



HOW THE WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS MOTIONS PROCESS WORKS

The Motions process is a central element of IUCN's governance system and an important means by which Members can influence future directions in the conservation community and seek international support on various conservation issues. This process is and has been influential in **setting the international conservation agenda** and in the **adoption of several international environmental instruments, standards and agreements**. Members may, through the motions process, promote and discourage action by governments and other actors and put forward conservation issues that are then discussed in a public forum where governments, NGOs and environmental agencies are sitting side-by-side. This is the uniqueness of IUCN governance. Motions may also be submitted to modify the governance and policies of the Union as well as **amend the IUCN Statutes and Regulations**.

a) What is a motion?

A **motion** is a draft of any decision which the World Conservation Congress is requested to take. Motions, once adopted, take the form of a **Resolution** or **Recommendation**. Resolutions are directed to IUCN itself; that is, to the Union in general, to one of its components -IUCN Members, IUCN Council, IUCN Commissions, IUCN Secretariat through the Director General-. For example:

... The World Conservation Congress at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5–14 October 2008:

1. REQUESTS IUCN's Council to continue efficiently to mainstream gender equality and equity through the continuation of Council's Gender and Biodiversity Task Force according to the *IUCN Gender Policy*;
2. REQUESTS the Director General to ensure that gender equity and equality are an imperative in the implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2009–2012* as well as annual plans of programmes, initiatives and projects carried out by the Secretariat; and
3. URGES the Chairs of IUCN's Commissions to work toward the fulfilment of *IUCN's Gender Policy*.

Recommendations are directed to third parties, and may deal with any matter of importance to the objectives of IUCN. For example:

...The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17–25 November 2004:

1. URGES states with fisheries that capture sharks, whether in directed fishing activities or as accidental by-catch in other fisheries, to implement the *International Plan of Action for the Conservation and Management of Sharks*, through the development of national and regional action plans incorporating a precautionary approach, that recognize the nutritional and socio-economic importance of sharks in some regions, that reduce to a minimum waste and discard from shark catch and that promote use of the entire catch through, *inter alia*, the implementation of bans on finning (removing any fin of the shark and discarding the body at sea) in their Maritime water and by their flag vessels worldwide;...

b) Who may submit a motion?

Only IUCN Council and IUCN Members have the right to submit motions.

National Committees, together with Regional Committees, can play an active role in encouraging and coordinating the discussion on and elaboration of Motions from their Members and evaluating Motions from other Members in other regions. National and Regional Committees may not submit motions.

Commission members as individuals or collectively do not have the right to submit a motion, nor have voting rights at the Members Assembly. However, they may participate in informal discussions and contribute with their expertise and knowledge.

c) Who else plays a role in the motions process?

The IUCN Secretariat participate in the motions process as it assists Members to submit motions and facilitates their revision process through providing technical advice and supporting, among others, the Council's appointed Resolutions Working Group.

The Resolutions Working Group is established by the IUCN Council. See below for more details on the Resolutions Working Group's composition and responsibilities.

d) What are the requirements that must be fulfilled in order to submit motions?

- 1- Motions must be consistent with IUCN objectives: Paragraph 54 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress establishes that "*Motions shall only be accepted if they are consistent with the objectives of IUCN.*" The objectives of IUCN as per paragraph 2 of the IUCN Statutes, "shall be to influence, assist and encourage societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecological sustainable".

- 2- Motions must address **new issues** other than those already covered by adopted Resolutions and Recommendations or new aspects of issues already addressed by Resolutions and Recommendations: Paragraph 54 mentioned above also states that *“Motions may repeat the decisions of a prior session of the World Congress only if the underlying issue has not been resolved and there remains a need for further action.”*¹ Submitted motions must cover new issues or, when covering subjects which have already been treated in the IUCN’s general policy, present an added element or aspect that is not present in previous adopted Resolutions and Recommendations. For a reference of adopted Resolutions and Recommendations in all previous Congresses, refer to: http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/global_policy/gpu_resources/gpu_res_recs/
- 3- Motions must be submitted **within the deadline**: paragraph 49 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress states that: *“Motions shall normally be submitted to the Director General no later than one hundred and twenty days before the opening of the next session of the World Congress.”*
- 4- The main sponsor and co-sponsors must be in **good standing**: Paragraph 13 b) of IUCN Statutes establishes that *“The rights of a Member in connection with elections, voting and motions shall ipso facto be suspended when the dues of that Member are one year in arrears.”* That is, all sponsors and co-sponsors’ dues must be properly paid at the time of the submission of motions for consideration at the World Conservation Congress.
- 5- Motions must be supported by at least **5 co-sponsors**: this requirement has been modified at the 2008 World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, from 3 co-sponsors to 5. As mentioned above, co-sponsors must also be up to date with their membership dues.

