaders Forum (WPALF) welcomes the leadership and initiative of the Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic and its administration of Jizera Mts Protected Landscape Area, the Krkonoše Mts National Park for hosting the 12th WPALF meeting and reconvening this forum after the global pandemic.

Protected and Conserved Areas are incredibly diverse covering a vast array of climates, terrains, waters and ecosystems. These special places, along with Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECM) and dedicated indigenous and local community lands and territories are set to cover to at least 30% of the planet by 2030 with the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) in December 2022.

With equitable governance and effective management, in partnership with custodians and local communities, these areas play a transformative role, not only to address biodiversity loss, but also in combating climate change as well as unlocking a cascade of additional benefits for mental health and wellbeing, the economy, local jobs.

These benefits were illustrated throughout the 12th meeting of the WPALF through a series of educational field trips, including a detailed examination of the Jizera peat bogs in the Jizera Mountains core area. The management measures taken to restore these peat bogs has not only secured and restored environmental benefits but also reduced carbon emissions, increased carbon sequestration, added to the visitor experience and are supporting jobs in the local economy. Appropriate ongoing resources are essential for management measures to be effective and for positive outcomes to be sustained.

The hosts and participants of the 12th WPALF call on all protected area agencies and governance bodies to help ensure equitable governance and effective management of their systems and networks of special places. Protected and Conserved Areas offer a unique combination of attributes and routes to positively impact the major issues of our time. With further engagement, investment, adjustment to linked policies and by drawing on best practice from across the global family these areas can unlock an even greater cascade of benefits to address biodiversity loss, to support the route to net zero, to improve health and well-being and to underpin local economies.

WPALF - an international forum for leaders of Protected and Conserved Area Agencies

The World Protected Areas Leaders Forum (WPALF) is a network for sharing knowledge and solutions for protected area systems. WPALF offers a unique space for the leaders of protected areas agencies to discuss priority issues and to advance global dialogue and future directions for protected and conserved areas. With an event hosted each year by one of the



- Discuss and strategise opportunities for protected areas agencies to contribute to the global conservation agenda, including through IUCN fora, CBD and UNFCCC events and meetings; and to
- Enhance and expand professional networks.

The mission of WPALF is to 'promote dialogue and exchange of experiences amongst the principal global agencies overseeing protected areas, and to explore ways, through leadership, to improve the effectiveness of these protected areas'.

WPALF is open to all leaders of area-based conservation authorities and agencies. It is a semi-formal network convened annually by a host country, with support of IUCN and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA). The host and organiser is agreed on a yearly basis and commits to develop and convene the next WPALF forum. Ensuring geographic balance and participant diversity is a key principle of each WPALF event.

WPALF allows space for protected areas agency leaders to discuss how their work contributes to achieving international policy and priorities. WPALF events can generate ideas and commitments that leaders can promote through their own national and international channels and networks, especially to contribute to national positions and presence at key policy fora, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The World Protected Areas Leaders Forum held its 2023 meeting from 26-30 June in Krkonoše Mts. National Park and Jizera Mts. Protected Landscape in the Czech Republic. In total, 27 WPALF members from 12 countries attended in person, with an additional 2 attendees online. A full list of participants are available in Appendix III. The first WPALF meeting to be convened in-person since 2019, and the first ever hybrid virtual-in person event, this year's meeting acted as an important opportunity to revisit the role and purpose of WPALF, along with key thematic priorities of protected areas leaders from around the globe.

The 2023 WPALF meeting focused on two key themes; global leadership and the role of protected and conserved areas (PCAs) in addressing the dual crises of biodiversity loss and climate change. It also offered a timely opportunity to reflect on the achievements of CBD COP15, the adoption of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), and the upcoming opportunities for protected areas agencies to contribute to its implementation. The meeting blended formal and informal sessions and activities for participants, including several field trips to explore the work of the Nature Conservation Agency of Czechia and Krkonoše National Park. The full meeting agenda and background notes from the 2023 meeting can be found in Appendices I and II.

The existential threats faced by PCAs, along with their potential to drive positive outcomes for nature, permeate beyond jurisdictional boundaries. While conservation progress can, and must, be made at the local and regional levels, it is essential to explore and capture the potential for outcomes at an international scale. Harnessing the full potential of PCAs, and the resources necessary to ensure their impact, will require effective leadership and dedication from the global PCAs community. Accordingly, The WPALF participants kicked off the meeting with a discussion on the need for global leadership to unlock the potential of PCAs.

