



TBCA in Focus
Protection
of flamingos
in the high
Andes



**TRANSBOUNDARY
COOPERATION
TO REACH GOAL
TX2**



**NEW IUCN WCPA
BEST PRACTICE
GUIDELINES ON
TRANSBOUNDARY
CONSERVATION**

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Transboundary Conservation

TBeNEWS 9

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2015



Editorial



Welcome back to the TB eNEWS!

2014 was an extremely busy year for the WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group (TBC SG). We were working very hard on preparation of the new IUCN WCPA's Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines on transboundary conservation, which were finally launched in May 2015 during the Little Sydney conference in Hainburg, Austria. This is a major achievement for the Specialist Group whose members had been working diligently and with dedication to produce a high quality product that will help guide transboundary practitioners worldwide. The publication is now available in PDF as well as in hard copy.

The Specialist Group also participated actively at the IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia, where the Group successfully organised several events related to transboundary conservation. We also contributed to the recommendations of the Governance Stream, and thus the final output of the Congress—The Promise of Sydney.

The 9th issue of the TB eNEWS reports on the key events attended by the members of the TBC SG and the progress of several transboundary initiatives and projects happening in Africa, Asia, Europe and South America, while announcing a number of future events in North America and other parts of the world. This issue highlights transboundary cooperation between Los Flamencos National Reserve in Chile and Eduardo Avaroa National Refuge in Bolivia, a Transboundary Protected Area where communities and protected areas staff work together on the protection of flamingos. Please read further in our section *TBCA in Focus*.

Many thanks to all the contributors to the 9th issue of the TB eNEWS. This e-bulletin is available online at www.tbpa.net, together with all previous issues.

Looking forward to more stories and project updates in the future.

Maja Vasiljević

Chair, Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group
IUCN WCPA

Protection of flamingos in the high Andes

Name:	Los Flamencos National Reserve and Eduardo Avaroa National Refuge
Countries:	Chile and Bolivia
Surface:	1,455 km²
IUCN protected area management category:	Category IV
International designations:	Ramsar Sites
Year of formal agreement:	2008



© Hernán Torres

Los Flamencos National Reserve in Chile, and Eduardo Avaroa National Refuge in Bolivia, are adjacent protected areas that form a Transboundary Protected Area located in the high Andes above an altitude of 3,000 meters. The area is characterised by remarkable volcanoes, steppes and wetlands. It hosts habitats of endemic large mammal vicuña (*Vicugna vicugna*) and other vertebrates, while its saline wetlands are the most important nesting sites for three species of flamingos: Andean flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus andinus*), James's flamingo (*Phoenicoparrus jamesi*) and Chilean flamingo (*Phoenicopterus chilensis*).

The survival of the flamingo species was seriously threatened due to the collection of eggs during the nesting season, poaching and mining activities in the vicinity of the wetlands. Flamingos migrate seasonally between both protected areas after breeding. Therefore, the protection of these nesting colonies is crucial.

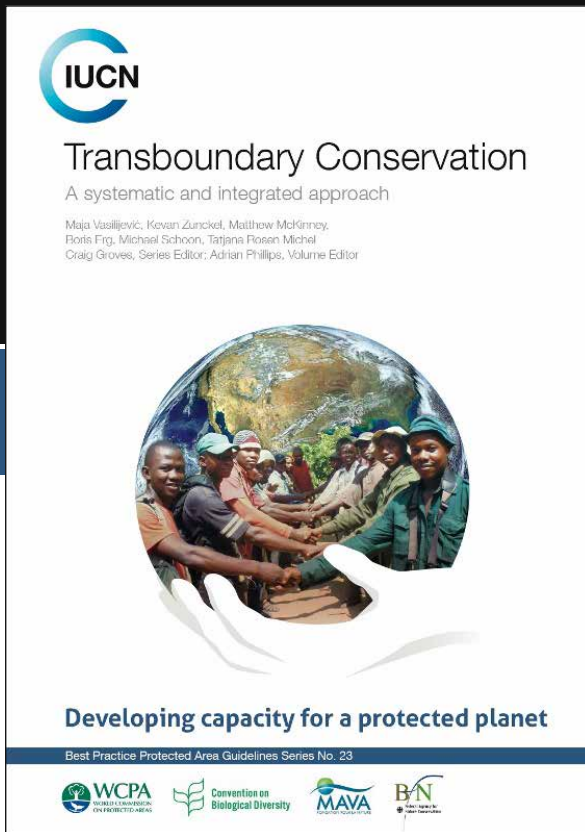
With the objective of helping local authorities in the protection of these important habitats, the Group for the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos was created in 2006. This multi-stakeholders Group consists of representatives of government agencies, NGOs and local communities and carries out transboundary activities such as capacity building of local people and guard personnel on both sides of the border. Apart from technical support, the Group for the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos also provides financial support.

After fifteen years of integrated work, the nesting colonies have been safeguarded from the threats posed by egg collection, poaching and mining. Mining companies have financed a number of activities and have also modified some of their destructive mining practices which have caused detrimental effects on the colonies in the past. Educational campaigns have also been effective in building awareness among the local Atacameños communities (on the Chilean side) and Aymara communities (on the Bolivian side) which now actively participate in the protection of the flamingos' colonies during the nesting season. The communities provide support during the yearly census work and the ringing of juvenile flamingos in order to monitor the seasonal migration between the two countries.

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New IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidelines on transboundary conservation



In May 2015, IUCN published a new book, *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach* that aims to help transboundary conservation practitioners and those intending to become involved in initiating, managing and governing transboundary conservation programmes. The publication combines the most current scientific thinking with practices from around the globe and offers new understanding of transboundary conservation principles, supported by 33 practical examples reflecting a variety of situations. It is published within a renowned IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas' (WCPA) Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series.

