



**WCPA**  
WORLD COMMISSION  
ON PROTECTED AREAS

THE IUCN WORLD COMMISSION ON PROTECTED AREAS  
OCEANIA  
Newsletter No. 4 2018



WCPA folk go to a lot of meetings, but we also look after our wellbeing by heading for nature. A visit to Wilson's Prom NP was hosted by Parks Victoria for a restorative two days after the World Urban Parks Congress. L-R Sean Southey CEC Chair, Jo Hopkins, Parks Victoria and WCPA leader Health and wellbeing, Joanne Wilson, International Affairs, OEH NSW, Julia Miranda Londono, Director Parks Colombia, Peter Cochrane, IUCN Councillor and Penelope Figgis, WCPA Oceania VC.

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#### 1. WCPA OCEANIA UPDATE

##### From the Vice Chair

Dear colleagues,

I write as many of our colleagues are gathered in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt for the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. WCPA will be well represented at this vital meeting as we head towards the critical year of 2020 when the world reports on the Aichi targets. The latest **The Protected Planet Report 2018** has just been released. It reviews the progress of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, which aims for the effective and equitable management of 17% of terrestrial and 10% of coastal and marine areas by 2020. The report concludes that the world is on track to meet the coverage aspect of Target 11, but emphasises the need to meet other aspects by 2020.

Read the Report @ <http://livereport.protectedplanet.net>

The last few months have been a busy and exciting time for IUCN WCPA. The big news was our chair Kathy MacKinnon being awarded the Prestigious Midori Prize for global achievement in biodiversity conservation (see below). In addition Australia had visits from WCPA Deputy Chair, Julia Miranda Londono, Sean Southey, Chair of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication from New York and WCPA's lead on People and Nature Karen Keeleysides from Canada.

A rich series of meetings was held around their visits with a major meeting on furthering the **#Natureforall alliance** in Australia held in Sydney thanks to the NSW Office of the Environment. Karen and Sean also held a reception for the concept in Melbourne during the World Urban Parks Congress where Julia and Karen were both speakers. <http://natureforall.global/>

The **World Urban Parks Congress** had multiple strands but we all found many likeminded people keen to join forces to emphasise the importance of parks both large and small for human health and well-being and other social outcomes in addition to their biodiversity and ecosystem importance. Also note IUCN's formation of the Urban Alliance below.

The Melbourne visit also allowed for Parks Victoria to host an excellent forum largely for their female staff on **women in conservation** where Julia, Karen and myself all spoke of our lives in conservation and enjoyed the interaction with the animated audience. This was followed by a **WCPA members gathering** where some 30 WCPA members were able to hear updates on key programme areas from myself and our guests and discuss future plans of WCPA.

Julia was much in demand as an inspirational world leader in conservation and finished her visit with a further **masterclass for Office of Environment** staff in Sydney and an address on the World Heritage listing of Chiribequete National Park hosted by the Colombian Ambassador to Australia.

##### Member Opportunities

###### Mentoring

Would you be interested in a mentoring program if we were to set one up?

Many of us believe that it is vital that one generation passes the benefits of their experience to the upcoming generation of younger conservationists. We have some interest expressed in setting up a relatively informal system of pairing a younger person with an experienced and

willing person in their field. Please let me know by my personal email and I will be in touch [penelope.figgis@outlook.com](mailto:penelope.figgis@outlook.com)

### Representations

Warragamba Dam. While WCPA carefully protects the independent advisory status of IUCN in World Heritage matters we ensure that the IUCN is kept properly informed of developments. We are currently sharing any information with IUCN given the federally acknowledged threats to the World Heritage Area from damming.

WCPA has long been a strong supporter and advocate for Indigenous land and sea management and will join others in Canberra in December to celebrate 20 years of Indigenous protected areas.

