

IUCN statement for the 13th Round Table Meeting, 15th-16th March 2017

Your excellencies, co-chairs, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, I would like to thank the Royal Government of Bhutan for your invitation and the opportunity to speak. Thank you also for your warm welcome and your generous hospitality.

On behalf of IUCN I offer my congratulations on hosting this successful, ambitious, and inspiring round table meeting.

IUCN's global programme is also aligned and focused on delivering against the Sustainable Development Goals, albeit a narrower selection than the comprehensive coverage described in this round table meeting.

IUCN would be honoured to make a contribution to the aspirations described during this meeting, to the best of our ability, drawing on our global and regional network of over 1200 government and non-government members; over 11,000 experts and practitioners in protected areas management, climate change adaptation, human wildlife conflict, water and wetlands management, forest landscape assessment, endangered species assessments, sustainable livelihoods development, and other relevant and related issues; and our good relations and accreditation with multilateral and global institutions such as the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund.

IUCN looks forward to further discussing and progressing with the Royal Government of Bhutan, and other partners, long term and strategic development of new initiatives to help meet the aspirations of the 12th five year plan, as well as options and opportunities related to specific partnerships and projects already in development, including:

- the options for participation with IUCN in a long term global initiative on ecosystem based adaptation to climate change in mountains,
- the options for developing further engagement with the Asia Protected Areas Partnership,
- further development of initiatives building on the BRIDGE transboundary watershed management project
- the options for supporting activities relating to wetlands and the Ramsar convention
- the options for further developing ideas and opportunities for assessment of species including Red List assessments building on the successful Red List of the Endemic Plant Species of Bhutan
- the options for working together with the Royal Government of Bhutan and other partners on the important issue of human wildlife conflict, and
- other opportunities that may contribute to the aspirations for Gross National Happiness set out over these two days.

Once again, on behalf of IUCN, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this inspiring event and for the opportunities and invitations to develop ways in which IUCN may make a contribution.

Your Excellencies, distinguished delegates, I remain at your service.

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