The hybrid (in-person and online) Global Leadership sessions focused on the need for a central body to harness the potential of this group, and the niche that WPALF can and should fill in

The Global Leadership Session also considered the efficacy of WPALF as a collective voice and the potential resource demands such a forum may require. Participants consi



to WPALF leaders considering the implications (Table 2).

The presentation was followed by a wide-ranging discussion focused on the many challenges of achieving GBF Target 3 within a 7-year period. It was acknowledged that 7 years is a challenging timeline and that the political emphasis is already shifting to demonstrating in 2030 that we are 'on course' for 30% with the areas determined but the measures not necessarily in place. This was recognised as pragmatic but concern was expressed that taking the eye off the target 7 years out could slow progress at the very point acceleration is required.

OECMs were raised in this context, as many jurisdictions are looking to alternatively conserved areas to allow the gap to 30% to close quickly. What OECMs are and are not, the standards they set, and several other issues were raised, with a suggestion that a future WPALF meeting could further explore the detail of these potentially key concepts to the delivery of Target 3.

While Target 3 has attracted much of the attention so far in wider global dialogue around the GBF, participants agreed that other targets could be very powerful in terms of delivery and could be areas of focus that PCAs can leverage. Participants also agreed that mainstreaming

7 years for implementation instead of 10, how realistic is to reach the goals? Are we in position to reach the goal by 2035?

Further growth of protected areas – where is the reasonable limit, what will be the next step until 2050? 50%? Is increase of area of PA delivering the goal, or weakening the protection/conservation?

Mainstreaming, territorial planning with biodiversity – how to approach it from the conservation side? Is there sufficient political will and/or enforcement power? If not, how to achieve it?

Monitoring and reporting framework: crucial – but demanding financial and personal investments, which perspectives do we have?

Table 2: Discussion questions on next steps for CBD GBF implementation presented by Ladislav Miko

is a prominent theme and one which PCAs can play into. PCAs sit at a series of intersection points in terms of policy and routes to delivery, some of which is highlighted in the international joint statement on PCAs and climate change already, that already illustrate the potential power of mainstreaming.

From a PCA point of view, mainstreaming is also a necessary mechanism to attract the funding required for PCAs to deliver on conservation. Funding for PCAs is limited but when this work is linked to the numerous other agendas (mainstreaming) that PCAs contribute to – including climate change, health and wellbeing, rural economy, culture, tourism, food and

disaster reduction – numerous other avenues of public and private funding are available. There were some excellent examples shared of successful leverage and mainstreaming, with one PCA agency nearly doubling their annual budget over recent years through demonstrating the cross-cutting impacts and higher return on investment through the multiple roles that the PCAs play. It was therefore acknowledged as imperative for PCAs to fully embrace the opportunity mainstreaming offers to support our work. It was determined that this is an area of work that should be continued by the WPALF.

Resourcing of PCAs in light of the newly agreed GBF targets will be challenging, as most PCAs are already under considerable pressure - exacerbated through recent energy and cost of living crises - and the wider fiscal environment in the post-pandemic period has left very little room to expand spending. In addition to the mainstreaming point already made, discussions also turned to the ability for PCAs to generate their own income.

In keeping with what participants wanted from this forum, the session on exploring the Dual Crises was adjusted to maximize practical outcomes from the meeting and took the form of an "Offer and Ask" session. This session was design to accelerate knowledge-sharing, to identify strengths and resources available to be shared across agencies, and to capture many of the informal offers of help already made.

Each attendee was asked to note offers the felt able to share including recent case studies, reports and research outputs, or particular areas of expertise. They were also asked to identify current challenges their agencies are facing that other PCA leaders may have already explored or could add additional perspective to. Finally, each attendee reviewed what others had offered to see where they may be able to support or benefit. A summary of the offers and asks is captured in Table 3. The details of all Offers and Asks have been captured and shared with the WPALF attendees, with several connections already made and further collaboration planned. This work will continue through to the next meeting in 2024.



*WPALF - an international forum for leaders of protected area agencies
12th WPALF event, 26-30 June 2023, Krkonoše Mts. National Park and Jizera Mts. Protected Landscape,
Czechia*

Arrival day – transport from Prague Airport (or railway station) to Špindler v Mlýn, hotel Erlebachova bouda (www.erlebachovabouda.cz), The Krkonoše Mts. National Park

Transport from Prague Vaclav Havel Airport to the venue in Krkonoše Mts. – bus at 16 pm and individual transport for late arrivals.