Thank you to Louise O'Flynn and Keith Twyford for their contributions to this edition of the WCPA newsletter. Please contribute if you locate an item of interest to our community.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### KATHY MACKINNON WINS MIDORI PRIZE FOR BIODIVERSITY



Midori Prize winners 2018 Abdul Hamid Zakri, Kathy Mackinnon and Assad Serhal

Photo: P.Figgis

The big news was of course the awarding of the prestigious Midori Prize to our Chair Dr Kathy MacKinnon. The prize is conferred by the AEON Foundation of Japan and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The three winners of the prize receive \$100,000 US each to continue their work. Midori means 'green' in Japanese

IUCN Director General Inger Andersen said "IUCN is very proud of Kathy's achievement. Midori's recognition celebrates her outstanding personal contribution to global conservation, but also the unique resource IUCN gains from its six Commissions of 13,000 experts who voluntarily contribute their immense experience, resources and networks to the work of the Union.

I was fortunate to join Kathy to attend the extensive three day series of events marking the award in Tokyo. Kathy gave an outstanding address covering the breadth of global environmental challenges and the contributions being made by WCPA. We are hoping this address will be posted shortly on the AEON Foundation website and also WCPA's webpage.

The other winners of the prize also gave excellent presentations. The delightful Assad Serhal from Lebanon spoke of his efforts in war torn Lebanon to build biodiversity conservation and human connection for peace and prosperity through the concept of community based conservation and sustainable use in the concept of 'Hima' Arabic for protected area. Abdul Hamid Zakri from Malaysia was the former Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of Malaysia but has made an outstanding contribution in many roles to global biodiversity and ecosystem services. He was a co-chair of the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and founding chair of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Service (IPBES). To read about Kathy's career and many achievements to date visit:

<https://www.iucn.org/news/protected-areas/201810/iucn-world-commission-protected-areas-chair-dr-kathy-mackinnon-wins-top-conservation-prize>  
<https://www.aeon.info/ef/en/prize/midori/winner/>

### **IUCN URBAN NATURE ALLIANCE FORMED**

IUCN has announced the formation of the Urban Nature Alliance. "By 2050, over two-thirds of the human population will be living in cities," says IUCN Director General Inger Andersen. "Nature can help shelter urban dwellers from the worst impacts of climate change and enable them to lead healthy, fulfilling lives. The new IUCN Urban Nature Alliance will help carve out more space for nature in urban areas, and accelerate the move towards green, liveable cities that are urgently needed across the globe.

The Alliance will also raise awareness of the value of ecosystems in urban areas, and of how these ecosystems can help address urban challenges including air pollution, flooding and health problems caused by lack of access to quality green spaces. The Alliance will also develop a City Nature Index, providing a standardised way for cities to measure the quality of their underlying stock of natural resources – known as 'natural capital'. The Index will be piloted in five cities, including Edinburgh, and will be available for use by governments, civil society and researchers.

<https://www.iucn.org/news/secretariat/201809/iucn-launches-global-alliance-greener-cities>

### **SOUTH AFRICA DECLARES 20 NEW MARINE PARKS**



On 25 October 2018, South Africa announced that the nation's Cabinet approved 20 new marine protected areas for designation in 2019. This establishes South Africa as a leader in African ocean protection, and contributes to protection of both the Southeast Atlantic Ocean and Southwest Indian Ocean – a uniquely South African opportunity!

The 20 areas include 18 new MPAs and expansions of Aliwal Shoal MPA and the conjoined Maputaland and St. Lucia MPAs. Together, the sites add approximately 50,000 km<sup>2</sup> to South Africa's protected area estate.

This is an area over two and a half times the size of the Kruger National Park, South Africa's largest protected area on land. It will increase protection of South Africa's waters from 0.4% to 5%. (This figure excludes the 180,000-km<sup>2</sup> MPA in South Africa's sub-Antarctic Prince Edward Islands territory.)