Principal editors and authors of the Guidelines are: **Maja Vasiljević**, Chair of WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group and Director of Eco Horizon NGO, **Kevan Zunckel**, Consultant at the Zunckel Ecological & Environmental Services, **Matthew McKinney**, Director of the University of Montana's Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy, **Boris Erg**, Director of IUCN South-Eastern Europe, **Michael Schoon**, Assistant Professor at Arizona State University's School of Sustainability, and **Tatjana Rosen Michel**, Director

of the Panthera's Snow Leopard Program. With more than 100 experts contributing to the development of the Guidelines in various capacities, the book reflects a truly participatory approach. The main collaborating institution in the development of the Guidelines was the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). ICIMOD's staff, Sunita Chaudhary, Nakul Chettri, Rajan Kotru, Nawraj Pradhan, Krishna Prasad Oli, Gopal S. Rawat, and Eklabya Sharma, contributed significantly to nearly all chapters.

The Guidelines were published as part of a project started in 2013, coordinated by the WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, and funded by the MAVA Foundation, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) through the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), and IUCN WCPA. Apart from the development of the Guidelines, the project included organisation of an international expert workshop (held in Austria in 2014 with support of the hosts, Thayatal National Park and Podyji National Park), and presentation of the book during the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014.

Download the publication here: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/PAG-023.pdf>

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WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group at the World Parks Congress



Best Practice Guidelines prelaunch © Rahimatsah Amat



Charlotte Karibuhoye © Rahimatsah Amat



Emma Doye and Orisha Joseph © Rahimatsah Amat



TBC SG members meeting

After months of preparation, WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group (TBC SG) successfully organised three events during the IUCN World Parks Congress (WPC) in Sydney, Australia, November 2014.

Thanks to the support provided by MAVA Foundation and Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) through German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), TBC SG convened a pre-launch event of the WCPA Best Practice Guidelines No. 23, *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach*. Key contents and findings in the Guidelines were presented by the publication's co-editors and co-authors who attended the Congress: Boris Erg, Matthew McKinney, Maja Vasilijević and Kevan Zunckel. Introductory speeches were provided by the project donors, Charlotte Karibuhoye (MAVA Foundation) and Uwe Riecken (BfN), while the keynote address was given by Jeff Mow (Glacier National Park). The audience widely welcomed the forthcoming Guidelines.

Several key recommendations came out of this event: to develop a comprehensive database on Transboundary Conservation Areas, to develop guidance on monitoring and evaluation of transboundary conservation programmes, to offer guidance on legal implications in cooperation with IUCN Commission on Environmental Law, and to engage with Biodiversity and Peace Initiative.

The second workshop, Governance of Transboundary Conservation Areas, was organised jointly by TBC SG and Southern African Development Community (SADC). After the introductory presentation on transboundary governance, six cases from different geographical regions presented various models of transboundary governance. Presenters include Nakul Chettri, Handrij Härtel, Benjamin Kahn, Jakub Kašpar, Kari Lahti, Matthew McKinney, Gary Tabor, Kevan Zunckel, Sandra Valenzuela, and Maja Vasilijević, with Boris Erg as moderator. This was followed by regional mini-workshops in which the participants discussed pressing issues related to governance.



Gary Tabor © Rahimatsah Amat



Participants at transboundary governance workshop © Rahimatsah Amat



Participants at transboundary Best Practice Guidelines event © Rahimatsah Amat



Handrij Härtel and Jakub Kašpar © Rahimatsah Amat



TBC SG meeting © Rahimatsah Amat



Jeff Mow © Rahimatsah Amat

TBC SG also organised an informal meeting of its members, coordinated by Rahimatsah Amat, TBC SG Regional Coordinator for Asia. The meeting was attended by 22 members and served as a valuable opportunity for members to meet their colleagues, some for the first time, and discuss relevant issues with regards to TBC SG.

Apart from these events organised or co-organised by TBC SG, the Specialist Group's members were invited to contribute to many other workshops convened by different institutions, e.g. the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and WCPA Connectivity Conservation Network.

The two formal events organised by TBC SG were part of Stream 6 on Governance and TBC SG members provided inputs to the recommendations of this Stream. Recommendations from all of the Congress Streams and Themes (twelve in total) form part of the final WPC output, the Promise of Sydney. The key elements of the Governance Stream's conclusions where transboundary conservation is noted are:

- Preamble, where it is recognized that transboundary governance is essential to conserving nature

- Recommendation 7, where transboundary conservation governance models are acknowledged as a way to conserve transboundary ecosystems and migratory species
- Recommendation 12, where transboundary cooperation is noted as a way to combat transnational wildlife crime,
- Recommendation 18, where key parties are called to develop a comprehensive database of Transboundary Conservation Areas.

Presentations from the workshops are available at:

www.tbpa.net/page.php?ndx=26

Promise of Sydney is available at:

worldparkscongress.org/about/promise_of_sydney.html

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Little Sydney: Protecting Nature in Europe



© Donau Auen National Park

Hainburg/Donau-Auen National Park in Austria hosted the Little Sydney: Protecting Nature in Europe conference, held from 28-31 May 2015. The event was organised by IUCN and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in collaboration with the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. It built on the outcomes of the IUCN World Parks Congress, held in Sydney, Australia in November 2014. About 250 participants from over 35 countries attended the conference and explored further the World Parks Congress' outcomes of particular relevance for Europe.

With regards to transboundary conservation, the Little Sydney conference launched the IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidelines No. 23, *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach*. Chair of WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, Maja Vasilijević, held a presentation during a plenary session, presenting the Guidelines and its contents. The first printed copies of the book were also distributed during the event.

EUROPARC Federation organised a workshop titled Transboundary parks: not only to understand each other, but to cooperate, chaired by Jakub Kašpar and Handrij Härtel from EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe. The workshop resulted with concrete action points to forward transboundary conservation in Europe.

Another interesting workshop session related to transboundary conservation was organised by UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre Inclusion of biodiversity conservation at land- and seascape levels into global database. Marcelo Goncalves Lima and Nina Bohla (both from UNEP-WCMC) presented its current project on mapping the connectivity conservation areas, while Maja Vasilijević presented the current situation regarding the assessment of Transboundary Conservation Areas and the need to create a comprehensive and sound new database.

The conference was a good balance of formal talks, networking opportunities, productive discussions and good initial conclusions. Little Sydney is not considered a one-off event but a long-term process aimed at mobilizing European contributions to the Promise of Sydney.

