



NEWSLETTER ON IUCN-APAC2022



ABOUT IUCN-APAC

IN BRIEF

The IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) is the first ever continent-wide gathering of African leaders, citizens, and interest groups to discuss the role of protected areas in conserving nature, safeguarding Africa's iconic wildlife, delivering vital life-supporting ecosystem services, promoting sustainable development while conserving Africa's cultural heritage and traditions.

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How IUCN APAC is set to create the space for private sector engagement across different streams and themes



An elephant in Ghana. World Bank/Arne Hoel

Businesses need a healthy environment. The 2020 Global Risk produced by the World Economic Forum highlighted growing concern among business leaders of the consequences of continued environmental degradation including the record pace of species declines. Climate change, biodiversity loss, natural and human-made environmental disasters and extreme weather topped the charts of perceived risks in their annual survey. COVID 19 drove home the interconnected nature of human and natural systems, and brought the world to a global crisis of unparalleled proportion.

The risks are apparent and growing. At the same time there is growing consensus on the solutions at hand. Nature provides for us all and taking care of nature has returns to the bottom line and beyond. Protected and conserved areas serve as a cornerstone for biodiversity and the ecosystem services that are essential for the private sector.

Africa's network for protected and conserved areas provides clean water, pollinators, habitat for spawning fish and breeding wildlife, local climate regulation, and protection against natural disasters. An estimated 60Gts of carbon are locked in African conservation areas. The natural systems of the intact tropical forests of central Africa can store 200 tons of carbon per hectare or more. Conservation areas lower the incidence of the spread of zoonotic diseases and provide the raw materials for cures, as indigenous people and local communities across the continent have known for millennia.

In short, Africa's Protected and Conserved Areas provide a wealth of solutions to key business risks. What's more, businesses small and large are recalculating their dependence on, and investments in nature.

Among international players, new requirements from the finance industry to disclose environmental risks are going to accelerate action. Among local enterprises, expectations from a growing movement of young African activists are reshaping markets and breaking old habits.

As the boundaries between conservation and development blur, there is a place for business at the table among the leaders shaping the future of protected and conserved areas in Africa. The Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) offers the private sector opportunities to engage in shaping the future of conservation and development and showcase a leadership role in the pursuit of biodiversity restoration for their benefit, for communities, and their investors in general by engaging in various events. There are opportunities for private sector engagement in the formal programme, side events and workshops, exhibitions (to highlight products, conduct events) as well as in congress sponsorship.

APAC will create the space for private sector engagement across different streams and themes (on panels, as key note speakers, as moderators), as well as make the space for side events and stands. APAC can help private companies better understand the linkages between conservation and their core business, as part of longer-term business sustainability and offer platforms to share best practice, for example, through panel or summit sessions on how the private sector can contribute to conservation.

Championing conservation will help enhance competitiveness and influence investor choices and APAC offers a strategic opportunity to promote the private sector as a vehicle for conservation innovation in terms of use, management and sustainability while creating awareness that the private sector has a wider and different constituency. For example, companies could help market APAC to their constituency, or become an official APAC champion (partner, brand) for certain products linked to the Congress such as supply of water and internet.



PHOTO: Nyungwe Forest National Park

APAC can help create the space for private sector engagement across different streams and themes (on panels, as keynote speakers, as moderators), as well as make the space for appropriate side events and stands. APAC can help private companies better understand the linkages between conservation and their core business, as part of longer-term business sustainability, as well as offer platforms to share best practice for example, through panel or summit sessions on how the private sector can contribute to conservation.

Business security that considers social and environmental sustainability will support capital preservation, sustainability, and how we better address pandemics such as COVID-19. APAC is a chance for the private sector to take leadership and proactively shape private sector engagement with conservation, thereby informing and influencing Africa's conservation vision and agenda in the coming years which is a key outcome of APAC. The private sector will be invited to participate in articulating the 'Kigali Call to Action', a declaration that will inform all stakeholder engagement in Conservation on the continent.

Source: IUCN APAC



RWANDA: Journalists trained on APAC

Rwandan journalists covering environmental stories were trained on the concept of the Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC).

The fact that journalists covering environmental issues are trained on APAC is a great way to increase their knowledge of APAC's goals and to help them understand their role in activities related to the conservation of the ecosystem in general.

The training was timely since Rwanda prepares to host the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress which will be actively supported by the Government of Rwanda through the Ministry of Environment, the IUCN-World Commission on Protected Areas, and the African Wildlife Foundation. This training which was held in Kigali on November 26, 2021 was organized by the Africa Wildlife Foundation (AWF) in close collaboration with IUCN Rwanda and the Ministry of Environment.

Speaking at the training, Samuel Kasiki who represented the APAC committee at the event, said that the training aimed at equipping journalists with basic skills and information that can help them to disseminate information about what Africa is doing in conservation. He said "The story of conservation has been the story of non-Africans. If you look around, many of the organizations that we work with are mostly foreign and it doesn't have to be like that."

"We know that Africa holds significant biodiversity more than any other continent. That's what APAC is about. APAC is about telling a wonderful story of what Africa can and needs to do for the World." Kasiki said.



During the training, the permanent Secretary in the ministry of environment Patrick Karera told journalists that the Ministry is ready to support Environmental Journalists any time they have a clear plan and detailed projects that need support to be carried out

"Our pledge as the ministry of Environment is that all you need to know, if you have a well detailed plan and present it to us, we promise that we will help you because it is our responsibility."

Karera said

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Sponsors for the IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress 2022 Announced

The IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress (APAC) has announced its current 2022 sponsors that include - WWF, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW), Mava Foundation, USAID, The Federal German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Nuclear Safety and Consumer Protection (BMUV), African Wildlife Foundation, ESRI and the International Crane Foundation & Endangered Wildlife Trust Partnership.

“The Congress the first ever of its kind in the continent gives Africa the to discuss the role of protected areas in conserving nature, safeguarding Africa’s iconic wildlife, delivering vital life-supporting ecosystem services, promoting sustainable development all-while conserving Africa’s cultural heritage and traditions.

Africa will be able to present a unified front towards delivering a lasting balance between people, prosperity, and our planetary boundaries,” say the APAC Co-organizers IUCN-WCPA and the African Wildlife Foundation.

The aim of the Congress which will be hosted by the Rwanda Government in March 2022, is to bring together authentic African voices across the continent to address conservation issues that matter most to African audiences and Africa’s development.

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