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**Motion on Governance of natural resources**

Due to the increasing significance of the topic of natural resource governance in the IUCN, and because it is a central focus for its Spanish Committee, it is considered pertinent and necessary to put forward a motion for the next World Conservation Congress (Hawaii 2016). The latter is a good space for working out strategies for the governance of natural resources through the system of motions (resolutions and recommendations), specific proposals for dealing with different environmental challenges which are submitted by IUCN members and debated and adopted internationally. This system is important because the resolutions enable an IUCN position on a given subject to be drawn up, and for international agreements and standards to be adopted. It also enables internationally endorsed actions to be undertaken with governments. As we shall see, motions on the subject of governance have already been proposed; but that work must be further developed, especially regarding its most practical and structural issues.

**Theoretical context**

Before going into the environmental aspect, we believe a theoretical introduction to what we understand as ‘governance’ is necessary, as these are terms our work will focus on. According to the UN, governance is “the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented).”[[1]](#footnote-1) The term governance can be used in different contexts, such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance, local governance or natural resource governance, as in the case we are concerned with.

Analysis of governance centres on the formal and informal actors involved in the process of making and implementing decisions, and on the formal and informal structures set up to implement decisions. It is supported by a focus based on human rights, holding citizens to be bearers of rights with full capacity for participation, and also on social and gender equity regarding ethnic groups and the impoverished, etc. All this bears in mind a bottom-up decision-making and participation model, i.e. one based on citizens’ requirements and decisions, backed by governments and other stakeholders for balanced management of resources.

Governance must not be confused with governmental management, as the government is just one actor, which interacts with others depending on the context, e.g. landowners, farming and/or fishing associations, cooperatives, NGOs and research institutes, etc, in other words, agents of civil society, whose voice is indispensable as they are the main stakeholders who will be impacted by the decisions made and applied. The implementation structures can be informal, such as advisors or assistance, or formal, corresponding to the government.

A good government is necessary for all this to be done correctly, that is, a lack of corruption, with decision-making capacity and participation extended to diverse groups, especially those in situations of vulnerability and historically excluded, such as women. Eight aspects help ensure proper governance: equitable information and participation, impartial and just legal framework, transparency and accountability in decisions and information, co-responsibility, consensus, equality and non-discrimination, effectiveness and efficiency and, finally, sensitiveness to citizen demands.

**Governance of natural resources**

Aracely Pazmiño supplies us with a definition of natural resource governance in the IUCN: “a concept that includes standards, institutions and processes that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are made and how citizens participate in natural resource management.”[[2]](#footnote-2) That is, governance involves the relationships and exercise of power, influence and decision-making between actors, institutions and standards or laws.

Regarding protected areas, the IUCN distinguishes four types of governance:[[3]](#footnote-3)

**Type A: Governance by the government (at central/state/sub-national or municipal level)**. A government office has the authority, responsibility and obligation to render accounts about management of the protected area;

**Type B: Shared governance**. Complex mechanisms and institutional processes are used to formally and informally share administrative authority and responsibility among various government and non-government entities;

**Type C: Private governance**. Private governance covers protected areas under the control and/or ownership of individuals, cooperatives, NGOs or corporations, run on a profit or non-profit basis;

**Type D: Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities**. This type includes two large groups: (1) areas and territories of indigenous peoples, established and managed by them, and (2) areas conserved by communities, established and managed by local communities. Both groups can be hard to separate; refers to both sedentary and mobile peoples and communities.

Effective management of each of these types depends on the quality of the governance and how well it functions. Good governance of a protected area can be understood to mean “a governance system that responds to the principles and values freely chosen by the people of a country and reflected in its constitution, natural resources law, legislation and regulations for protected areas and cultural practices and traditional laws”.