More information is available here: http://iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/europe/little_sydney_conference/

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Transboundary cooperation to reach goal Tx2



© Vivek R. Sinha / WWF

Tigers are one of the most iconic animals on the planet. One hundred years ago, there were 100,000 wild tigers, but today as few as 3,200 remain. The shocking 97% decline is driven by rampant poaching and habitat loss. In 2010, governments of tiger range countries decided it was time to take a stand. The most ambitious and visionary species conservation goal ever was set: to double the number of wild tigers by 2022—the next year of the tiger. The goal is called Tx2.

WWF launched The Tigers Alive Initiative in 2009 to drive a major push behind the goal of Tx2 and since 2010, excitement has propelled the work on the ground and in conference halls. WWF focuses on 13 priority tiger landscapes, six of which are transboundary. WWF has been instrumental in catalyzing action in Indo-Nepal, Russia-China and Indo-Bhutan boundaries. Evidence is growing to support the achievability of Tx2. India, Nepal and Russia have already proved the resilience of tiger

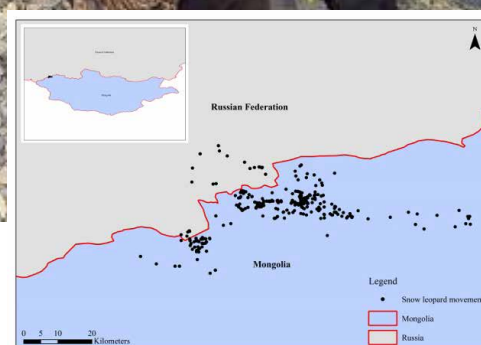
populations with national increases and camera trap footage shows tigers are returning to China from Russia.

But these site specific examples are not enough to recover tigers globally. Next year marks the half way point of Tx2. The six years leading up to it have laid the foundations and 2016 will be pivotal if wild tigers are to be doubled by 2022. This is an exciting moment where Tx2 have managed to halt the rapid decline of tigers. Now what is needed is a monumental push forward to ensure they increase, and continue to increase, up and beyond 2022. Sustained commitment and dedication from all tiger range governments is critical and so are passion, enthusiasm and unwavering support from the public.

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Where has 'White' gone?



In autumn 2014, Mongolian and Russian specialists collared a three year old snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) female with signal transmitter on Tsagaan Shuvuut Mountain. The snow leopard was named 'White', a local symbol of generosity. In early spring 2015, 'White' stopped transmitting signals and has since then been sought by the researchers.

Protection and study of snow leopard in the Altai-Sayan ecoregion (including China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Russia) is one of important WWF's strategic objectives. The snow leopard inhabits often very high mountains, steep and rocky terrain of Central Asia, while in the Altai-Sayan it can live at the elevation of only 500-600 m above sea level in suitable habitats. Snow leopard population in Central Asia decreased approximately 20% due to habitat and prey loss, poaching and retaliation killing. WWF's Altai-Sayan Ecoregional Strategy 2012-2020 thus set a goal to increase the snow leopard population in the Russian part of the ecoregion by 25%, in the Kazakh and Chinese part

by at least 150%, and to keep the population stable in the Mongolian part, by 2020.

The movement of 'White' (see a map above) clearly shows transboundary aspects, and thus the regional approach in protecting the species is of the highest importance. Specialist undertook two expeditions in order to trace the missing animal. Total of 13 safe snares were placed along with camera traps, but without any results. One possibility is that 'White' might have died in a cave, which would explain the loss of signal. During collaring in 2014, it was confirmed that the wild cat had toxoplasmosis, a dangerous disease which might have caused the death. The search for the animal, as well as the effort to protect the species with transboundary range, continues.

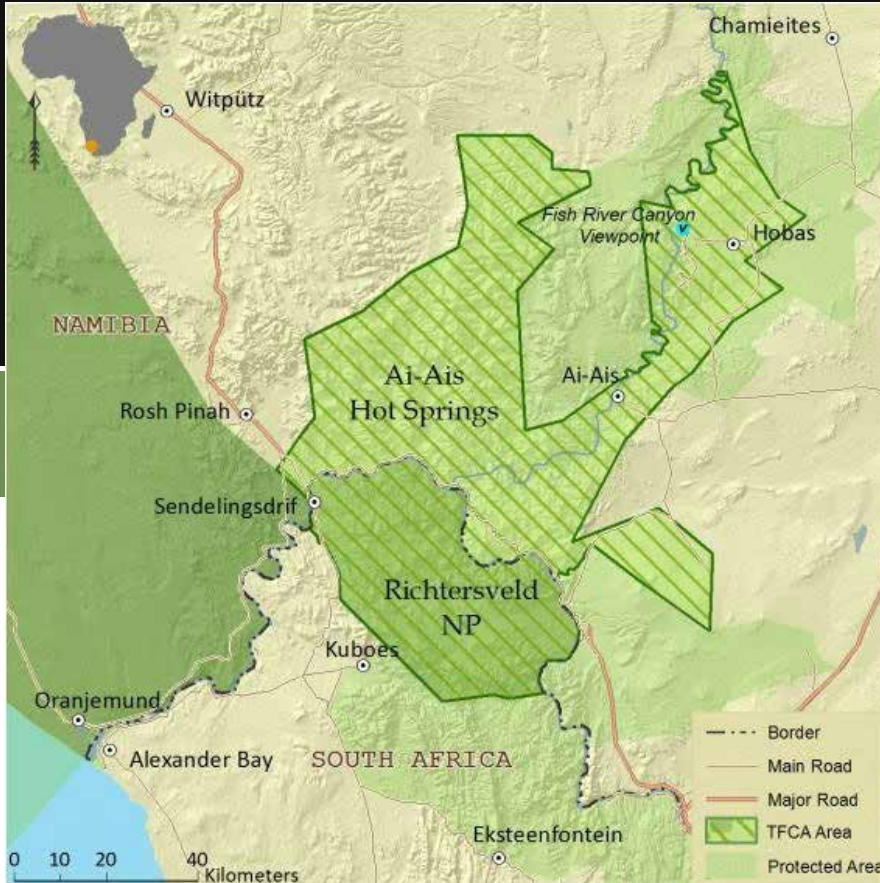
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/Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park: transboundary radio communication



In every protected area radio communication is of utmost importance, even more so when protected areas are situated at an international border. The /Ai/Ais-Richtersveld Transfrontier Park (ARTP) shared by Namibia and South Africa, embarked on a process to improve communication between the two parks. The first ever transboundary radio licence for a Transfrontier Park within the Southern African Development Community was issued.