Accommodation

19:00 - Welcome dinner – _____, director of NCA CR and _____, director of Krkonoše NP, brief presentation of the Krkonoše Mts. NP and Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic

8:00 - Breakfast

09:00 – Welcome by hosts, introduction to the delegates, what to expect and ambition for the forum

10:00 – Coffee

Global Leadership

10:30 – The need for Global leadership – including perspectives from IUCN (James Hardcastle) and WCPA (Madhu Rao) and update on the Protected Areas Joint Statement (James Stuart) – *on-line session*

11:30 – What does great global leadership look like and how do we unlock it? Facilitated discussion, continued after lunch – *on-line session*

12:00 – Lunch

14:00 – Continued: Unlocking global leadership and the role of WPALF – *on-line session*

15:00 - The Krkonoše-Jizera Mts. Declaration – an introduction

15:30 - Coffee break

16:00 - Field trip to the Krkonoše arcto-alpine tundra (organised by staff of Krkonose Mts. NP)

19:00 - Dinner

20:00 - Friendly gathering with catering – an informal session

8:00 - Breakfast

9:00 - Field trip to the Krkonoše arcto-alpine tundra (organised by staff of Krkonose Mts. NP)

12:00 - Lunch

13:00 - Transport to Hejnice Monastery in Jizera Mts. Protected Landscape Area by bus (www.klaster-hejnice.cz)

14:00 - Field trip on the way – Jizera peatbog (Ramsar site) and forest restoration after SO₂ deposition (organised by staff of NCA CR)

16:00 - Accommodation

18:00 - Dinner

19:00 - Guided tour of the Hejnice Monastery

20:00 - Informal evening session, presentation of the Jizera Mts. PLA (Jiří Hušek, head of

12:00 – Statement development

12:30 - Lunch



Appendix II - Briefing materials

Background note

June 29, 2023 WPALF Day 4, Session 1 (09:00 CEST)



and ecosystem services, without compromising the quality of conservation necessary to effectively protect biodiversity.

: The GBF calls for the integration of



In the run up to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP26 hosted in Glasgow, Scotland, the UK National Parks – including Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, located only 20 miles from the host city of Glasgow – sought to explore how best to capitalise on being the host country and to support Protected and Conserved Areas (PCAs) engagement in climate dialogue. In consultation with several international PCA organisations including Parks Canada, Europarc, US National Parks Service and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN WCPA) it was agreed to draft and publish a Joint Statement on the joint climate change and biodiversity crises. The drafting process engaged well beyond this initial group. This process strengthened references to communities and moved from the confines of climate and UNFCCC to actively bridge the link between climate and biodiversity. The finalised document attracted 26 signatories.

The launch of the Joint Statement took place in the UK Pavilion at COP26 and is prefaced by a challenge, on behalf of the next generation, issued by a Youth Committee and Junior Ranger from Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. The launch was linked to a [coordinated press release](#) shared by signatories from across the world. In anticipation of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP15 in December 2022, several additional signatories joined the Joint Statement. A copy of the statement is available in

The PCA family could be a global actor in the fight against climate change. With ambition increasing for protecting 30% of the planet’s land and waters by 2030, there remains a need for coordinated efforts to tackle climate change mitigation within the lands and waters we as

Protected and Conserved Areas Joint Statement Signatories



Figure 1. Map illustrating distribution of signatories. Note – global organisations (e.g. IUCN WCPA) marked on Antarctica.

PCA agencies steward. In the context of UNFCCC, despite nature-based solutions expected to account for 1/3 of the transition to net-zero by 2050, PCA's are regularly omitted from the conversation. Even in the context of the CBD there is substantial scope to deepen the role that PCA's play and tap into the vast opportunity our family offers.

The Joint Statement therefore set out to:

- Position a new 21st Century role for the PCA family;
- Begin drawing attention to the influential role of PCA's in the dual crises; and to
- Knit our own community even closer together and to gather and galvanise wider support

for PCAs

The statement concludes with a set of commitments each signatory agreed to take forward:

Since the launch of the Joint Statement, signatories have worked to meet these commitments.

In the buildup to CBD COP15 Parks Canada, with the support of several other signatories,

led initial research into carbon and net zero-linked activities across the signatories which was published at COP15 in a talk at the IUCN Pavilion. A summary p





Figure 2. Extract of the Parks Canada research showing examples of Carbon emission activities by signatories.

