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Australian wins Kenton Miller Award for Parks Innovation

Barcelona, Spain, 6 October, 2008 (IUCN) – An Australian academic has been rewarded for his international efforts to make nature conservation in national parks and reserves more effective. Dr Marc Hockings from Queensland University has won the prestigious Kenton Miller Award for innovation for developing methods for park managers to evaluate if actions are really achieving conservation goals. His methods have been taken up by such bodies as the World Bank, WWF and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre.

The award was presented at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona held every four years by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Some 8,000 global delegates are gathered at the Congress, including 50 Australians. The award was named for Kenton Miller, one of the foremost global figures of conservation and a former Director General of IUCN who also presented the award.

*“Protected areas are the primary sanctuaries of nature on earth,” says **Kenton Miller**. “In the face of major environmental changes, especially climate change, their importance can only grow. Evaluating what we do in parks is one important way of ensuring that the investment of time and effort in establishing and managing protected areas is delivering the benefits that society seeks and that the sites will be sustainable in the long term. Real conservation needs management of threats like preventing poaching, pollution, vandalism, controlling invasive plants and pest species, preventing excessive fire or flooding and proper management of tourists. Managers need to know what works and what doesn’t.”*

Working with the IUCN’s World Commission on Protected Areas, Dr Hockings and colleagues developed the Framework for Evaluating Management Effectiveness of Protected Areas. This Framework has been adopted by the Convention on Biodiversity, the key global instrument to protect nature and is influencing assessments in over 7000 protected areas in more than 100 countries.

*“Marc Hockings work has been very influential in guiding The Nature Conservancy as we support national governments to strengthen their national protected area systems,” says **Trevor Sandwith, Director of Global Protected Areas Policy at The Nature Conservancy**. “Our staff worked with Marc to conduct regional training workshops that have touched over 700 protected area professionals in more than 100 countries. In more than 6,000 protected areas, this has resulted in a clear understanding of what is needed to manage the parks effectively, and has influenced national governments to increase capacity and financing to meet those identified needs.”*

For more information, please contact

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