Funding was the biggest stumbling block but with the assistance of the South African National Parks Honorary Rangers and Namplace (Namibian NGO), the system was installed. All vehicles, offices, camps and staff now have radios which has made the ARTP more functional as a Transfrontier Park. From a transboundary law enforcement point of view, it has increased efficiency. Most joint law enforcement takes place along the Orange (Gariiep) River, the common boundary. Due to the efficiency of the patrols, illegal fishing has dropped considerably. For security purposes, the radios are programmed so that law enforcement radios are not heard by unrelated staff with radios.

With the effort to make the ARTP more financially viable, a number of events have been initiated, including hiking trails, Desert Knights mountain bike tour and Desert Kayak trails along the Orange River. Safety is of utmost importance as these events take place in an extremely harsh environment of mountain desert that is very isolated and not accessible by any form of motorised transport. Radio communication has improved response times in search and rescue operations and medical emergencies with many lives being saved.

Transboundary radio communication is a must for all Transboundary Conservation Areas and in order to succeed, it takes good levels of cooperation between staff on the ground and the will to see it through, no matter what obstacles appear along the way.

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Joint Park Management Committee for increased collaboration in southern Africa



© Piet Theron

When neighbours take hands, good things can happen, as has been proven time and again when staff and management of the Kruger and Limpopo National Parks work together. This collaborative relationship was recently cemented when the first Joint Park Management Committee was established, and met in April 2015 for the first time. Its aim is to increase collaboration between the management of the Limpopo National Park in Mozambique, and neighbouring Kruger National Park in South Africa, already joined as integral parts of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park.

Particular issues that the Joint Park Management Committee will focus on include protection, conservation management, tourism development, community beneficiation, communication and fundraising. Yet, this is not the first time that management of these parks have joined hands. They have previously collaborated on a number of strategic anti-poaching interventions with great success. These have included improved transboundary collaboration and joint operations, joint training initiatives and the development of a joint communications system.

The establishment of the Joint Park Management Committee forms part of a Great Limpopo Transfrontier Park and Conservation Area institutional reform process, which will provide for the establishment of four Committees within the core areas of the transfrontier conservation area. The Committees will be responsible for the implementation of the operational guidelines, programmes and action plans assigned to them by Joint Management Board based on the political and policy directives. The International Treaty makes provision for other bodies to be established if required. The Park Management Committees will strengthen transboundary law enforcement and other joint management issues. They will not only facilitate the effective implementation of the objectives and guidelines of the International Treaty, but also seek to achieve a balance between political will, strategic guidance and effective implementation.

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New cooperation in Central and Eastern Europe established



© Jan Rejzek

Representatives of 26 protected areas, nature protection agencies and ministries from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, gathered in March 2015 in Šumava National Park to establish a new section of the EUROPARC Federation—EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe. The very place of the meeting was the place where only 25 years ago Iron Curtain was a reality.

The first Members' Assembly of EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe discussed and adopted the new section's statutes and work plan. It also elected the leadership for 2015-2017, with Czech Republic's Jakub Kašpar as President, Handrij Härtel as Vice-President and Michael Hošek as Coordinator. In subsequent years, leadership will pass on to Hungary and further on by alphabetical order of the member countries' names.

EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe operates as an informal association of the EUROPARC Federation members from that particular region. Invitation to join the network is open to all EUROPARC member countries from

the region, such as Austria, Croatia, Georgia, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine.

The new section aims to enhance the level of regional cooperation, joint project implementation and facilitate exchanges among section members. Transboundary conservation activities are one of the key interests of the new section. In late May 2015 EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe organized a workshop on transboundary conservation at IUCN's Little Sydney Conference in Hainburg, Austria. In June 2105, EUROPARC's TransParcNet Meeting will be organized in Šumava-Bayerischer Wald National Parks, while in October 2015 EUROPARC Central and Eastern Europe is going to organize a workshop on benefits generated by transboundary cooperation during the EUROPARC Federation Annual Conference in Regensburg, Germany.

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B3P summer programmes in south-eastern Europe



© Luigi Cekaj

A full summer lies ahead for B3P–Balkans Peace Park Project. As many will know, at the heart of B3P vision is a transboundary park in one of the most beautiful, but fragile, regions in Europe, an area of rugged mountains and green valleys spanning Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro, where the aim of this initiative is to support sustainable tourism and environmental cooperation. All the activities, however small-scale, aspire to add to that bigger picture.

Five summer programmes are planned. Two of them are in Albania, the first in the village of Valbona, which will be the first time to have led an education project in that community. It will be closely modelled on the B3P pioneering work in Thethi, where B3P Albania will be heading a programme. The other Albanian programme will be in Lepushe which will involve a group of Kosovar volunteers from American Corner.

But 2015 summer programmes are not limited to Albania. Back for a second year in August, and in response to the success of the first project last year, B3P volunteers will lead an education programme in Grbaja and Babino Polje in Montenegro. All the programmes, both in Albania and in Montenegro will be for children and young adults, with a marked emphasis on environmental thinking.

Next year B3P has ambitious plans. The idea is to try out a travelling summer programme, 'The B3P Caravan', which visits a number of communities in Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. The Caravan would listen to the concerns and aspirations of local people, disseminate information about the aims of the B3P, as well as being a focus for cultural celebration in each venue. This summer will see B3P volunteers making a reconnaissance journey to firm up the logistics of Caravan 2016.

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A partnership for conservation of Iguaçu/Iguazú National Parks



© Boris Erg

A partnership between WWF-Brazil, Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina (FVSA) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) established the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services Program in the Binational Corridor Iguaçu/Iguazú National Parks (Brazil/Argentina). The Program seeks to leverage the Biodiversity Vision for the Upper Paraná Ecoregion–Atlantic Forest.

