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IUCN Standard to boost impact of nature-based solutions to global challenges

Gland, Switzerland, 23 July 2020 (IUCN) – IUCN today unveiled a Global Standard providing the first-ever set of benchmarks for nature-based solutions to global challenges. The new IUCN Global Standard will help governments, business and civil society ensure the effectiveness of nature-based solutions and maximise their potential to help address climate change, biodiversity loss and other societal challenges on a global scale.

“The world is looking for durable and effective options to tackle global challenges such as climate change, food and water security, and now, economic recovery from the global pandemic. To this end, the new IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions is ideally placed to harness and accelerate the sustainable use of nature,” **said IUCN’s Global Director for the Nature-based Solutions Group Stewart Maginnis**. “For nature-based solutions to fulfil their potential, we must ensure that the actions put in place today bring about the desired benefits for society and biodiversity. This Global Standard offers a rigorous, consistent and accountable framework that will help avoid any misuse and take nature-based solutions from the local to global scale.”

The concept of nature-based solutions (NbS) – actions addressing key societal challenges through the protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems, benefiting both biodiversity and human well-being – is increasingly being applied around the world. More than 130 countries have already included NbS actions – such as reforestation, green infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and aquaculture, or coastal protection – in their national climate plans under the Paris Agreement.

However, not all actions labelled as “nature-based solutions” provide the anticipated benefits to both society and biodiversity, and the global potential of NbS is far from being fully realised.

“Until now, there has been neither consensus nor coherent guidance on how to design and implement nature-based solution interventions that are capable of consistent delivery of benefits for people and nature,” **said Angela Andrade, Chair of the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management**, which helped lead the development of the Global Standard. “The contribution of the Commission, in addition to input from over 800 experts and practitioners from 100 countries, has been to guide the IUCN Global Standard, ensuring that it is scientifically robust and applicable across a wide range of regions and scenarios.”

The IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions has eight criteria and associated indicators that allow the user to assess the aptness, scale, economic, environmental and social viability of an intervention; consider its possible trade-offs; ensure transparency and adaptive project management; and explore possible linkages to international targets and commitments. It consists of a user guide and self-assessment tool, which identifies areas for improving and learning.

The IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions can be accessed [here](#).

For more information or to set up interviews, please contact:

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Notes to editors:

In 2016, the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Hawai‘i adopted a resolution ([WCC-2016-Res-069-EN](#)) which, for the first time, defined the use of nature for simultaneous benefits to biodiversity and societal well-being. According to the resolution, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are “actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”.

About IUCN

IUCN is a membership Union uniquely composed of both government and civil society organisations. It provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.

Created in 1948, IUCN is now the world's largest and most diverse environmental network, harnessing the knowledge, resources and reach of more than 1,400 Member organisations and some 15,000 experts. It is a leading provider of conservation data, assessments and analysis. Its broad membership enables IUCN to fill the role of incubator and trusted repository of best practices, tools and international standards.

IUCN provides a neutral space in which diverse stakeholders including governments, NGOs, scientists, businesses, local communities, indigenous people's organisations and others can work together to forge and implement solutions to environmental challenges and achieve sustainable development.

Working with many partners and supporters, IUCN implements a large and diverse portfolio of conservation projects worldwide. Combining the latest science with the traditional knowledge of local communities, these projects work to reverse habitat loss, restore ecosystems and improve people's well-being.

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