This effectiveness is reflected in various international documents: the Convention on Biological Diversity, Aarhus Convention, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, United Nations Declaration on Rights and Convention 169 of the ILO on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. It has also been present at different regional and international gatherings: World Parks Congress (2003 in South Africa), First Congress on Protected Marine Areas (2003 in Australia) and Second Latin-American Congress on Protected Areas (2007 in Argentina). Taking the above into consideration, the principles for good governance are:

* **Legitimacy and voice**: social dialogue and collective agreements on management strategies and goals for protected areas on the basis of freedom of association and non-discriminatory expression vis-à-vis gender, ethnic group, way of life, cultural values or other characteristics;
* **Subsidiarity**: to attribute management and responsibility to institutions closer to the resources in question;
* **Fairness**: to equitably share the costs and benefits of establishing and administering protected areas and to provide for impartial judgment of any related dispute;
* **No damage done**: to ensure that the costs of establishing and managing protected areas do not create or exacerbate poverty and vulnerability;
* **Direction**: to foster and uphold an inspiring and consistent long-term vision regarding the protected area and its conservation goals;
* **Return**: to effectively conserve biodiversity while responding to stakeholder concerns and to use resources intelligently;
* **Accountability**: to have clear lines of responsibility and ensure that stakeholders have appropriate communication and information about fulfilment of their responsibilities;
* **Transparency**: to ensure that all relevant information is available for the groups involved;
* **Human rights**: to respect human rights in the context of governance of protected areas, including the rights of future generations.

**Governance in IUCN documents and other international documents**

Governance is a central theme for the IUCN which has become increasingly clear and evident since the beginning of the 21st century. This can be seen in Recommendation V.16 of the **World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000)** on good governance in protected areas, which served as the basis enabling the **Action Plan of the 5th IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003)** to indicate that governance “is central to the conservation of protected areas throughout the world” (Outcome 8 of the Durban Action Plan) and that the Congress took note of various recommendations concerning good governance principles as well as the advantages and diversity of different types of governance.

The IUCN presented the document on “The IUCN and Good Governance for Sustainable Development” at the meeting of the **Preparatory Committee (Bali) for the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002)**. It also made significant contributions on governance during the **Third World Water Forum (Kyoto, 2003)**.

Resolution 012 on natural resource governance for conservation and sustainable development adopted by the **3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004)** is of major importance, as it urged the IUCN to play a leadership role with respect to natural resource governance for conservation and sustainable development.

These are complementary documents, along with others which since the 1990s have associated sustainable development and governance, such as the **Rio Declaration on Environment and Development (1992)**, whose principle 10 establishes that the best way to handle environmental issues is with participation of and information for all citizens. The **Aarhus Convention (1998)** affirms in its article 8 access to information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters.

Also noteworthy besides the **Application Plan for Decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD – Johannesburg, 2002)**, the **United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000)** or the **Monterrey Consensus (Monterrey, 2002),** is the programme of work on protected areas adopted per Decision VII/28 of the 7th Conference of the Parties in the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD – Kuala Lumpur, 2004)**, which includes an element on “governance, participation, equity and benefit sharing”. Finally, the **2011-2020 Strategy Plan and Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2010)** should be highlighted; its target 11 indicates that protected areas’ systems should be effectively and fairly administered.

Thanks to these documents, the IUCN’s programming has been making natural resource governance operative in its different programmes:

The **2005-2008 Programme**[[4]](#footnote-4)highlights the importance of governance, providing a number of standards to guide conservation activities: transparency (openness of decision-making), access to information and justice (reliable, effective and open communication), public participation (genuine involvement in decision-making), coherence (consistent focus), subsidiarity (decisions made at the lowest appropriate level), respect for human rights (interwoven with ‘good’ environmental governance), responsibility vis-à-vis third parties (for economic, social and environmental results) and rule of law (impartial, transparent and consistent application of legal rules at all levels).

The **2009-2012 Programme**[[5]](#footnote-5) considers global result 1.1, in the programme’s central area: policies concerning biodiversity and governance systems make possible the actions needed to conserve biodiversity. It is highlighted that the environmental community is increasingly worried about the governance of natural resources, concerted and collective action for their effective management and the challenge involved in governing resources and places which extend beyond political borders, including many river basins and trans-national protected areas. The IUCN sought to emphasise support for full enabling of governance policies and systems meant to carry out natural resource conservation actions.

