



IUCN World Conservation Congress

Abu Dhabi 2025

October 9–15, 2025

Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre, United Arab Emirates, and online

Press Kit



The IUCN World Conservation Congress

The IUCN World Conservation Congress is one of **the largest gatherings of nature conservation experts**, leaders and decision-makers from government, civil society, Indigenous peoples, business, and academia in the world.

The event is the democratic forum for the global **conservation community to express its views and decide and act on the latest in conservation science, practice and policy** - shaping the global conservation and sustainable development agendas for decades to come.

The 2025 Congress will serve as a **key milestone toward the implementation of global biodiversity and climate targets**. With hybrid participation options, and a sustainability focus, it aims to be the most accessible, inclusive, and green edition to date.

Welcome Message

Dear Members of the Media,

It is with great pride and anticipation that we welcome you to the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, hosted by the United Arab Emirates in its vibrant capital, Abu Dhabi.

It is both a professional and personal honour to witness our nation serve as the global stage for one of the most influential gatherings on nature conservation. This Congress arrives at a time of critical urgency and profound opportunity for our planet, just five years ahead of the 2030 deadline for our shared climate and biodiversity goals.

The UAE's commitment to environmental leadership is embedded in our national vision. From the Net Zero 2050 Strategic Initiative to our Green Agenda 2030, and through hosting landmark events such as COP28, we have demonstrated our commitment to address some of the planet's most pressing challenges, both through domestic action and also by fostering international collaboration.

With its diverse ecosystems and heritage of ecological stewardship, the UAE is a fitting host for the collaborative spirit and innovation that define the IUCN Congress. This year's themes, ranging from climate overshoot and equity to nature-positive transitions, resonate deeply with our priorities. We believe that bold action, rooted in science and technological innovation and informed by local knowledge, can



generate real-world solutions that honour both nature and humanity. Through this Congress, we hope to build new partnerships, amplify underrepresented voices, and catalyse actions that leave an enduring legacy.

To the media professionals joining us; your role in shaping public discourse is enormous. Responsible nature journalism plays a critical role in shaping public understanding of environmental issues and in highlighting the urgency to address them. Your presence here is a validation of your commitment to nature. We want you to be the voice of nature. Voices that can transform the conversations and inspirations from Abu Dhabi into compelling stories for the rest of the world.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to each of you. May this Congress be a moment of purpose, connection, and hope, for both people and planet.

Sincerely,

H.E. Dr. Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri

IUCN Councillor West Asia Region



Leadership Quotes

H.E. Dr. Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri, Secretary General, Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) and IUCN Councillor West Asia Region

“Hosting the IUCN World Conservation Congress in the capital of UAE, Abu Dhabi is momentous. It is both a privilege and a responsibility. It reflects our nation’s enduring bond with nature and our unwavering commitment to safeguard it. “This IUCN Congress is a call to action. Action for nature, for unity and for a future shaped by hope and aspirations for nature and humanity to coexist.”

Dr. Grethel Aguilar

Director General, IUCN

“The IUCN Congress is where science meets policy, and where solutions are scaled. The time for incremental change is over—we are here to set the pace for bold transformative global action.”

“Inclusivity, innovation, and urgency will define the 2025 Congress. We are proud to convene the voices of Indigenous peoples, scientists, youth, and leaders in one shared mission as we come together to build a world where nature and people thrive as one.”

Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak

President, IUCN (and Managing Director, EAD)

“The Congress in Abu Dhabi is a chance to demonstrate what is possible when science, policy, and collective action come together in service of nature. IUCN’s Members represent a powerful force for positive change — bringing diverse knowledge, practical tools, and a shared commitment to a future where nature and development are not at odds, but in balance.”



Why the UAE?

A Natural Host for Global Environmental Leadership

The United Arab Emirates stands at the intersection of innovation, ambition, and ecological responsibility. As the first nation in the MENA region to commit to Net Zero by 2050, the UAE has embedded sustainability into its national fabric—through policies like the UAE Green Agenda 2030, the National Climate Change Plan, and leadership roles at global climate summits, including COP21, COP26, and COP28.

Hosting the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 reflects the UAE's growing stature as a convenor of bold climate action and multilateral environmental dialogue. With its unique biodiversity, from desert ecosystems to marine habitats, and a legacy of conservation, the UAE provides not only the platform but also the credibility to advance the goals of the Congress.

The UAE's hosting of this Congress is more than symbolic — it is strategic. It underscores the country's commitment to nature-positive development, to bridging North-South dialogue, and to creating inclusive spaces where policymakers, scientists, Indigenous voices, and youth can co-create solutions that work for both people and planet.

Key Speakers/Confirmed Participants

A diverse group of speakers from across conservation science, policy, and practice has also been confirmed for the Congress.

Key speakers include:

- **Razan Al Mubarak, IUCN President**
- **Dr Grethel Aguilar, IUCN Director General**
- **Amna bint Abdullah Al Dahak, UAE Minister of Climate Change and Environment**
- **David Obura, Chair of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and Founding Director of CORDIO East Africa**
- **Juan Carlos Navarro, Minister of Environment, Panama**



- **Alessandra Yupanqui, Andean activist, and Editor-in-Chief of *Sapiens***
- **Eric Jing, Chairman and CEO, Ant Group**

Speakers will contribute insights and perspectives across the Congress themes, helping shape policy and practice through dialogue, knowledge exchange, and collective decision-making.

