

WORLD COMMISSION ON PROTECTED AREAS (WCPA)

Jeffrey McNeely, USA

Personal

Name: Jeffrey A. McNeely
Date of birth: 30 May 1944
Nationality: US citizen

Education

Bachelor of Arts, University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)

Current position

A.D. White Professor at Large, Cornell University
Member, UNEP International Resource Panel
Member, Scientific and Technical Council, International Risk Governance Council
Chair, IUCN-SSC Red List Committee
Chair, Policy Committee, Society for Conservation Biology

Professional background

Jeff McNeely began working internationally in 1968, as a Peace Corps Volunteer building school water systems in Thailand. In 1970, he started working with Dr. Boonsong Lekagul and co-authored **Mammals of Thailand**. While working with Dr. Boonsong, he also prepared an FAO report on wildlife in the Lower Mekong Basin, which included a systems plan for protected areas for the region. He spent 2 years doing research in eastern Nepal, in an area that later became Makalu-Barun Conservation Area. He moved to Indonesia in 1977 to manage the first IUCN–WWF Country Programme, working closely with the Indonesian Government and FAO to design and establish a national system of protected areas. During this time, he managed 35 projects.

Jeff joined the IUCN Secretariat Headquarters in 1980 as Executive Officer of CNPPA (now WCPA). He started the Commission newsletter and managed the establishment of the Protected Areas Data Unit (PADU), now the World Database on Protected Areas. He organized regional Commission meetings in Cameroon, Peru, Zimbabwe, and Scotland and led the secretariat team that organized the 1982 3rd World Parks Congress, in Bali. He co-edited with Kenton Miller **National Parks, Conservation, and Development: The Role of Protected Areas in Sustaining Society**, published by Smithsonian Institution Press and widely credited as a critical contribution to defining the modern role of protected areas. He was responsible for IUCN's relations with UNESCO, including both biosphere reserves and World Heritage; wrote the first indicative list of natural sites worthy of consideration for the World Heritage List in 1982, and co-edited the Proceedings of the First World Conference on Biosphere Reserves (held in Minsk in 1983).

Jeff left CNPPA to become IUCN Programme Director in 1984 and later Deputy Director General. During this time, he established IUCN programmes on Marine Conservation, Forests, and Wetlands. He later started and directed IUCN's Biodiversity Programme and helped draft the Convention on Biological Diversity and establish and manage the Global Biodiversity Forum, as well as publishing numerous books on biodiversity. In 1990, he was appointed Secretary General of the 4th World Congress on Protected Areas (Caracas, Venezuela) and was responsible for organizing the programme, fundraising, and managing the Congress. 13 books resulted from the Congress. He edited the proceedings (**Parks for Life**), **Partnerships for Conservation** (which showcased the many other sectors with an interest in protected areas) and **Protecting Nature: Regional Reviews of Protected Areas** (with Jerry Harrison and Paul Dingwall). For the 5th World Parks Congress in Durban, he prepared a presentation for the opening plenary on Scenarios for the Future of Protected Areas.

Jeff served as Chief Scientist of IUCN until retirement in July 2009, and as Senior Science Advisor until March 2012. He has recently worked with the Government of Tanzania on World Heritage issues and the Government of Japan, also on World Heritage issues as well as protected areas and natural hazards and advising on the content of the Asia Parks Congress. He has worked on protected areas for the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and numerous bilateral agencies/NGOs in over 80 countries. His publications comprise over 40 books (including co-editor of **Sacred Natural Sites** in 2010) and 500 scientific and popular papers on various aspects of conservation.

Experience and past involvement with IUCN

Jeff started working for an IUCN Member in 1970 (Association for Conservation of Wildlife in Thailand, run by a Vice President of IUCN). He was invited to be a member of SSC in 1971 and of CNPPA in 1978. He managed IUCN's first country programme (Indonesia) from 1977 to 1980 and was a member of the IUCN Secretariat from 1980 to 2009.

Future priorities of the Commission

WCPA remains the world leader in protected areas but still faces many challenges. The 6th World Parks Congress, planned for 2014, will be a major opportunity to address issues such as management effectiveness (and how to measure it), the ethics of protected areas, responding to external threats such as climate change, conflicts over land use, invasive alien species, poaching, sustainable financing, urban issues related to protected areas, working with local and indigenous peoples in and around protected areas, and collaborating with the other five Commissions on protected area issues, particularly SSC and CEESP. Contributing to international conventions and programmes (especially the Aichi targets of 17% land and 10% of marine habitats protected) will also offer ways to improve the contributions of protected areas to the evolving cultures of the 21st Century. Close collaboration is foreseen with the IUCN Secretariat, especially the Protected Areas Programme.

Institutional support

Jeff McNeely is currently retired, so can devote considerable time to the position and would be able to establish a Secretariat anywhere in the world. He has discussed funding with potential donors, with the intention of establishing a secretariat with a professional officer, an executive assistant, and support for at least one intern (building on the SSC model). He will be preparing project concepts in the coming months for discussion with potential donors if elected to the position.