Motions may be submitted in all IUCN languages: English, French and Spanish.

e) **How does a motion look like?**

The structure of a motion is as follows:

TITLE: The title should convey the subject of the motion in 10 words or less.

Preamble: The preamble provides relevant background information to substantiate the action(s) called for in the operant part of a motion. It should not exceed 500 words. Paragraphs in the Preamble usually start with verbs as follows:

Noting...

Taking into account...

Transition clause: A clause that declares the decision of the Members to undertake the actions called for and links the preambular part of the motion with its operant part.

For example: *The IUCN World Conservation Congress at its session in Jeju, Korea, 6-15 September 2012:*

¹ A prior session of the World Congress refers to any past IUCN World Conservation Congress or General Assembly.

Operant paragraphs: In 500 words or less, the operant section of the motion elaborates actions that respond to the problem described in the preamble. Action statements should identify the audience and/or the entity responsible for undertaking the action, such as: Government agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), the Director General of IUCN. Each action should be cited as a separate point and numbered sequentially. The first word of each paragraph should be a verb IN CAPS.

For example:

CALLS ON... *to...*

REQUESTS... *to...*

ENCOURAGES... *to...*

URGES... *to...*

RECOMMENDS.... *to....*

Explanatory memorandum: An Explanatory memorandum of up to 500 words, as required by the Statutes, may be annexed to the motion. Explanatory memoranda are normally used to give further technical information to explain the purpose of the motion. These memoranda are not formally part of a motion and are thus not subject to review, negotiation or decision.

f) What is the Resolutions Working Group?

The Resolutions Working Group is a group of Councilors and Member representatives which is established by the IUCN Council, as per the Statutes (paragraph 46 (p)) before the motions process is open. The Resolutions Working Group oversees the motions process and remits the motions to the Congress. At the Congress, a Resolutions Committee is established composed of some of the same members of the Resolutions Working Group.

More specifically, the Resolutions Working Group/Committee a) establishes specific procedures for the motions process and **principles** upon which they will be revised; b) ensures that the **statutory requirements** are applied to the submitted motions and that motions are treated **fairly and equitably**; c) **advises** sponsors of motions to revise, amend or withdraw a draft motion d) **prepares motions** for tabling at Congress; and e) **facilitates** discussion between Members on motions in advance of the Congress.

The Resolutions Working Group transforms into the Resolutions Committee at the opening of the Congress to fulfill the same functions during the Congress, as well as receiving new motions and managing the contact groups.

g) What happens with the motions once they are submitted before the Congress?

Once **submitted**, a motion can only be amended by the Resolutions Working Group before the Congress is opened. Once the Resolutions Working Group processes the motions, they are circulated **“at least sixty days” before the opening of the Congress** (paragraph 49 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress).

h) What happens if Sponsors disagree with the decision made by the RWG?

At Congress, if the author of the motion wishes to amend its text, the proposed amendments must be:

- presented in “the course of a debate”; or
- “submitted in time to the Resolutions Committee for distribution before they are debated” (Paragraph 59 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress)

That is, amendments must be presented at public debates: plenary or contact groups announced in time for Members to have the opportunity to participate.

Each sponsor of a motion may also **appeal** the ruling of the Resolutions Working Group by formally requesting the Steering Committee of the Congress to reinstate the motion as submitted. To appeal this decision, a formal request explaining why the motion is eligible can be submitted for consideration to: motions@iucn.org.

As per paragraph 55 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress, “The Steering Committee shall decide any appeal from a proposer and co-sponsors against the exclusion or amendment of a draft motion by the Resolutions Working Group or Resolutions Committee. The Chair shall announce the decision of the Steering Committee and the World Congress may confirm or change that decision”.

i) How will motions be managed during the Congress?

All decisions regarding amendment and adoption of motions are in the hands of Members. Several Committees will be established and assisted by the Secretariat to serve and support Members’ consideration and adoption of the motions. Their roles and responsibilities are noted in Annex 1.

Because of the limited time available to consider motions, those not requiring consultations and or committee action are referred directly to plenary for consideration. Motions that address substantial policy issues, or members would benefit from greater clarification of the issues or needs the motion addresses are referred to contact groups before being forwarded to plenary for consideration.

