



IUCN
World
Conservation
Congress
Hawai'i 2016



Next Generation Journey

Outcomes



The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress was a great opportunity to involve, support, empower and engage with next generations, with over 1,300 registered participants under the age of 35.

This document will briefly reflect on some of the major outcomes of the Next Generations Journey.

The Next Generations Journey Outcomes

“The world is facing a rapidly closing window. The ecosystems that underpin our economies, well-being and survival are collapsing. Species are becoming extinct at unprecedented rates. Our climate is in crisis. The path we choose today will define nature’s ability to support us as a species during our lifetime and for generations to come.

To overcome the challenges we face we need to engage with and invest in people who have the potential to advance the future of conservation and sustainable development: the next generations of conservation leaders.

The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress represents a unique opportunity to kickstart meaningful empowerment of the next generations, who can and must take forward the cause of conservation and sustainable development towards a sustainable future for all.

In our closing window for action, we cannot afford to miss this opportunity. The 2016 IUCN Congress is our moment to work together across all generations to get it right.”

Inger Andersen



The international conservation community increasingly recognizes that next generations are important stakeholders and actors for addressing current and future challenges and creating a better future for our planet. With this in mind, we made engaging with youth and young professionals a priority for IUCN Congress 2016.

Two sub-themes or *files rouges* threaded through the 80+ sessions that made up the Next Generations Journey: showcasing inspiring youth that are making a difference in nature conservation and sustainable development, and professional empowerment and meaningful engagement with the next generation of conservation leaders.

The high-level dialogue [Conservation 2.0: Empowering Next Generations](#) fully reflected this spirit and provided a platform for discussion about youth engagement, empowerment and intergenerational collaboration as the most effective way to advance the future of conservation. The opening panel showcased inspiring stories of a variety of young leaders that are taking action for biological and cultural diversity, human rights, and sustainable development. It also highlighted the role of access to information and a sense of empowerment has on the impacts the next generation will have on conservation. The second panel explored the importance of empowerment and meaningful engagement of emerging conservation and community leaders and how we can work together in an intergenerational partnership to overcome environmental challenges, accelerate change and maximise conservation impact.

Building on the enthusiasm generated by *Conservation 2.0*, a high-level lunch was organised for institutional players and leadership experts committed to collaborating with IUCN for youth engagement and empowerment in conservation. The objective of the lunch was to identify and deliver support mechanisms for building leadership, meaningful engagement and empowering next generations of conservation professionals, through:

- Integration, engagement and capacity development to increase proactive and meaningful participation of emerging young conservation leaders and professionals in IUCN priority areas by supporting the younger generation’s professional and leadership development needs and ensuring a long-term commitment to conservation work.
- Intergenerational partnerships between established and emerging young conservation leaders and professionals to contribute to IUCN’s work and conservation on-the-ground.



The discussion of the lunch was magnificently represented graphically byillustrator [Leah Silverman](#).

The outcomes and objectives of the next generations journey were finally reflected and incorporated in the legacy piece of the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress: *Navigating Islands Earth: [The Hawai'i Commitments](#)*.

“...The conservation community has a responsibility to help youth by inspiring those who have yet to care for nature, empowering young professionals already inspired to develop their capacities and networks, and by lending our time and experience as mentors -- recognizing that youth have as much to teach as they have to learn.”

IUCN is fully committed to making sure that young people and young professionals find their place in the [IUCN Programme 2017–2020](#) and are able to challenge and collaborate with all parts of the Union to take forward the cause of conservation and sustainable development.




In order to effectively achieve this goal, the establishment of a position for a Young Professionals (YP) Engagement and Empowerment Coordinator was proposed and discussed. Responsibilities of the coordinator would likely include:

- Increasing proactive and meaningful participation of young conservation leaders and professionals in IUCN priority areas by defining a strategy that embraces policy and governance for effective YP engagement and facilitates intergenerational cooperation and mutual support. This strategy will enhance the capacity of IUCN to undertake decision-making in a participatory, inclusive, effective and equitable manner and become a reference for best practices for its members to follow.
- Establishing a systematic and effective framework for cooperation of the YP within and across all IUCN Commissions, Secretariat and Members.
- Working in collaboration with key actors and partners to develop, fundraise, implement and coordinate a professional empowerment and leadership training program to build capacities of early career conservationists, by providing the knowledge, skills, inspiration and resources needed to support their collective flourishing into the next generation of conservation leaders while facilitating cooperation and entrepreneurship for conservation.



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