



YOUTH AND INTERGENERATIONAL
RESEARCH, IMPACT AND ACTION
GROUP

Review: Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Partnership across IUCN

Report

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Submitted on behalf of *InterGens* by



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List of Abbreviations

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity

CEESP: Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy

CEC: Commission on Education and Communication

CEM: Commission on Ecosystem Management

EFI: European Forest Institute

GYBN: Global Youth Biodiversity Network

IFSA: International Forestry Students' Association

IPLCs: Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

IPS: Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability

IPCC: Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

IPBES: Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

IUCN: International Union for the Conservation of Nature

IUFRO: International Union of Forest Research Organisations

KIs: Key Informants

LGBTQIA2S+: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, Two-Spirit, and the countless affirmative ways in which people choose to self-identify.

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SSC: Species Survival Commission

UNCCD: United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNEP: United Nations Environment Programme

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WCEL: World Commission on Environmental Law

WCPA: World Commission on Protected Areas

WWF: World Wide Fund for Nature

YPs: Young Professionals

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Executive Summary

Harnessing the potential of young people within global conservation is a critical opportunity. As the world's largest conservation organisation, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has a unique role to play in mainstreaming meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships as a critical catalyst to its global conservation efforts.

Commissioned by IUCN, to a brief agreed with all six IUCN Commission Chairs and the IUCN Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability, this review report presents critical insights and recommendations for youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnership as it relates to global conservation and the role of IUCN. The research for this review began in August 2020 and concluded in November 2020. The review provides a history of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnership within IUCN and produces insights for the future based on our research with key stakeholders and the Union. The review demonstrates that IUCN has been making short-term to mid-term strategies towards youth engagement. However, with an unclear mandate and limited commitments, the impact has been inconsistent and not adequately measurable.

Hence, the key priorities of this review are to (1) define what meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships in IUCN should include; (2) highlight successful best practices, experiences and lessons learnt in youth engagement, and intergenerational partnerships within and outside IUCN; and (3) present a new set of recommendations for mainstreaming and institutionalising youth engagement and intergenerational partnership effectively that are realistic and can be sustained at all levels of IUCN.

Learning from models of youth engagement

A literature review was carried out for various models of youth engagement in environmental governance in different international organisations and IUCN to highlight what has worked and what could be scaled. From this, it emerges that IUCN is among the few institutions that have attempted a youth engagement model that seeks to meaningfully engage across generations (through the Taskforce for Intergenerational Partnerships for Sustainability - IPS). Insights of youth engagement from other institutions are reviewed to demonstrate the diversity of models and their intersections amongst themselves and with IUCN. Three key findings emerging from this review are:

- international institutions such as IUCN, have occasionally demonstrated interest in engaging young people;
- this provides a basis for mainstreaming youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships in their long-term strategies; and
- In so doing, it allows them to address some of the evident challenges relating to youth tokenism that seem to limit their long-term commitment to invest in youth engagement.

Engaging Stakeholders

Our stakeholder engagement included 827 young and senior professionals from across the IUCN and other organisations. The main themes emerging from the analysis of these engagements were:

- Due to the nature of the IUCN mandate, young people aged 18 and 35 (often the young professionals) show remarkable participation, contributions and achievements within IUCN. This is a good scope for IUCN but does not mean ignoring other age groups such as

school-aged children and adolescents who are currently underrepresented within IUCN's youth engagement initiatives.

- Mentoring, including 'reverse mentoring', should be a key component of IUCN's youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships strategy.
- There is value in learning from experience within and outside IUCN as a tool for fostering meaningful collaborations and interventions for youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships.
- IUCN needs to capitalise on its strengths and opportunity in providing leadership in the area of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnerships within its constituents and the global conservation community.
- Structural and cultural changes are required within IUCN specifically, organisational support systems including dialogue, funding, mentoring, and professional development.
- Decentralised action is key. It is necessary to support the implementation of the IUCN youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships strategy through IUCN Regional offices (and country offices where possible) due to their capacity to better mobilise diverse youth in their regions for action.
- Any mandate towards youth engagement and intergenerational partnership must embody gender, diversity and inclusion commitments, among them special consideration for Women, Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) and LGBTQIA2S+, and acknowledgement of their roles as traditional authorities and/or special knowledge holders. The notable progress in gender mainstreaming at IUCN can provide guidance and best practices for youth mainstreaming.

Assessing collective leadership

A widely disseminated survey based on the Collective Leadership Compass developed following the interviews, webinars, and targeted surveys, gathered 791 responses that relate to the inclusiveness and broad perspective of IUCN collaboration systems related to youth and intergenerational partnership. The aim of the survey was to gain a broad perspective of a variety of qualities that provide insights into patterns within collaboration systems that may aid in shifting the system behaviours and actions towards the achievement of stated goals. Three key findings from this survey are:

- the IUCN collaboration system can take advantage of its strengths to increase its commitment to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership;
- a structural commitment to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership would anchor these efforts and significantly increase their effectiveness and that;
- IUCN can systematically take better advantage of working with youth.