In the **2013-2016 Programme**[[6]](#footnote-6), the IUCN self-defines itself as being a “global authority for the conservation of biodiversity, nature-based solutions and environmental governance”. The programme consists of three areas, with the second concerning effective and fair governance in the use of nature, an area which consolidates the IUCN’s work on “relations between people and nature”, rights and responsibilities, and economic policy with respect to nature. It is stated that natural resource governance leads to effective, just, gender-sensitive and fair conservation, producing tangible benefits for the means of subsistence. The following indicators are established:

1. Improvement of institutional arrangements and governance based on a new IUCN natural resource governance framework;

2. Scope of protected areas managed in accordance with the IUCN natural resource governance framework;

3. Area in (in ha) of farmland, fisheries and forest exploitation managed according to the IUCN natural resource governance framework;

4. Extent of open sea administered according to the focus by ecosystems and the IUCN natural resource governance framework.

The overall result for this area is: better natural resource governance arrangements lead to equitable conservation based on rights, with tangible benefits for means of subsistence.

On the other hand, four programmatic priorities were identified to support the three Programme Areas, the third of which concerns efforts to enhance governance policies by capacity-building: responding to gender issues, biodiversity management and ecosystem services; environmental governance services and functions (conventions, IPBES, MEAs, World Heritage, etc); and governments and application (e.g. verification and certification). The first area likewise concerns the provision of products of the IUCN’s knowledge and considers preparation of a framework for natural resource governance.

**Key resolutions and recommendations**

Natural resources governance has gained prominence in the IUCN’s system of motions (resolutions and recommendations), as can be seen in the following graph:

Once certain aspects of the aforementioned Bangkok Resolution 012 are dealt with (definition, principles, typology and focuses of governance), it is necessary to continue efforts to make governance operational in the following aspects:

Shared management:

* Biodiversity observation networks;
* Private, public, community partnerships (PPCPs);
* Biodiversity preservation and community management;
* Natural resources management by the community;
* Community-based management systems;
* Monitoring and co-management of freshwater and marine ecosystems;
* Sustainable environmental management;
* Integrated management of protected areas;
* Community planning and management of the territory;
* Co-managed municipal conservation areas.

Participation, information and capacity-building:

* Observatories with participative management;
* Transparency and public access to information and participation by all stakeholders, especially the most vulnerable;
* Creation of capacities (empowerment);
* Good practices in governance management and dissemination and information about same;
* Governmental participation mechanisms;
* Access to justice in environmental matters;
* Training of citizens’ advisory councils in extraction industry projects, to enable informed public oversight.

Gender issues:

* Equitable relations between women and men;
* Importance of women’s role in the conservation and management of natural resources and biodiversity;
* Inclusion of women in participation and decision-making.

Ethnic groups and local communities:

* Territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and communities areas (ICCAs);
* Recognition of various ways of managing and conserving nature depending on the region of the planet: there is a direct relationship between cultural diversity and biodiversity.

Technical issues:

* Creation of governance indicators based on those established in the IUCN 2013-2016 Programme;
* Production of an action plan;
* Regional, national and local policies that enhance natural resource governance;
* Creation of tools enabling participation in natural resource management;
* Arrangement of a framework for natural resource governance as set out in the IUCN 2013-2016 Programme.

We highlight the following selection of motions:[[7]](#footnote-7)

