



September 19, 2014

Sydney gears up for once-in-a decade global conservation event

Tomorrow marks World Parks Day and Sydney counts down to host the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014, a major international event which will shape national parks management for the next ten years and beyond, said NSW Deputy Chief Executive National Parks and Wildlife Service, Michael Wright.

The NSW Government is co-hosting the event at Sydney Olympic Park in less than two months, from 12-19 November. The Congress is convened by IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, the world's largest environmental network.

Mr Wright said the Congress will feature more than 1,700 presentations and events, with Heads of State, international Environment Ministers and more than 4,000 delegates from 160 countries. The last Congress was held in Durban, South Africa in 2003.

The Congress will feature local and international experts of the highest calibre including:

- **Sylvia Earle**, renowned oceanographer and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence;
- **Luvuyo Hlanganani Mandela**, social entrepreneur and youth advocate and great-grandson of the late South African President Nelson R. Mandela;
- Brazilian Senator **Jorge Viana** who has found creative ways to save the Amazonian rainforest;
- **Harvey Locke**, global leader in the field of parks, wilderness and landscape conservation;
- **Nadya Hutagalung**, Indonesian-Australian media personality and eco-activist who founded Let Elephants Be Elephants, a region-wide campaign to reduce the demand for ivory, and
- **Emmanuel de Merode**, Chief Warden of Virunga National Park in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.

Sydneysiders can also get involved by attending the free family festival *Planetfest* on Sunday 16 November, at Cathy Freeman Park, Homebush Bay.

“Hosting this prestigious once-in-a-decade event is a coup for Australia and especially Sydney, providing a platform for the world to discuss the challenges and successes in managing parks and protected areas across the world,” Mr Wright said.

“There are streams which focus on Indigenous management, engaging young people in conservation, protecting our oceans, climate change and the health benefits of getting out in nature.

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IUCN
WORLD PARKS CONGRESS
SYDNEY 2014

This November, the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) is co-hosting a global environmental event, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's World Parks Congress. Jointly hosted with Parks Australia, the prestigious Congress is a once in a decade event. Read more: www.worldparkscongress.org

“The Congress outcome will be called the *Promise of Sydney* and will capture the most strategic thinking of those present, inspiring solutions for the challenges we all face globally and charting the future direction for our precious national parks and reserves.

“The NSW Government is excited to be working with IUCN and the Australian Government to make this Congress a success.”

More information on the IUCN World Parks Congress can be found at www.worldparkscongress.org

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