



Powering Transformative Conservation

Foreword

“Imagine a world where nature and humanity flourish side by side,” Grethel Aguilar, IUCN’s Director General implored during the opening ceremonies of the World Conservation Congress on October 15, 2025. Razan Al Mubarak, IUCN’s President, elected to a second term at the conference, spoke of “Nature as our greatest ally” and “Healthy ecosystems are the key to a just, resilient and sustainable future for all.”

The Abu Dhabi Call to Action is a powerful reaffirmation of human reliance on nature as the source, the foundation of our past, present and future prosperity as a species that in the 21st century is at a critical moment of choice. What we now do – or fail to do – concerning our relationship with nature will determine the future of humankind on a planet undergoing rapid change owing to the actions of one species – us. Thus, the theme of the Congress: *Powering transformative conservation*.

When IUCN began decades ago, we had neither the magnitude of knowledge nor the urgency for action that now exists. Soon, it will be too late to do what is now possible. Mindful that other intelligent primates, elephants, bears, dolphins, whales and various smart fish and invertebrates surely know the world is changing but they do not know why nor what to do about it. We do.

As this thoughtful report makes clear, we have the best chance ever, working together, to protect nature as if our lives and everything else we care about depend on it, because they do.

Dr Sylvia Earle
Oceanographer, Founder and Chair
of Mission Blue & founding IUCN Patron of Nature



The largest environmental gathering

7 days

of action

10,000+

participants

1,300+

sessions



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IUCN stands at the confluence of diverse currents - science, policy, conservation practice, and communities - and it is at these junctions where the magic happens, where collaboration across boundaries creates transformative solutions for our planet.



Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak

IUCN President



Ashley LASHLEY
Youth Advisor to
the United Nations
Secretary General
on Climate
Change
*The United
Nations*



Becky ANDERSON
Managing Editor
CNN



Frances Camille RIVERA
Founder
Oceanus Conservation



Elizabeth MREMA
UN Assistant Secretary General
& Deputy Executive Director
*United Nations and United
Nations Environment
Programme*

Eric JING
Chairman
Ant Group



**His Highness Sheikh Khalid
bin Mohamed AL NAHYAN**
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates



Surangel WHIPPS JR.
President
Republic of Palau



**Carlos Manuel
RODRIGUEZ
ECHANDI**
CEO & Chairperson
*Global
Environment
Facility*

Ruth SPENCER
Local community
representative
Antigua and Barbuda



Seyni NAFO
Member, UN Secretary-
General
*High-Level Advisory Group
on Climate Action
Co-chair
Green Climate Fund Board*



Mukhtar BABAYEV
UNFCCC COP29 President
and Representative of the
President of the *Republic
of Azerbaijan*



Yoko WATANABE
Director (Environment)
Asian Development Bank



Laurence PESSEZ
Global Chief
Sustainability
Officer
BNP Paribas



David OBURA
Director
*Intergovernmental
Platform on
Biodiversity and
Ecosystem Services
(IPBES)*

**Pradeep
KURUKULASURIYA**
Executive Secretary
*United Nations Capital
Development Fund*



**Francisco Ramiro
BATZIN CHOJÓJ**
Director
Ruk'u'x Balam



IUCN convening power in action

Every voice for nature represented

Over 1,000 sessions showcasing innovations and solutions over 5 days, involving IUCN's diverse constituencies and other key stakeholders.

130+ Heads of States, Ministers and Ambassadors

25+ Mayors and Heads of Subnational governments

200+ Heads of international organisations

200+ Representatives of Indigenous Peoples' Organisations

100+ Business executives

125+ Leaders in academia, science and charity/non-for-profit organisations

1,000+ Youth and Young Professionals (35 years and under) in attendance across the different constituents

PARTICIPATION SATISFACTION

"The Congress was a worthwhile investment of my personal time"

88%

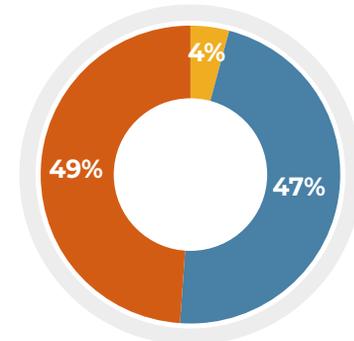
agreed or strongly agreed

GENDER BALANCE OF SPEAKERS

Female
1,179 speakers

Male
1,140 speakers

Other
105 speakers



The Forum

300 innovative and interactive sessions over 4 days including:

100+

Thematic sessions

13

High-level dialogues

22

Podcasts

45

Speaker Pitches

7

Youth-focused events

100+

Learning Zone training & capacity building sessions



The Exhibition

A marketplace for partnerships,
collaboration and conservation action

140

exhibitors

42

pavilions

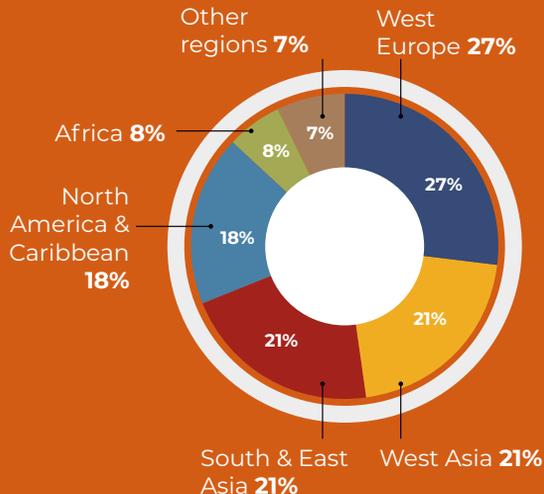
1,000+

events

4.4/5

satisfaction level

Exhibitors by region



IMPACT & SUCCESS STORIES

- UN Convention Dugong & Raptors global assessment announced
- USD 20M Blue Bond issued by First Abu Dhabi Bank
- New global initiative to track 2030 Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework goals
- TNFD global innovation competition for SMEs & entrepreneurs
- First-ever Indigenous Peoples' Pavilion
- Regional showcases via IUCN Regional Pavilions & UAE Pavilion



The Members' Assembly

Democracy in action for the planet

The IUCN World Conservation Congress is where global conservation priorities get set and science meets political action. Via the democratic process at the Members' Assembly, governments, NGOs, and Indigenous Peoples' Organisations agree and vote on motions, turning intentions into resolutions that shape how we protect nature worldwide, and set the roadmap for environmental policy from the local to the global level.

144

recommendations and resolutions adopted

1,000+

IUCN Members in attendance



4 historic Summits

Youth Summit

240+ youth from over **90** countries

Philanthropy Summit

115 participants from **29** countries covering **6** continents

World Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nature

132 Indigenous Peoples' representatives from **50+** countries

Business Summit

400+ onsite participants from **6** continents



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The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 has brought together an unparalleled diversity of voices – from governments to Indigenous Peoples, scientists to civil society representatives and the private sector – all united by one goal: turning commitments into action. This is what makes the Congress unique. It energizes us and reminds us that protecting nature requires collective power and urgent implementation, not just pledges. Luxembourg is proud to be part of this critical movement from ambition to results.



Serge Wilmes

Minister of the Environment, Climate and Biodiversity of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg

Global reach & media impact

278.6M	potential reach #IUCNcongress
116.5M	total reach for paid social media campaign
11.5M	views from the Sponsored Influencer Programme
3.6M	page views across IUCN Congress websites
261,900	newsletter opens
193	airings of the Congress content on CNN
1,700,000	impressions of digital ads on CNN website
16Mio	digital video views across Sky News Arabia & The National
220,550	press mentions
430	media representatives on site

A catalyst for global conservation action

Major announcements and essential updates to the world

Historic resolutions

IUCN Members adopted critical resolutions shaping policy responses to the climate crisis, recognising ecocide as a crime against the environment, elevating the central role of Indigenous leadership, their knowledge and languages in conserving nature, curbing the wildlife pet trade and governing the use of AI and protecting digital evidence.

BBNJ Treaty announcement

The BBNJ (Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction) Treaty, also known as the High Seas Treaty, received the prestigious World Future Policy Vision Award 2025 during the Congress. The award recognised the treaty's landmark achievement in multilateral environmental diplomacy and its role in protecting marine biodiversity beyond national borders.

IUCN Red List updates

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ provides the most comprehensive assessment of species' extinction risk. It includes 172,620 species of which 48,646 are threatened with extinction but also highlights examples of conservation and restoration projects leading to species recovery.



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Participating in the IUCN World Conservation Congress as Principal and Official Banking Partner represents the continuity of FAB's fundamental belief that financial institutions have a responsibility to lead the transition toward a sustainable future. The Congress serves as a vital point of convergence between science, policy, finance, and conservation action. It is at these intersections where transformative solutions emerge.



Shargiil Bashir

Chief Sustainability Officer and Executive Vice
President at First Abu Dhabi Bank

Sustainability leadership

Walking the talk

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 achieved ISO 20121:2024 certification for sustainable event management, marking the third time IUCN has earned this distinction.

- **Carbon:** Full carbon offsetting of all participants through certified projects selected from IUCN Members
- **Energy:** Waste reduction on site and collaboration with venue on green energy sources
- **Materials:** Selection of recycled and recyclable materials across all aspects of the Congress
- **Food services and zero food waste:** Prioritisation of local, vegetarian and vegan options. Collaboration with ne'ma to donate surplus food and Reloop to compost unavoidable food waste
- **Water innovation:** Provision of free reusable water bottles and air-to-water technology accessible onsite to refill





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The Congress – once every 4 years – is giving us space to think, space to be ourselves, but in particular to think outside the box and talk to people that we do not necessarily meet within the various convention work streams.



Astrid Schomaker

Executive Secretary of the Convention on
Biological Diversity

Partners and Sponsors



وزارة التغير المناخي
والبيئة
MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE
& ENVIRONMENT



هيئة البيئة - أبوظبي
Environment Agency - ABU DHABI



مؤسسة الإمارات
EMIRATES FOUNDATION



Sources

IUCN CRM (registration numbers and categories)

IUCN Global Communications Team (Media figures)

Economic Impact Assessment by UAE's Department of Culture and Tourism

IUCN Congress Participant survey

Green Events & GDS Movement

Analysis of participant interviews prepared in collaboration with Altai Consulting and Masae Analytics



IUCN
World
Conservation
Congress
Abu Dhabi 2025