[https://www.environment.gov.za/mediarelease/molewa\\_22newproposed\\_mpas](https://www.environment.gov.za/mediarelease/molewa_22newproposed_mpas)

## **MAJOR PLEDGES FOR OCEAN HEALTH IN BALI**

In more good news for the oceans representatives of governments, the private sector, civil society groups and philanthropic organizations have pledged billions of dollars to protect vast swaths of the world's oceans.

The impacts of illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and climate change on the world's oceans were a focus of recently concluded Our Ocean Conference in Bali, Indonesia.

Global participants in this fifth Our Ocean Conference have pledged the highest amount of funding yet for new initiatives and commitments on the protection of a combined expanse of ocean eight times the size of Alaska. The event, hosted by the Indonesian government on the island of Bali, generated 287 pledges in bilateral and multilateral agreements between governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and philanthropic foundations. The pledges were valued at more than \$10 billion to protect some 14 million square kilometers (5.4 million square miles) of the world's oceans, according to Luhut Pandjaitan, Indonesia's coordinating minister for maritime affairs.

## **NEW PROTECTED AREA DATA OBSERVATORY**

The European Commission-Joint Research Center have just launched the latest version of the Digital Observatory for Protected Areas (DOPA) Explorer! Improvements compared to the previous version from February 2018 include

- A new graphical interface with improved search functions;
- Complete update to the July 2018 version of the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA):
- Indicators for all the world's protected areas bigger than 25 km<sup>2</sup> instead of 50 km<sup>2</sup>;
- Many new metrics and indicators including near real time information on droughts, fires, floods, coral bleaching stress, and sea surface temperature anomalies...

Check it out: [https://dopa-explorer.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dopa\\_explorer/](https://dopa-explorer.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dopa_explorer/)

## **BIODIVERSITY AND HEALTH IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

Members interested in the strongly emerging issues around health and conservation should note that the conference proceedings as well as the conference documentation of the European Conference on "Biodiversity and Health in the Face of Climate Change" are available now on our conference website at: <https://www.ecbcc2017.com/>

The conference was jointly organized by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and the European Network of Heads of Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA) in co-operation with the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ) / German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv). The event was co-sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) Regional Office for Europe.

An open-access book on the same topic will be released by Springer-Publications, early next year and in case you would like to get free printed copies of the conference proceedings, just send a note on how many you would like to get to [jutta.stadler@bfn.de](mailto:jutta.stadler@bfn.de)

## **HIGH ANXIETY IN BRAZIL WITH FEARS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ROLL BACK**

Many environmentalists fear that the election of Jair Bolsonaro will lead to major reductions in Brazilian government and environmental regulations. Mongabay reports that during the presidential campaign, Amazon deforestation rates rose by nearly 50 percent, possibly as Bolsonaro supporters and land grabbers anticipate government retreat from environmental protections. Analysts worry Bolsonaro will criminalize social movements and end the demarcation of indigenous reserves assured by the 1988 Constitution.

Bolsonaro also chose Tereza Cristina as Agriculture Minister. She is known for her support of pesticide deregulation, and for backing a bill to fast track socio-environmental licensing of large infrastructure projects such as dams, railways, roads, industrial waterways, and mines – a position Bolsonaro also supports.

<https://news.mongabay.com/2018/11/bolsonaro-pledges-government-shakeup-deregulation-amazon-development/>

### 3. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL NEWS

#### TRIBUTES

WCPA wishes to pay tribute to these outstanding conservationists who have sadly died recently.

#### VALE MARGARET THORSBORNE



To know Margaret was to love and respect her. This diminutive woman was a formidable and indefatigable champion for nature. She was best known for her feisty defence of the beautiful Hinchinbrook Island in Queensland but her contributions were many. Read this tribute to her life and work by the Wildlife Queensland of whom she was patron.