The two national parks in Brazil and Argentina share the most extensive set of waterfalls in the world, and are home to species identified as threatened, such as the otter (*Lutra longicaudis*), the jaguar (*Panthera onca*) and the harpy eagle (*Harpy harpyja*). Because of these characteristics, and in particular the Iguaçu Falls, both parks were declared UNESCO Natural World Heritage Sites.

The first action of the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecosystem Services Program started in December 2014, and has Tamoios Inteligência Geográfica, a consulting company, as its implementing partner. The Program consists of a two-phase project and the initial activities indicate that there are continuing pressures on the forest fragments surrounding the parks and causing serious threats to connectivity and maintenance of

ecosystem services. Phase 1 also concluded that since the completion of the Biodiversity Vision, there have been important improvements in policies and instruments dealing with cooperation in the region in the last ten years.

It is expected that the implementation of the Program will lead to further promotion of the importance of conservation of the Iguaçu/Iguazú ecological corridor, stimulation of regional economy based on the value of ecosystem services that the parks provide, and strengthening the cooperation between the parks.

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Register for the 8th World Rangers Congress



The 8th World Ranger Congress of the International Ranger Federation (IRF) will be held in the United States in May 2016. The venue is the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado, just minutes from Rocky Mountain National Park.

The Congress will focus on the theme of connecting parks, rangers and communities. Delegates from more than 40 countries will explore the different ways rangers and protected area professionals are actively protecting and preserving the world's natural and cultural resources from ever-increasing threats like climate change, poaching and loss of habitat. Participants may also register for shadow assignments, field trips and professional training before and after the Congress.

The event, hosted by the Association of National Park Rangers and supported by the US National Park Service, will provide rangers and protected area professionals the opportunity to learn new skills, share knowledge and best practices, create lasting partnerships, and be inspired by their colleagues. The Congress will offer live video feeds from the plenary sessions and engagement through social media to encourage participation from rangers all over the world.

Early registration is now open on the Congress website: www.worldrangercongressusa.com
Information on the program, field trips, and travel can be found there or on Facebook at "World Ranger Congress USA 2016".

Meg Weesner

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Ranger training opportunities at the 8th World Ranger Congress



Together with the World Ranger Congress to be held in May, 2016 in Colorado, USA, the Center for Protected Area Management at Colorado State University (CPAM) will be organizing two nine-day ranger training courses in English and in Spanish.

These courses will offer hands-on learning opportunities for rangers from around the world, provide rangers with an extended technical visit to a variety of types of protected areas demonstrating different management approaches in the western United States, and allow rangers to form a community of practice and learn together with colleagues from around the world.

The pre-Congress training in English will visit the western part of Colorado and Utah including Mesa Verde, Arches and Great Sand Dunes national parks and other protected areas managed by federal, state and local agencies. Dates are 12-21 May 2016.

The post-Congress training for Spanish-speaking rangers will visit Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and other protected areas in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. Dates are 27 May – 5 June 2016.

Applications are due by 31 October 2015 but CPAM recommends you apply as early as possible to increase the possibility of scholarship support and to ensure adequate time for applying for US visas where needed. Learn more about the courses and submit an application here: <http://warnercnr.colostate.edu/world-ranger-congress-2016>

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Maloti-Drakensberg: from a Transfrontier Park to a transboundary World Heritage Site



© Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Programme

In 2006, the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Programme witnessed the declaration of the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Park linking the more than 2,400 km² uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site on the South African side and the 65 km² Sehlabathebe National Park on the Lesotho side. This was complemented by the development of the first Joint Management Plan for the Transfrontier Park and the establishment of a Joint Management Committee, with representatives from the two countries to oversee the implementation of the management plan.

Less than ten years down the road, the two countries celebrated the inscription of the Transfrontier Park as a UNESCO transboundary World Heritage Site. In 2013, UNESCO World Heritage Committee approved the proposed extension of the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site to include the Sehlabathebe National Park. The extension was based on the same selection criteria that were the basis for inscribing the uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site back then in the year 2000: criterion (i) that acknowledges the wealth rock art of the site, criterion (iii) that acknowledges the heritage

of the San people, criterion (vii) that recognizes the exceptional beauty of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park with soaring basaltic buttresses, incisive dramatic cutbacks and golden sandstone ramparts, and criterion (x) that recognizes the importance of the transboundary park for in situ conservation of biological diversity.

The first State of Conservation report for the Maloti-Drakensberg Park transboundary World Heritage Site was prepared by the two States Parties and based on the draft decision of the World Heritage Committee (available at the following link: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc/3254>), it seems to have been well received. The draft decision specifically welcomes the cooperation of South Africa and Lesotho in updating the Maloti-Drakensberg Joint Management Plan and also welcomes the progress regarding transboundary cooperation. The World Heritage Committee will meet in Bonn, Germany in June/July 2015.

Rabson Dhlodhlo

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Towards the establishment of Witsishoek Community Conservation Area



© Srđan Marinčić

On the Free State side of the border of the Maloti-Drakensberg Park World Heritage Site (Lesotho/South Africa) a Community Conservation Area (CCA) is slowly but surely taking shape with the facilitation of the Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project's Coordination Unit. The proposed 260 km² Witsishoek CCA includes communal land under the management of the Batlokoa and the Bakwena Traditional Authorities in Qwaqwa. The area constitutes an important buffer zone for the World Heritage Site. The week of 25 to 29 May 2015 will hopefully be remembered as marking an important milestone as the communities will be meeting, with facilitation from the Department of Rural Development and Land Reform and Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project, to formally confirm their agreement towards the establishment of the CCA which will be declared as a protected environment as per the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act (Act No. 57 of 2003).