The Joint Statement itself was linked to UNFCCC COP26 and CBD COP15, and whilst the sentiments and ambitions remain valid, it is now time to refresh and revisit this work and to consider what mechanisms are best suited to unlock our ambitions to address the dual crises. As part of this exploration the forthcoming WPALF will consider global leadership on the dual climate and biodiversity crises and the future of WPALF.

Background Note

The World Protected Areas Leadership Forum (WPALF) was created in 1999 by IUCN in collaboration with several international protected areas agencies. The first meeting was in the US, hosted by the US Park Service in Virginia, February 2000. WPALF's mission was to 'promote dialogue and exchange of experiences amongst the principal global agencies overseeing protected areas, and to explore ways, through leadership, to improve the effectiveness and conservation results of these protected areas'.

The WPALF is a forum for the leaders of protected areas agencies to discuss the most important issues facing their agencies and to contribute towards the global dialogue on future directions for protected and conserved areas. The WPALF is usually hosted by one of the members' agencies. Participation in the WPALF is by invitation, with the criterion being that the leaders are willing and able to participate as part of this peer group. From time to time, the WPALF invites extra participants from agencies and organisations in the region where they are meeting, either to play a role in the particular meeting or to maintain an ongoing involvement in the WPALF. Although participants are drawn from agencies, they are not officially representing their agencies in the deliberations of the forum. They engage as peers involved in similar work and who face similar challenges that would benefit from dialogue and exchange. WPALF's play an important networking opportunity for PA agency heads.

WPALF objectives, defined in 2002 ahead of the Durban IUCN World Parks Congress (WCC),

have remained as:

- To allow opportunities for heads of PA agencies to discuss items of mutual interest;
- To identify emerging issues and trends in PA area management; and
- To discuss the forward agenda for PA agencies to contribute to the global conservation agenda, including IUCN WCC / WPC events; and
- To enhance and expand personal networks

The most recent in person WPALF, the [11th meeting](#), was held in Victoria, Australia in 2019, hosted by Parks Victoria. The report is available [here](#). The previous meeting was hosted by Israel (10th forum, in Tel Aviv, M5.1(tN)35(ech20)10(198). I 20)10(a21, Ne10(w oZ25(o)10(a lnd pos)10(t)



includes sub-national (State, Provincial) agencies, where there is a clear and distinct agency responsibility for protected areas management.

The previous WPALF event hosted 17 agencies, from 9 countries.

It is a clear intent to expand the network and engage more members from around the globe. However, how membership is coordinated, including maintaining a list of relevant contacts and agency leaders, and supporting inter-forum communication and engagement, has been the role of IUCN's secretariat.

The associated costs and logistics of the WPALF events have to date generally precluded a large number of member participants in any one event, except when coinciding with other significant nature conservation events, such as IUCN World Conservation Congresses or CBD COPs.

Invitation to participate in WPALF events should be the mandate of the host, with an eye to logistics and hosting capacity, but also with criteria given to: geographic diversity, agencies with diverse and representative systems of PAs (such as marine, island and SIDS, arid ecosystems, wetland and riverine systems, alpine and montane systems etc); and the leaders' capacity and resources to attend. Sponsorship opportunities for each WPALF event should be a priority planning consideration, to enable good north-south exchange.

The leaders of IUCN's protected areas institutions are supporting members (Chair of World Commission on Protected Areas; Head of IUCN's Global Protected and Conserved Areas programme; Director IUCN Centre for Conservation Action). Participation in the Forum as technical experts and resource persons has always been welcomed by the WPALF members. In addition, IUCN has generally provided support and coordination services for the WPALF, and advice on key thematic priorities and topics, at the invitation of the host agency. However, it is the host who works with other WPALF members to develop a theme and set the agenda, with IUCN very much in a supportive role.

plus local hosts and IUCN support. The agenda is under design and preparations beginning, especially to set the schedule and send out an initial 'save the date' to an initial set of potential invitees.

Finland has already committed to host the 13th event, likely to be in 2024. It will always be important to roster 2-3 hosts in advance, to aid in planning and ensure lessons and momentum are carried from one host to the next.

At this next iteration of the WPALF meetings, the Czechia hosts will invite a revisit of the mission and purpose of the WPALF and we will be encouraging dialogue around themes discussed at CBD COP15 in Montreal, such as implementation of the Global Biodiversity Framework and the nexus of climate change and biodiversity conservation. There is a plan to present local contextual issues and lessons learned from PA leaders related to climate change in the mountain regions of Central Europe.

The Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic and the Administration of the Krkonoše Mountains National Park will seek support from other leading WPALF members to help set the agenda and finalise the technical development of the event schedule and objectives. IUCN secretariat and IUCN WCPA will support and contribute as relevant to the agenda, and to the preparations of sessions, background materials, platforms for virtual participation facilitation if needed, and in organisational and coordination support.

The Nature Conservation Agency of the Czech Republic and the Administration of the Krkonoše Mountains National Park would like all interested WPALF members to help identify the objectives of the 12th event and to help ensure that the following outcomes are achieved:

- Membership is renewed, new commitment are made, enhanced diversity is achieved
- Leaders develop and expand their personal networks and forge new relationships
- The WPALF is revitalized and members reaffirm its mission and objectives
- Members agree on 2-3 priority actions and initiatives that will address emerging issues and trends in area-based conservation, and contribute to the global conservation agenda and 30x30 ambitions.

A WPALF members virtual meeting will be held in mid-March. Details forthcoming from IUCN. This will help keep WPALF members engaged and actively contributing, and support the preparations by Czechia in their hosting mission.

Discussion document / draft February 2023

Contact: Mr. JiBoo Park, IUCN Protected and Conserved Areas Team / Korean National Park Service; and Tomáš Růžka, Czech Nature Conservation Agency



BIU

Revised Draft June 2023

The World Protected Areas Leaders Forum (WPALF) role is to 'promote dialogue and exchange of experiences amongst the principal global agencies overseeing protected areas, and to explore ways, through leadership, to improve the effectiveness of these protected areas'.

The WPALF offers a space for the leaders of Protected and Conserved Areas (PCAs) agencies to share knowledge, to be inspired, to discuss important issues and to contribute towards the global dialogue on future directions for PCAs.



communique may be issued from the forum to share some of these key messages. Additionally, the IUCN and the WCPA can also help to advance key messages from the WPALF through its global events.

The IUCN Secretariat will provide basic secretariat support to WPALF events including; capturing and retaining a record of meetings, logistical support to extend the diversity of attendance, maintenance of a database of contacts across the PCA community and advice to the hosts when developing the format and theme. The Secretariat will hold the institutional knowledge of WPALF meetings in cooperation with the WCPA.

The IUCN WCPA will provide technical support to WPALF and will host a dedicated WPALF Special Project/Task Force within its structure. The primary mandate of the Task force is to share existing technical guidance for the implementation of T3 to WPALF members, develop technical guidance materials on newly identified themes, developing a communication mechanism to exchange information, best practice case studies, news and information relevant to the WPALF in between the annual meetings. The ToR of the Task Force will be developed shortly.



Remarks by Madhu Rao, Chair, IUCN WCPA

“Thank you for the opportunity to share some opening remarks. By way of introduction, I am here with all of you.

technical advice and advocate for effective systems of PCAs across terrestrial, inland water and marine realms.

Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Target 3 is undeniably ambitious in its scope and intent. The ambition we see in T3 grew from widespread recognition that nature is in crisis and that there is a great sense of urgency to take adequate steps, most importantly, for human well-being.

We have 7 years to reverse declining trends in biodiversity in the context of a rapidly changing climate. We have had much dialogue and debate and it is now time for action on the ground. This is when, as the saying goes, “that the rubber hits the road”.

The success of GBF and T3 lies in implementation at the site and system levels. It lies in ensuring we have effective systems of protected and conserved areas.

The entire PA community will need to step up to the challenge through creative and bold leadership. We have no time to lose, and you all, as global protected area leaders, you are all well positioned to generate strong momentum towards implementation of T3.

So, what would bold and strong global leadership look like?

1. *The Joint Statement on biodiversity and climate is extremely timely and provides a solid foundation for a powerful collective global voice representing importance of PCAs to achieving biodiversity and climate targets; it is the only one of its kind at the moment.*

2.

and PCAs. It will be equally important to make PCAs ready for the impacts of climate as species and ecosystems move due to climate change;

3.

security to regulating climate. We can and should place PCAs on the human health agenda - from preventing pandemics to supporting mental well-being - there is now solid evidence that PCAs are critical to human health. There is good evidence to show that PCAs help strengthen governance and promote peace and human security in many contexts. We have a unique opportunity to mainstream biodiversity and PCAs into other sectors.

4.

while drawing on traditional knowledge and ground-up approaches in developing effective

solutions. We need to integrate the vast body of existing science and knowledge into policies and decision-making.

5. *We have experience from implementing Target 11 so we know broadly where the gaps are*