*“Margaret lived her life simply, with grace and humility, in absolute accord with her conservation principles – yet her influence was felt far beyond local boundaries. Indeed, where her work advanced the cause of threatened species, migratory birds or World Heritage areas it was of national and international importance. Margaret represented the epitome of what it is to be passionate, inspiring and*

*committed and her life will long remain as an outstanding example of service to country and community. “*

<http://townsville.wildlife.org.au/2018/10/17/margaret-grace-thorsborne-ao-1927-2018/>

#### MURRAY WILCOX QC



Murray Wilcox will be fondly remembered as one of Australia's great conservation figures. Murray, a Sydney Barrister in the 70s was very affected by the loss of Lake Pedder to damming in 1972. While becoming a distinguished federal court judge he was also a passionate and effective conservationists for over forty years.

He served on The Australian Advisory Committee for the Environment 74-76 and been the Foundation President of the Environmental Law Association of NSW. In the 70s he worked on many environmental issues and acted for

conservation organisations in high profile cases like the Myall Lakes Inquiry against sand mining and the Iwasaki case where ACF sought standing to oppose a tourism development.

In 1979 he was elected the President of the Australian Conservation Foundation, Australia's major NGO. Murray was President during a very active and tumultuous period in environmental history, including the production of Australia's first National Conservation Strategy, the definitive battle against the flooding of the Franklin Gordon wild rivers, numerous campaigns to protect native forests and the iconic battle to Save the Rainforests to name a few.

Murray had many achievements but should be particularly remembered for his very significant role in Australia's major conservation battle for the Franklin. It was Murray who drafted a legal opinion to the federal government which argued for the use of the external affairs powers of the constitution to be used to intervene in what had been seen as a state's issue, despite the area's World Heritage listing. He worked assiduously all through that campaign lobbying Ministers on both sides, and leading the formation of the National South West Coalition – the combined forces of Australian conservation groups to make the Franklin a defining issue of the 1983 federal election. After the election of the Labor government in 1983 he was central in shaping the World Heritage Properties Conservation Act which was confirmed by the High Court and saved this remarkable part of the world.

### **FERAL HORSE IMPACTS: THE KOSCIUSZKO SCIENCE CONFERENCE**



IUCN and WCPA have taken a clear stand on the issue of horses in Kosciuszko, the integrity of a protected area must not be compromised and science must dictate policy. Many WCPA members were among the 140 Australian scientists who attended a conference co-convened by the Australian Academy of Science and the Australian National University's Fenner School of Environment and Society and Deakin University on 8 November 2018. The conference distilled the scientific evidence and observations of the impacts of feral horses to the natural heritage values

of the Australian Alps national parks overall and especially Kosciuszko National Park. It was one response by scientists to the NSW 2018 Kosciuszko Wild Horse Heritage Act which effectively '*prioritises a harmful invasive species over the fragile ecosystems of a national park and world biosphere reserve*' (see fact sheet). It highlighted the multiple values threatened by feral horses and provided community access to the information through a Kosciuszko Science Accord, a conference abstracts booklet, published journal papers and publicity. Photo: Horse damage to wetlands G. Worboys

Academy news and media releases website:

<https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/news-and-media-releases/academy-hosts-conference-examine-latest-science-impacts>

Event website:

<https://www.science.org.au/news-and-events/events/feral-horse-impacts-kosciuszko-science-conference>

Feral horse fact sheet is now online on the Reclaim Kosciuszko website as a downloadable pdf or web text. See <https://reclaimkosci.org.au/myths-v-facts/>

### **P&O CRUISE SHIP POLLUTES GREAT BARRIER REEF MARINE PARK**

Cruise ship company P&O spilled 27,000 litres of food waste and grey water into the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in August 2018 a Senate estimates hearing has heard. A report prepared by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority investigating the incident says the spill occurred on 26 August after food waste was transferred to the ship's galley holding tank due to a shortage in capacity in its food waste tanks. Waste from the tank was then discharged by engineers into the marine park. Apparently, the vessel became aware of the incident on 27 August and subsequently informed the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority on 4 September.

The incident is still under investigation and P&O has agreed to provide the Senate estimates hearing with information including whether the incident had been made public and of any environmental impacts.