All motions calling for actions that would affect the proposed **Programme 2013-2016** are referred to the **Programme Committee** which will submit its recommendations to the Resolutions Committee. Motions that call for substantial changes in the programme are referred to a contact groups. If adopted these motions will amend the proposed programme and will be noted when the proposed programme 2013-2016 is considered for adoption.

Those motions addressing governance issues are referred to the **Governance Committee**. Those motions related to governance issues not affecting the governance structures or procedures are referred to plenary for consideration. Those motions that propose a change in the present governance of the Union are referred to contact groups for consideration before being referred to plenary for consideration.

Members may find the “Tentative time allocation for motions” at:

http://www.iucnworldconservationcongress.org/member_s_assembly/motions/

Motions/Resolutions Help Desk: Beginning on 7 September - the first day of the Forum – a Motions/Resolutions Help Desk will be open to answer questions and assist Members. It will be located at the fifth floor of the International Conference Center (5F-15) and it will be staffed throughout Congress. The Motions/Resolutions Help Desk will receive appeals, submissions of new motions (with signatures of the requisite ten sponsors). Information on when and where particular Contact Groups will be scheduled and on the status of particular motions will also be available there.

j) How are “new” motions submitted during Congress?

During the Congress, motions may only be submitted by Council and by Members eligible to vote if the following criteria are fulfilled:

1. Motions must be consistent with the objectives of IUCN
2. Motions must be submitted within the deadline (14h00 on 12 September).
3. New motions must be co-sponsored by 10 Members in good standing.
4. New motions may only be submitted if they meet a minimum of any three of the following criteria, in accordance with paragraph 52 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress:
 - a. **subject is new**, means that the issue which is the subject of the resolution or recommendation has arisen within ninety days before the start of the session of the World Congress;
 - b. **urgent**, means a matter in respect of which developments are about to take place soon after the World Congress and upon which a resolution or recommendation of the World Congress may reasonably be expected to have an impact;
 - c. **could not have been foreseen**, means a matter which, while not itself new, has been the subject of developments within ninety days before the start of the session of the World Congress which call for action by the World Congress;
 - d. **arise out of deliberations of the World Congress**, means a matter which has been discussed at any officially scheduled meeting during the World Congress, including business and conservation sittings, technical meetings, Commission meetings, meetings of working groups or associated meetings;or
 - e. **respond to matters on the agenda**; means any matter scheduled for discussion at any of the meetings referred to in the immediately preceding paragraph, but which has not yet been discussed by that meeting at the time when the resolution or recommendation was submitted.

To be considered, the text of new motions are to be submitted electronically to motions@iucn.org or to the Motions Help Desk by the deadline: **14h00 on 12 September**. The principal sponsor and ten co-sponsors must confirm their sponsorship of the motion in writing at the Motions Help Desk before the deadline.

Because of the large number of motions being considered, the Resolutions Committee urges members to submit new motions at the Congress only in exceptional cases.

Motions submitted at the Congress will be handled in the same manner as motions submitted prior to the Congress (i.e., verification of standing of sponsors, style edit, technical review, and if approved, translation, duplication and distribution). The Resolutions Committee will decide whether a new motion meets the submission criteria and the principles that the RWG adopted. If a new motion is not accepted by the Resolutions Committee the sponsor may appeal the decision in writing to the Steering Committee of Congress.

k) What are contact groups?

A contact group is a **meeting destined to discuss a motion where there might be differences among Members** and which might have been deemed controversial. Contact groups are scheduled in sessions of 90 minutes, and are facilitated discussions in which the text of the proposed motion might be modified.

The Resolutions Working Group (RWG) when analyzing the motions presented for consideration at Congress makes an assessment of the motions that might need more time to be discussed during Congress. A comment from the RWG indicating that a motion is referred to a contact group has been included after the text of each motion concerned and posted online through the Motions Blog. During Congress, the Chair of the plenary session or the Resolutions Committee may also refer a motion to a contact group if deemed necessary.

The Resolutions Committee schedules contact groups for members to:

- Reach consensus on the amendments to be made of the text of a motion;
- Familiarize themselves with issues and/or actions proposed in a motion, or suite of motions on the same topic and where appropriate to harmonize the proposed actions to avoid contradictions;
- Review the actions in two or more motions on the same topic that would be in conflict if adopted and propose alternative text to remove such conflicts;
- Review and refine actions proposed in motions that would amend the proposed programme 2013-2016.