Why Should I Attend?

At the IUCN World Conservation Congress, more than 1,400 State and non-state organisations will make decisions that are expected to influence global conservation policy for the years to come.

- Covering the event gives you access to high-level participants, government, science, business and civil society leaders, Indigenous peoples representatives and conservation experts from across the globe.
- New studies, reports and policy announcements are expected, including **an update to the Red List of Threatened Species and the launch of the next World Heritage Outlook report.**
- A chance to cover [100+ motions](#) on a range of growing global issues.

The Congress in numbers

8	4	100+	500+	70+	1400+	140+
Days	High-level dialogues	Motions	Sessions	Interactive exhibitions	Members	Countries



Key Congress Dates & Components

The Congress will feature several components, each playing a vital role in shaping the conservation agenda:

- **Forum (9–12 October):** The Forum addresses the economic, social, scientific and technical aspects of a wide range of issues related to nature conservation.
- **Members' Assembly (9th then 13–15 October):** The highest decision-making body of IUCN where Members vote on motions that guide the Union's work and elect the next President.
- **Exhibition (9–13 October):** A dynamic space displaying cutting-edge conservation initiatives, projects and partnerships.

There will also be a series of summits across the opening days of the event, including: The first [World Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nature](#), a [Business Summit](#), a [Youth Summit](#), a [Philanthropy Summit](#) and the 3rd MENA Oceans Summit.

IUCN Congress themes

The Congress will tackle five critical themes, each driving the bold, transformative change needed to secure a sustainable future for both nature and humanity:

- Scaling Up Resilient Conservation Action
- Reducing Climate Overshoot Risks
- Delivering on Equity
- Transitioning to Nature-Positive Economies and Societies
- Disruptive Innovation and Leadership for Conservation

Programme highlights

For a day-to-day overview of the programme, and to see which sessions will be available online for virtual participants, please consult the IUCN Congress website.



Critical timing

With only five years remaining until the 2030 deadline for the Paris Agreement, Sustainable Development Goals, and Global Biodiversity Framework, the conference comes at a pivotal time for securing concrete actions towards the realisation of these critical goals.

Also taking place less than a month before the United Nations Climate Conference (UNFCCC) COP30, in Belém, Brazil, the IUCN Congress 2025 in Abu Dhabi emerges as a pivotal opportunity to elevate ambition, accelerate action and scale up collaborative solutions that address the needs of both nature and people.

Policy implications

The outcomes of the 2025 Congress are expected to directly influence international environmental policy, particularly in the lead-up to the UNFCCC COP30 and ahead of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) COP17 and the UNFCCC COP31 in 2026.

Motions adopted by IUCN Members will provide critical guidance to national and multilateral strategies, reinforcing commitments under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement. International progress towards these commitments will be examined at COP30.

The Congress will also catalyse new partnerships and funding mechanisms, shaping the global policy landscape for ecosystem restoration, climate adaptation, and the protection and empowerment of Indigenous peoples.



Media resources

To apply for official media accreditation for the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, please visit:

<https://iucncongress2025.org/press/press-registration>

All members of the media—journalists, broadcasters, photographers, and digital content creators—must be accredited in advance to access:

- Press conferences and briefings
- Interviews with key figures
- Onsite media centre facilities
- Behind-the-scenes and exhibition access
- Official visuals and media kits

Important Notes:

- Accreditation will be processed on a rolling basis; early application is encouraged.
- Proof of media credentials and recent bylined work may be required.
- A virtual accreditation option will be available for remote coverage.

Media Contacts

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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 around 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 peoples' 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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About Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD)

Established in 1996, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) is committed to protecting and enhancing air quality, groundwater as well as the biodiversity of our desert and marine ecosystem. By partnering with other government entities, the private sector, NGOs and global environmental agencies, we embrace international best practice, innovation and hard work to institute effective policy measures. We seek to raise environmental awareness, facilitate sustainable



development and ensure environmental issues remain one of the top priorities of our national agenda.

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdRGaYXrqkMIxoEfshDDfyA>



Sustainability focus

IUCN aims to make significant strides in event sustainability by introducing a range of initiatives focused on venue, travel, and procurement practices.

IUCN is dedicated to leading by example in sustainable events management. Building on the success of previous initiatives, including the ISO 20121 certification awarded to the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2016 in Hawaii and IUCN Congress 2021 in Marseille, IUCN is working to further enhance its sustainable event management practices.

Working collaboratively with the [Global Destination Sustainability Movement](#) (GDS-Movement), a pioneering international agency dedicated to driving positive socio-economic and environmental transformation, and [Green Événements](#), an expert in developing responsible event strategies, IUCN is working towards achieving ISO 20121 certification once again. Specific actions include:

- Minimising the environmental impact of its events by reducing greenhouse gas emissions,
- Minimising resource demand,
- Promoting good sustainability practices to participants, suppliers, and local communities.