The whole idea of the Witsishoek CCA was borne out of efforts to further consolidate the support that was being provided to the Batlokoa community through the rehabilitation of their Witsishoek Mountain Resort sitting

right on the edge of the World Heritage Site but in the Free State Province. Prior to the start of the rehabilitation process, the Batlokoa community owned resort was highly dilapidated with occupancy rates of around 10%, if not less. Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Project's support to the resort started with the development of a business plan which was followed by a presentation to an investor's conference in 2008. It was at this conference that Transfrontier Parks Destinations, a private company that invests in tourism facilities in a couple of Transfrontier Parks and transfrontier conservation areas, took up the challenge to invest and provide management support to the resort. This was also followed by a grant support for rehabilitation of the resort from the then Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. The rehabilitation process is expected to be completed by the end of 2015 and already occupancy rates are reported to have more than doubled.

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Wilderness Academy in Austria



© Tomasz Pezold

European wilderness protection has a relatively short history. The focus on European wilderness started to increase when the European Parliament adopted a special resolution on 3 February 2009. This resolution resulted in the approval of the Agenda for Wilderness and Wildland, which included 24 recommended actions.

The Wilderness Academy Days, a unique European event, will be hosted by Gesäuse National Park in Austria from 30 September until 2 October 2015. There is still a huge lack of knowledge in relation to wilderness protection in Europe. Where are the wilderness areas? What are the main threats and major opportunities to enhance the protection? Can wilderness be restored? What are the management principles for wilderness? Is there enough practical experience to share? These are just some of the questions, which will be addressed at the 2nd European Wilderness Academy Days.

Among other sessions, two sessions at the Wilderness Academy Days deserve special attention of transboundary experts: (1) the role of connectivity in improving the protection of wilderness in Europe, and (2) best practices of transboundary cooperation for preservation of wilderness for future generations.

More information about the event and submission of presentations is available at: www.wilderness.academy
Early bird registration is open until 1 August 2015.

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Join the Wildrun in the Maloti-Drakensberg



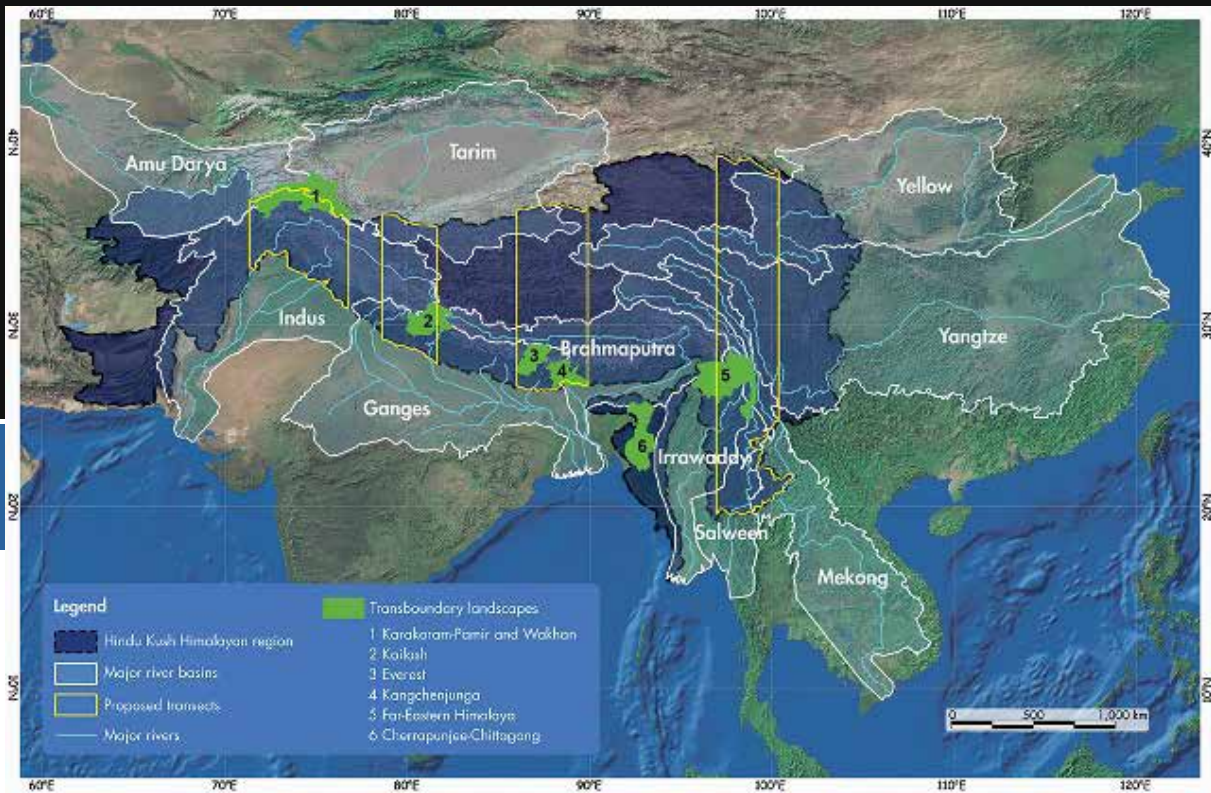
© Maja Vasiljević

A challenge for, not only the extremely fit and tough but also the highly motivated, enthusiastic and adventurous is in the pipeline up and down the Maloti and Drakensberg mountains, and through the transboundary World Heritage Site (Lesotho/South Africa).

A 3-day +/-70 km run up and down the mountains is being planned for 2016. The run which is being planned for about 80 runners will include homestays in a community on the Lesotho side for one of the three nights. The purpose of this event is to promote Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier Park as an adventure tourism destination and support community development efforts. The event will be piloted in 2015, with the intention of developing it into a flagship cross-border tourism product for this transfrontier conservation area.

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The Hi-LIFE for the Himalaya



Characterized by elements of the three global biodiversity hotspots—Himalayan, Indo-Burma, and Mountains of South-West China, the Far-eastern Himalayan Landscape spans an area of more than 70,000 km² across Gaoligongshan Mountains in China, Namdapha Tiger Reserve and adjoining areas in India to Northern Kachin States of Myanmar. The landscape is abundant with natural and pristine vegetation with more than two-third forest coverage, and it provides a habitat for a large number of globally threatened species. About half of this vast area is under formal protection with contiguous protected areas across the three countries.