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| Congress | R&R | Title | Content |
| Jeju | Resolution 123 | Advocating Private, Public, Community Partnerships (PPCPs) for sustainable development | When implementing the IUCN Programme 2013–2016 to consider new and inclusive approaches that include local communities so as to achieve sustainable development;  private, public, community partnerships (PPCPs) and capacity-building as a major component of the innovative PPCP approach. |
| Jeju | Resolution 093 | Prioritising community-based natural resource management for social and ecological resilience | To recognise and promote the rights of communities to exercise self-determination in the formulation of policies and projects affecting their environment and security;  prioritise and promote community-based approaches;  support community governance frameworks; and  identify and support customary and traditional legal systems, legal and policy frameworks that can secure the rights of local people. |
| Jeju | Resolution 092 | Promoting and supporting community resource management and conservation as a foundation for sustainable development | A range of terms are in use when referring to conservation and sustainable development programmes carried out by local communities – ‘community resource management’ (CRM) may be an appropriate generic description.  Good governance, appropriate legislation and even-handed enforcement are essential to ensure that community resource management programmes  prosper.  To facilitate and enhance a broad exchange of information amongst practitioners, relevant interest groups and international conservation and development organisations. To develop and implement broad policy coherence among multilateral environmental agreements and conservation organisations which would be beneficial to conservation of terrestrial biodiversity through community resource management programmes.  To recognise the various forms and names of community conservation present in West Asia and North Africa; and to work together with IUCN Programmes and Commissions to revitalise community-based  management systems. Adoption and application of local and traditional knowledge, and through customary institutions and regulations; assistance to indigenous peoples in implementation of the IUCN Programme 2013–2016. |
| Jeju | Resolution 056 | Enhancing connectivity conservation through international networking of best practice management | Requests that states consolidate and continue to establish national ecological networks and connectivity conservation areas to strengthen the protection of biodiversity.  Requests further support and and facilitation of the exchange of best practice connectivity conservation management information through an international network of managers. |
| Jeju | Resolution 035 | Facilitating conservation through the establishment of protected areas as a basis for achieving Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 | Conservation by means of protected area systems administered effectively and equitably.  The resolution recommends that national governments recognise the IUCN definition of a protected area, including the full range of protected area management categories and governance types. |
| Jeju | Resolution 181 | Citizen participation in legislative procedures regarding the environment | To establish mechanisms that allow for effective public participation preferably at an early phase, and when the options are still open, during the stage when regulatory provisions or other general, legally binding regulations that could make a great impact on the environment are being drawn up. |
| Barcelona | Resolution 089 | Establishing Citizens' Advisory Councils for large-scale extractive industry projects | Calls on the extractive industries to embrace and support the formation of local Citizens’ Advisory Councils comprised of representatives of civil society in the vicinity of extractive industry projects being undertaken in ecologically sensitive areas, and having the function to provide informed public oversight of these projects in order to minimise their environmental and social impacts. |
| Barcelona | Resolution 056 | Rights-based approaches to conservation | To support improvement of governance frameworks on matters regarding the legal and policy frameworks, institutions and procedures that can secure the rights of local people in the context of conservation and sustainable resource use. |
| Barcelona | Resolution 037 | Municipal Conservation Areas | Based on governance types, requests the introduction of Municipal Conservation Areas in the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areasat the 10th Meeting of the Conference of Parties in 2010, in order to influence global policies that regulate this kind of protected area governance. |
| Bangkok | Recomendación 081 | Implementation of  Principle 10 by building  comprehensive good  governance systems | Urges international institutions to internalise good-governance practices across all offices,  missions, departments, and projects in decisions that affect the environment. |
| Bangkok | Resolution 061 | IUCN’s interaction with  the private sector | Transparency through ensuring public access to information; and participation of all stakeholders, especially vulnerable groups, in dialogues with the private sector. |
| Bangkok | Resolution 012 | Governance of natural  resources for conservation  and sustainable  development | Definition, principles, typology and focuses of governance. |

1. UNESCAP. *What is Good Governance?* <http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Pazmiño Montero, Aracely (2013). “Aprendiendo sobre gobernanza”. Moreno R., Verónica (ed.). *Conservación Ahora*. Pp. 17-19. <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/revista_web_sur.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dudley, Nigel (ed.) (2008). Directrices para la aplicación de las categorías de gestión de áreas protegidas. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. Pp. 31-39. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/PAPS-016-Es.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UICN (2004). *El programa 2005-2008 de la UICN. Muchas voces, una tierra*. <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/programme_spanish.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. UICN (2008). *Diseñando un futuro sostenible. Programa de la UICN 2009–2012*. <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/iucn_programme_2009_2012_dfc_es.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. UICN (2012). *Programa de la UICN 2013-2016*. <http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/programa_de_la_uicn_2013_2016_final_29_nov_12.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Available for consultation at: <https://portals.iucn.org/library> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)