

Responding to Climate Change: Guidance for Protected Areas Managers and Planners

Background

Climate change is happening now, and it is posing new challenges to managing and designing protected areas. Many protected areas are experiencing earlier springs and longer growing seasons, increased floods, rising sea levels, and other effects of global climate change. These changes to our climate will become more intense over time and they will require us to explore and implement new strategies and techniques for managing protected areas.

In response to needs for management-relevant information, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas is developing the Guidebook “Responding to Climate Change: Guidance for Protected Area Managers and Planners”. The Guidebook addresses key concepts, resources, and activities to consider in planning and implementing management decisions under a changing climate. It includes discussions on how to integrate protected area adaptation at local, regional, and national levels and applies to all environments – terrestrial, coastal, marine, freshwater, and to biomes that are arid, wet, hot, or cold.

Ahead of the World Parks Congress, a group of climate change practitioners designed and developed a Consultation Draft document, incorporating state of the art background information and adaptation approaches to serve as guidance for protected area managers around the world. Acknowledging that threats and challenges greatly vary across geographies, the authors aim to incorporate new perspectives from professionals around the world, so as to accomplish a more comprehensive and ultimately a more useful document. We expect the consultation process launched through the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 and in the months following will inform a revised, richer final document.

Gaining Input on the Consultation Draft

A consultation DRAFT of the Guidebook is available at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014 for review and input. We actively seek suggestions, case studies, new insights and concepts, and other information that will improve and enhance the Guidebook. The process of gaining input and buy-in from Congress participants will allow for multiples perspectives on what is needed to help decision making under climate change and will lead to a more successful implementation of the final product. We will incorporate suggestions and materials after the Congress and we anticipate completing a final version in mid-2015. Two events will be held at the Congress to facilitate the launch and discussion of the Guidebook.

1. Celebration and Consultation Guidebook Launch

Where: Nature Based Solutions Pavilion

When: Saturday, November 15th, 17:30-19:00

Aim: Celebrate the newly drafted Guidebook and direct participants in how they may review and provide feedback during and after the Congress.

A limited number of hard copies will be distributed to participants at the Nature Based Pavilion book launch event. A pdf version of the Consultation Draft is available on the IUCN Responding to Climate Change Stream website (<http://www.worldparkscongress.org/drupal/node/111>) along with questions to prompt review of the document. We expect to advertise and spread the document to a broader audience electronically by sharing the website directly with participants at the Congress. We will advertise the location of the electronic document by sharing a QR code (see the last page of this brief) that can access the website via a smart phone. The QR code can be printed or shown on a screen or posted on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. We will also post a banner with the QR code in the Responding to Climate Change Stream Home Room (Hall 3A2).

2. Side Event/Workshop

Where: Hall 3A2 (Responding to Climate Change Stream Homeroom)

When: Tuesday, November 18th, 19:00-21:00

Aim: Interact with WPC participants at the end of the Congress to solicit more direct feedback and determine next steps for delivering the Guidebook

The workshop will allow the authors to present in a more detail the content and objectives for final Guidebook and offer participants an opportunity to interact and provide feedback. Because the workshop is being held at the World Parks Congress, we expect to receive valuable insight from a range of managers and from the global conservation community. In addition to requesting direct input from those who have read the consultation DRAFT, the workshop will have the benefit of insights and implications following on 4 days of sessions on climate change at the Congress. The Stream has established a structured process for synthesizing key elements from each session, identifying what topics sessions participants find most interesting, what tools and information they need, and what issues present the greatest challenges for protected area managers and planners. This information will be presented at the workshop and discussed in the context of the balance of information already in the Guidebook and what potential new sections/authors/case studies are needed for the final product.

Scan the QR code at the bottom with your smart phone to locate the consultation draft and other documents on the IUCN website or go to <http://worldparkscongress.org/drupal/node/111>

Please send your review comments to:

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