The transboundary Landscape Initiative in the Far-eastern Himalaya, the Hi-LIFE, is a conservation and development initiative jointly developed by International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and partners in China, India and Myanmar, and supported by GIZ, ADA and UKAID. The Hi-LIFE contributes to the objectives of the transboundary landscape framework—to bring about effective governance and management, generating ecosystem services and livelihood benefits. The landscape is home to culturally and ethnically diverse tribes and communities, majority of whose livelihoods rely on natural resources. While shifting cultivation is dominant, extraction of natural resources from the wild, although integral to traditions and culture

of people in the landscape, has become unsustainable. Removal of timber and non-timber forest materials, together with deforestation and habitat fragmentation, is one of crucial conservation and development issues within the Hi-LIFE.

The Hi-LIFE's strategic development dates back to 2008 where transboundary prospect was discussed with several global conservation partners during the International Mountain Biodiversity Conference. The Initiative completed the start-up phase with the development of the Regional Cooperation Framework and other operational strategies and plans developed through series of consultative processes. The Initiative seeks to strengthen further regional cooperation among countries to address transboundary and socio-culturally driven issues not only through promoting linkages between ecosystem services and human well-being, but also by building intersectoral partnerships and synergies for conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits.

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Academic expedition across Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro



© International Peace Park Expeditions

In May 2015, International Peace Park Expeditions and Ohio University embarked on the accredited academic expedition 'Environmental Peacebuilding and Sustainability in the Balkans' with 11 students from 4 universities. Starting in Washington D.C. students met with experts from the Environmental Change and Security Program, the Environmental Law Institute, US Agency for International Development, US National Park Service—Office for International Affairs, and Conservation International's Policy Center for Environment and Peace. Students formed groups around topics of water, forestry and ecotourism to complete the IUCN transboundary conservation assessment.

In Pristina, Kosovo, the expedition visited the US Embassy, while in Peja, the local partner ERA Group hosted lectures from Kosovo's Environmental Protection Agency, a former Deputy Minister of Culture, Youth and Sport, and an EcoTourism operator.

In Albania the expedition took a ferry ride down Lake Komani and discussed hydroelectric dams, which produce 70% of the country's electricity. The students met with the water advisor to the Prime Minister, the director of a women's empowerment organization, the scientist who coordinates

Protecting People, Nature, Environment of Albania and the forestry expert who runs the NGO Connecting Natural Values and People. In the remote mountain village of Thethi, the students had the first of three cross-cultural homestays with local families in each country. After visiting a waterfall and Bronze Age archaeological site the expedition followed the Peaks of the Balkans, a transboundary ecotourism trail, into Montenegro. The Director of Prokletije National Park and the Forestry Inspector shared their strategies combatting illegal logging and hunting. The expedition trekked across the border back into Kosovo to ERA's Cabin to learn about the transboundary Balkan Lynx project, and the challenges gaining local community support for the founding of Bjeshket e Namuna National Park. After the final homestay, the expedition returned to Peja where students presented the findings of their transboundary conservation assessment to the Bjeshket e Namuna National Park Director, ERA staff and Green Team Volunteers, and other local NGO leaders.

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 Search #2015BalkansExpedition

EUROPARC's Transboundary Parks Programme—off to new endeavours



© EUROPARC Federation

The EUROPARC Transboundary Following Natures Design Programme and Certificate have been developed to promote and facilitate transboundary cooperation between European protected areas. EUROPARC's certified Transboundary Protected Areas (TBPAs) have shown excellent results in managing the continent's natural and cultural resources effectively in collaboration. Only recently one of them, Maas-Schwalm-Nette Nature Park (Germany/The Netherlands), received honours from the European Commission, being nominated as the finalist for the Natura 2000 awards in the category 'Networking and cross-border collaboration'.

Currently 23 protected areas forming 10 TBPAs in 13 countries are joined in the EUROPARC Transboundary Programme, recognising the Programme's benefits: 77% of TBPAs confirm an overall positive impact of the Programme, and 69% of TBPAs feel their biodiversity-monitoring improved.

In 2015 EUROPARC continues to strengthen its Transboundary Programme on a number of fronts. New projects are being developed with members to foster transboundary cooperation in TBPAs and fruitful networking

between experienced and less experienced parks. A set of fact sheets has also been recently created, showcasing the contribution of TBPAs to Europe's Green Infrastructure Strategy by fostering habitat connection through their common work (available on EUROPARC website). Ongoing EUROPARC work includes the 7th TransParcNet meeting, to be hosted by Bavarian Forest and Šumava National Parks in České Žleby. Once again, it will be a great opportunity to facilitate capacity building between European TBPAs, exchanging experience and best practice.

Finally, the strength of transboundary collaboration has been highlighted during the European Day of Parks 2015. The Presidents of Austria, Hungary and Slovenia celebrated together this special day and invited EUROPARC to the trilateral park between Goričko Regional Park (Slovenia), Raab Regional Park (Austria) and Órseg National Park (Hungary). A great message and recognition for the work of TBPAs and for nature conservation in Europe!

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SADC Transfrontier Conservation Area Guidelines adopted



© Kevan Zunckel

In September 2013 transfrontier conservation practitioners from the member nations of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) agreed to form the SADC Transfrontier Conservation Area (TFCA) Network with the aim of facilitating the coordination and collaboration on efforts to establish, develop and manage transfrontier conservation initiatives between member nations. As part of this process the practitioners recognised the need for a guideline on the establishment and development of TFCA initiatives between SADC member states. To this end funding was secured from the German government through the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), and the SADC Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources facilitated the process of procuring the services of a professional service provider to compile the guidelines.