## CONCERNS OVER PROPOSED FLOODING OF BLUE MOUNTAINS WORLD HERITAGE AREA

Conservationists have written to UNESCO requesting a moratorium on NSW Government plans to raise the height of Warragamba dam, which could flood parts of the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. The group of 14 signatories, led by the former NSW Environment Minister, Bob Debus, and including Bob Brown and Christine Milne, wrote to the Chair of UNESCO's World Heritage Committee earlier this year to bring the proposal to the Committee's attention and warn that the natural heritage values of the area would be at risk should the proposal go ahead.

The proposal involves raising the dam wall by 14 metres. This would open 1,000 hectares of the World Heritage Area and 3,700 hectares of the surrounding national park to flooding. The NSW government announced the proposal as part of its broader flood mitigation strategy with a plan to commence construction by mid-2020.

## PRIVATE MEMBER'S BILL TO DE-GAZETTE MURRAY VALLEY NATIONAL PARK



A NSW Nationals MP has lodged a private member's bill to extinguish one of NSW's largest national parks, the 41,000-hectare Murray Valley National Park and revert it to a state forest to allow timber harvesters back in.

Austin Evans, the member for Murray is demanding the de-gazettal arguing that the national park is not in the best interests of locals and stating that compensation offered to buy out timber workers was insufficient while promises of increased tourism from creation of

the national park have not been delivered.

A national park has not been reversed in NSW before and such a move is expected to be met with great concern by the environmentalists who had fought for three decades to win support for the region's conservation.

Photo: David Finnegan NPWS

## 4. NEW ZEALAND NEWS

### TRAGIC LOSS OF DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION STAFF

WCPA deeply regrets the loss of two Department of Conservation colleagues who tragically died in October after their helicopter crashed. Paul Hondelink and Scott Theobald, along with pilot Nick Wallis, were on their way to undertake tahr control in the Haast area at the time.

Paul Hondelink had worked for DOC since 1987. He started as a programme manager in the Threats team in Wanaka, and pioneered Judas goat and tahr control work. Most recently he worked as a Senior Ranger, Biodiversity. Paul was also a critical part of New Zealand Police search and rescue and fire response.

Scott commenced work with DOC in 1996 and was a world pioneer in the use of dogs to detect predators. His first use of predator dogs was at Trounson Kauri Park detecting stoats in 1998. From his early work he developed the National Predator Dog programme in 2000, based in what was the Northland Conservancy. This grew into the Conservation Dogs Programme which combined Pest Detection Dog and Protected Species programmes.

DOC Director General Lou Sanson says DOC is devastated by this loss and acknowledges the significant conservation contribution of the men.



## ROSS SEA WORLDS LARGEST MARINE RESERVE



The recent IUCN Protected Planet report has designated the Ross Sea Region Marine Protected Area managed by the governments of New Zealand and United States of America as the world's biggest protected area at over two million square kilometres.

The region was added to the World Database on Protected Areas in 2017. Thanks to its designation, fishing is now banned in 432,000 square miles of this Antarctic

reserve, in an attempt to preserve over 16,000 species, including the Emperor and Adelie Penguins. Photo: IUCN

<https://news.nationalgeographic.com/2016/10/ross-sea-marine-protected-area-antarctica/>

## MEASURES TAKEN TO PREVENT SPREAD OF KAURI DIEBACK

Conservation Minister Eugenie Sage announced in October that the Department of Conservation will close 21 tracks across Kauri land to help prevent the spread of kauri dieback. An additional ten tracks will be partially closed, and open sections upgraded to eliminate wet and muddy sections of track and better protect the roots of kauri trees.