Contact group sessions are chaired/facilitated by a delegate appointed by the Resolutions Committee. Contact Groups are conducted in the language of the motion as submitted, when possible and when other Members attending the contact group speak that language. Interpretation will not be provided but the chairs of the sessions might ask, amongst the participants, assistance to participants not fluent in the language of the discussion. A “motion manager” from the Secretariat will record amendments to the text of motions using track changes.

Once Members attending the contact group agree on the text, the amendments and resulting text are tabled for approval by the Members in plenary.

Contact groups are open to delegates who are interested in the issue(s) put forward by the respective motion(s). However amendments to motions may only be proposed by Members who will have precedence in all discussions and make all decisions taken during contact group sessions.

Contact groups can be scheduled from the beginning of Congress (from 7 September) up until the end of the Congress (14 September and exceptionally 15 September if needed). Contact

group sessions take place at noon and in the evening. A tentative schedule of contact groups is on line.

l) How can Members make amendments to motions?

Amendments to motions may only be proposed by delegates representing Members in good standing and whose credentials have been approved by the Credentials Committee. Amendments may be proposed in any publicly scheduled session, including contact groups and plenary sessions.

The Resolutions Committee, as stipulated in § 59 of the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress, decides whether amendments proposed in contact groups are in order. Members may propose amendments to correct factual errors outside of publicly scheduled sessions by submitting a written request to the Resolutions Committee at the Motions/Resolutions Help Desk.

Only short (up to 10 words) and clearly presented amendments will be considered during plenary sessions. If more substantial amendments are proposed the Chair may refer the motion to a contact group. These sessions will be chaired/facilitated by a representative of the Resolutions Committee or a Member appointed by it. A motion manager will record proposed amendments. The results of these sessions, including revisions to the text of a motion will be reported directly to the plenary session.

During plenary sessions amendments to motions will be handled according to the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress (§ 60). The Chair of the plenary session, in which motions are considered, will determine the order multiple amendments in a motion will be considered (§61). The Chair can limit the number of interventions and the time for interventions on motions (§ 35).

m) Can a Member withdraw of a motion?

Once tabled for consideration at the opening of the Congress motions become the “property” of the Members’ Assembly. However, if the sponsors of a motion wish to withdraw it they may do so by submitting a request in writing to the Resolutions Committee at the Resolutions Help Desk. The request must be signed by the voting representative from each sponsoring institutions.

Committees of the World Conservation Congress relevant to the motions process

- *Steering Committee*.— The Steering Committee comprises the Preparatory Committee appointed by Council to plan and organize the World Conservation Congress, the President and Vice-Presidents and the Director General. It oversees all matters pertaining to the management and organization of the Congress. In regards to motions, the Steering Committee considers appeals of decisions of the Resolutions Working Group/Committee concerning motions submitted Congress. The Steering Committee meets daily.
- *Resolutions Committee*.— The Resolutions Committee will be elected at the opening of the Congress. It will oversee and guide the motions process during the Congress. It will establish all contact groups, appoint the chair/facilitators, and provide the charge to which the group is to respond. It will determine how motions will be handled, including to which committee and/or contact group motions will be referred and the schedule when motions will be considered for adoption in plenary.

The Resolutions Committee will also receive motions submitted during the Members' Assembly; and determine if they meet the statutory criteria for submission.

Members of the pre-Congress Resolutions Working Group automatically serve on the Resolution Committee; additional members may be nominated by members at the time the proposed Committee is elected.

- *Governance Committee*.— The Governance Committee is appointed at the opening of the Congress. It oversees discussion of proposals by Council to amend to the Rules of Procedure for the World Conservation Congress and reviews motions that address aspects of governance of the Union and advise the Resolutions Committee regarding the impact of such motions if adopted.
- *Programme Committee*.— The Programme Committee is appointed at the opening of the Congress. It will introduce the proposed intersessional programme for 2013-2016 and consider those motions that have an impact on the proposed Programme or Commission mandates. It advises the Resolutions Committee on which actions called for in motions are included in the proposed Programme or Commission mandate and which would amend the Programme or mandate if adopted.
- *Credentials Committee*.— The Credentials Committee will be elected at the opening of the Congress. This Committee examines the credentials of delegates from IUCN's members and verifies eligibility to vote and the number of votes that the member may cast. It will report the number of members whose credentials are in order and the total number of votes that may be cast in plenary sessions.