A fully inclusive and consultative process was initiated at a SADC TFCA Network meeting in Johannesburg, South Africa, in April 2014, where a table of contents was presented, discussed and agreed upon, as well as the

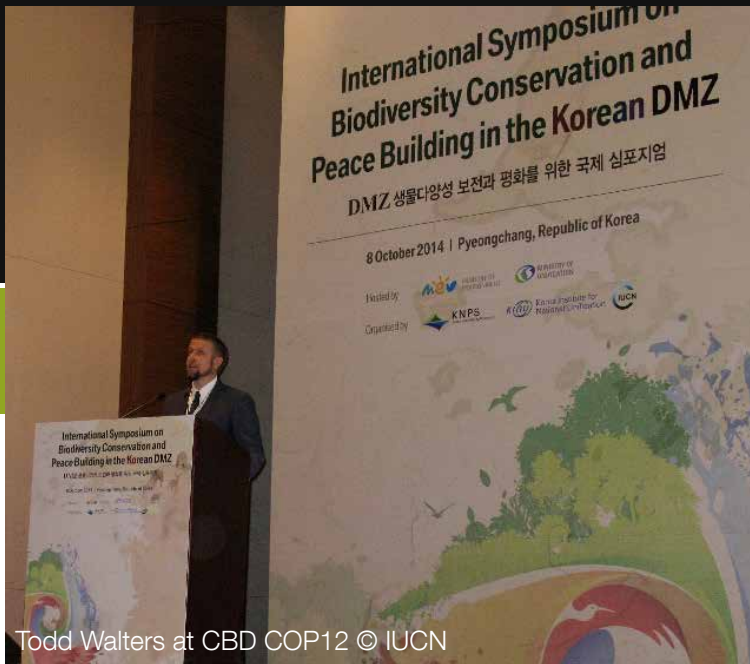
process required to compile the guidelines. Shortly after this at the end of April 2014 a workshop was hosted by the Angolan government in their capital Luanda, where TFCA practitioners from the SADC member states contributed to the content of the guidelines. On the basis of these contributions the service provider was able to undertake further research and information gathering to further inform the content and to produce a first draft. This was circulated for critical review and to ensure preparation for a follow up workshop, this time hosted by Lesotho in their capital Maseru in June 2014. A systematic review of the first draft was undertaken in plenary after which a final draft was produced. The guidelines were adopted by the SADC Technical Committee on Wildlife in May 2015.

A copy of the SADC TFCA Guidelines may be obtained off the SADC TFCA Network portal at www.tfcaportal.org

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Transboundary conservation helping promote peace and cooperation



Todd Walters at CBD COP12 © IUCN

'Conservation goals can be achieved across international boundaries through cooperative models, including enhanced nature conservation outcomes, sustainable socio-economic development and the promotion of peace'. This was the core of a statement made by Todd Walters on behalf of Maja Vasilijević of IUCN WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group at the International Symposium on Biodiversity Conservation and Peace Building in the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The symposium took place during the 12th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014.

The Statement on Transboundary Conservation for Biodiversity and Peace called for the engagement of all relevant sectors of society in the governance of Transboundary Conservation Areas, as well as for promotion of generation of social, cultural and economic benefits for local communities and indigenous peoples through transboundary conservation and cooperation. Specially referring to the Korean DMZ, the Statement encouraged mutual cooperation and the exchange of knowledge among scientists, protected area managers, civil society and other interested parties from the Korean Peninsula and other countries in the region, with the view of the future Korea DMZ Eco-Peace Park being at the heart of cooperative efforts in north-east Asia. This will help people

recognise the important natural and cultural values and the historical importance of the area as well as connecting it to biodiversity conservation in the wider region.

Jane Smart, Global Director of IUCN's Biodiversity Conservation Group, spoke on 'Harmonization of Biodiversity Conservation and Peace in Transboundary Protected Areas', signalling the support of international organisations like IUCN to promote transboundary dialogue at local, national and regional levels.

IUCN encouraged the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to work towards consensus and to apply for international recognition of the DMZ as an UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. It was also advised that the two countries work towards establishing a permanent ecological monitoring station and sites within the DMZ to foster scientific and educational cooperation between scientists and students and the international community.

The Statement on Transboundary Conservation for Biodiversity and Peace is available here: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/biodiversity_and_peace_statement_final_approved_at_cbd_event.pdf

Watch the video: <https://vimeo.com/110778947>

New international forum to feature transboundary conservation



© Boris Erg

In early July 2015 the inaugural World Leader's Conservation Forum (WLCF) will take place in Jeju, South Korea. This initiative stems from Jeju's hosting of the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2012 and reflects Korea's growing desire to facilitate global conservation action. The Forum has a strong focus on transboundary conservation and the role of protected areas in fostering international peace and cooperation.

The programme includes an expert session on Day 1, which WCPA Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group is helping to prepare, and which will then inform a World Leader's Dialogue entitled 'Peace: Facilitating Transboundary Conservation and Peace-building' on Day 2. Hopefully, the event will encourage participation from across the transboundary conservation community and provide an excellent opportunity to delve more deeply into these issues. Timing is good as it comes hot on the heels of the recently launched new IUCN WCPA Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines No. 23, *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach*, providing a great opportunity for these to be showcased.

The topic and Korean venue means a strong focus on the Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) and the longstanding aspirations to create a transboundary mechanism that supports conservation and peace. In this respect, the forum will advance our understanding of the governance, advocacy and security considerations of successful transboundary initiatives in conflict zones. The WLCF is a rare new global offering which aims to run annually and become the equivalent of the influential World Economic Forum, a kind of 'Davos of conservation'. In that sense, it can pose the question 'what do we want the world's leaders to do with respect to transboundary conservation and parks for peace?'

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TB eNEWS is prepared on a bi-annual basis. All issues are available at Global Transboundary Conservation Network's website administered by TBC SG: www.tbpa.net

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Guidelines for contributions

The TB eNEWS contains information on your activities and projects relevant to the mandate of the WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group. You are welcome to send us updates of transboundary conservation-related projects and initiatives you are involved with, review relevant past and announce future events, and provide information on publications or funding opportunities.

We welcome contributions that contain up to 320 words in length. Please also include graphic additions (e.g. photograph, logo, map) in size of minimum 500 kB and indicating the credits. All articles should contain the name of the author, contact email and website link (if applicable).

This newsletter is prepared by the WCPA's Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group, which reserves the right to edit and shorten the texts as appropriate. The authors of articles are responsible for accuracy of the content of contributions.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Maja Vasiljević

*Chair, Transboundary Conservation Specialist Group
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