The measures are in response to the dieback because there is currently no known cure for kauri dieback. The best-known method to control the problem is to slow and stop the disease from spreading. The decision follows public consultation with most public submissions favouring closure. DOC has closed tracks in the past to prevent the spread of kauri dieback. For further information, visit: <https://www.doc.govt.nz/news/media-releases/2018/doc-closing-tracks-to-protect-kauri/>

## 5. PACIFIC ISLAND & PNG NEWS

### PAPUA NEW GUINEA TO CREATE 7,500 SQUARE KILOMETERS BISMARCK SEA MARINE PROTECTED AREAS BY 2021.

Papua New Guinea has announced its commitment to creating 7,500 square kilometers of marine protected areas in the Bismarck Sea by 2021. The new MPA network will encompass 2,500 square kilometers of coastal areas around Tikana and Lavongai islands including key coral reef systems in the Bismarck Sea, as well as 5,000 square kilometers of offshore areas identified as high priorities for marine conservation in New Ireland Province.

The Bismarck Sea is considered one of the most biologically diverse areas on Earth. Samper said that the marine ecosystems the new MPAs are designed to protect provide critical habitat for a number of species, including nearly 2,000 species of fish and more than 130 species of sharks and rays.

The PNG government has pledged to triple the coverage of its current MPA network, and this new 7,500-square-kilometer (nearly 2,900-square-mile) commitment will achieve that goal. According to WCS president and CEO Cristián Samper, the new MPAs will also help the country meet its Aichi Target goal of protecting 10 percent of its territorial waters and coastline by the year 2025.

The government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) made the announcement at the 5th annual Our Ocean Conference in Bali, Indonesia with the support of two conservation NGOs: the

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Marine Protected Areas Fund and Oceans 5. <https://news.mongabay.com/2018/11/png-to-create-7500-square-kilometers-of-new-marine-protected-areas-in-bismarck-sea/>

### **INFORMATION SHARING BOOSTS PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT**

A workshop was recently held in the Cook Islands to collect and collate information on the suite of protected areas across Rarotonga, Cook Islands. The intention is for the collected information to be shared on the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal which is described as a 'one stop resource' for information on protected areas in the Cook Islands and Pacific region.

The information will help to guide missing or conflicting content on protected areas in the Cook Islands. Information sharing allows national services, partners and stakeholders to freely contribute, view and utilise information to make informed decisions about the management of protected areas, biodiversity values, marine and terrestrial ecosystems, species and habitats, pressures and threats, management and governance SPREP says.

<https://www.sprep.org/news/protected-areas-in-the-cook-islands>

### **PACIFIC WORLD HERITAGE SITES UNDER-REPRESENTED**

Small island developing states (SIDS) in the Pacific are home to only eight of the world's 1092 UNESCO World Heritage sites with two of the sites: East Rennell in Solomon Islands and the Nan Madol Ceremonial Centre of Eastern Micronesia on the sites in danger list.

In the late 2000s the World Heritage Committee launched a program to increase representation of Pacific Island countries on the World Heritage list. The program to date has resulted in the inscription of several World Heritage sites with an additional 28 sites on UNESCO's tentative list.

The UNESCO Pacific World Heritage Action Plan 2016-2020 provides strategic guidance on priority regional and national actions. The plan recognises that the region offers a unique contribution to global heritage from the Pacific's cultural heritage and biodiversity, the Action Plan aims to increase community, national, regional and global awareness of Pacific heritage and building global recognition and support for increasing Pacific representation.

The Action Plan also considers why Pacific SIDS remain under-represented, identifying possible reasons including limited awareness of Pacific cultural and natural heritage outside the region; the Pacific's large geographic area, isolation and resource limitations; the need for increased awareness within island communities of the value of world heritage; the region's political instability and governance issues; and increased external challenges such as globalisation, the spread of pests and diseases, and climate change.

## **UPCOMING**

A World Protected Areas Leaders Forum will be held in Melbourne in March hosted by Parks Victoria.

The South American Protected Areas Congress will be held in Lima Peru in <https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/about/iii-latin-american-and-caribbean-congress-protected-areas>

The African Parks Congress will be held in Kenya in late 2019. tbc.

The 9th World Ranger Congress will be held in the village of Sauraha (on the border of Chitwan National Park), Nepal between 11th-17th November 2019.