Key recommendations

A. Implement an IUCN-wide mandate/policy statement on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. This includes the following sub-recommendations for immediate action:

- 1. Establish a permanent Office/Unit on Youth** with a Director for Youth and Intergenerational Partnerships that will:
 - a. Design an IUCN-wide youth engagement and intergenerational partnership strategy;** establishing youth focal points across all IUCN bodies;

- b. **Coordinate existing youth engagement and intergenerational partnership activities** across the IUCN to align to the new mandate and strategy;
 - c. **Mobilise investments** to drive the youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships agenda across IUCN.
2. **Establish a Youth Endowment Fund** in partnership with relevant stakeholders to provide sustained financial backing for the implementation of the youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships mandate and strategy
- B. Strengthen IUCN systems in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnership**
1. **Foster a “culture” for meaningful youth engagement** through transparent, regular, and open communication within IUCN.
 2. **Establish a structured scheme for mentorship and intergenerational dialogue opportunities** within the IUCN Secretariat, Council, Commissions and membership. Ensure that at least one third and above of positions within IUCN are dedicated to youth.
 3. **Enhance efforts in intergenerational partnerships in key IUCN programmes** through joint-research and setting of standards for youth mainstreaming.
 4. **Develop educational programs and training opportunities** that are targeted towards specific age groups.
 5. Develop youth engagement models that **cater for the heterogeneity of young people** including school-going children and youth, BIPOC, and other groups of young people.
 6. Encourage collaborations that ensure that youth leaders from **Indigenous and equity-seeking communities, especially communities in the global south** are included in IUCN conservation efforts.
 7. **Establish IUCN Young Champions Award** for youth in conservation, and enhance skills development through a scaled Internships and Junior Professional Officers Programme across all IUCN offices.
- C. Enhance communication in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnerships**
1. **Include Forums for intergenerational partnerships across all IUCN important events** such as the Congresses.
 2. **Develop and deliver effective communication strategies** that facilitate a clear understanding within the IUCN community about the importance of empowering younger generations and intergenerational partnerships.
 3. **Strengthen existing communication channels** to facilitate streamlined sharing of information relating to IUCN structures, activities and opportunities that promote youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships.

Section 1: Background and Review Process

1.1. Background

The ongoing complex global environmental governance challenges demand transformative governance models that future-proof the current, mid-term, and long-term conservation planning and actions. The role of young, diverse, and emerging leaders and intergenerational partnerships in global environmental governance processes is a vital policy and planning lacuna that has been continuously reinforced and highlighted (Case et al., 2015; Spijkers, 2018; Zurba & Trimble, 2014). Engaging young people¹ in nature conservation is particularly important as the population under the age of 35 encompasses a significant share, around 50 percent, of the overall population in many parts of the world (especially Asia, Africa and Latin America). While the youth contribution is enshrined in the concept of sustainable development as articulated by the Brundtland report, ‘Our Common Future’ (Brundtland, 1987), these principles and actions have not been adequately elevated to achieve a wide-scale and lasting global conservation impact. Fortunately, the engagement of diverse stakeholders in conservation processes, planning, implementation and monitoring is becoming more inclusive, and this has fostered youth engagement² as a core approach to achieve present and future conservation goals (Chen et al., 2019). Therefore, it is imperative for international organisations to have a deeper understanding of what youth engagement should look like and how it should be blended with the ongoing governance processes of conservation organisations to achieve the intended goals.

IUCN has a vision to encourage youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships to such an extent that they commissioned a review study on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships with the aim of informing the development and implementation of meaningful and sustainable Union-wide youth engagement and intergenerational partnership and integrating such an approach into the governance, policies, budgets, and the culture of IUCN. Five main objectives were to be achieved through this review:

- Defining what diverse, meaningful youth engagement should be understood to include in IUCN, including through a review of leading literature, including effective engagement across the developmental stages and identities of youth (i.e. children, teenagers, and young and emerging professionals);
- Summarising the full variety of relevant dialogues and collaborative efforts undertaken in IUCN since 2008;
- Highlighting successful best practices, experiences, and lessons learned from IUCN's Global Programme on Governance and Rights (GPGR) (IUCN, 2019), as well as entrenched challenges resulting from these past efforts, including lessons learned from other intersecting IUCN efforts on the inclusion of diversity – such as programmes, experience from members and commissions related to gender and Indigenous peoples;
- Compiling a new set of recommendations for mainstreaming and institutionalising youth engagement and intergenerational partnership effectively, and in ways that are

¹ The United Nations, for statistical purposes, defines those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 as youth without prejudice to other definitions by Member States

² The result when young people are involved in responsible, challenging actions to create positive social change: http://actforyouth.net/youth_development/engagement/

realistic and can be sustained, at all levels of IUCN, including in terms of dialogue, collaborative initiatives, governance and accountability, and the results sought and priorities;

- Exploring how the Union can support and empower the multitude of currently existing, effective conservation youth-led organisations and networks.

IUCN is committed to identifying priority actions to acknowledge, enhance and mainstream youth engagement and intergenerational partnership within IUCN. The commitment is motivated by the persistent demand from and within the Union for meaningful engagement of young people. There is increasing evidence for youth-focused conservation initiatives leading to better conservation outcomes, child and youth development, and their educational advancement. Commitment of IUCN leadership to provide direction on mainstreaming intergenerational equity and justice with specific consideration for supporting future generations of conservation leaders is therefore vital. This report recommends a holistic, all-inclusive, and collaborative approach for stakeholder participation to transform global conservation efforts.

The overall report is organised into the following sections:

Section one presents the background of the review. Section two offers an in-depth analysis of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships models within and outside IUCN. Sections three and four are based on the findings of the stakeholder engagements and the Collective Leadership Compass survey to help determine actions that IUCN might take to mainstream youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. Recommendations are offered in section five.

1.2. Review process

The review process took place from August 2020 to November 2020 and involved four phases (see Annexure II for more details): desktop review; Key stakeholder consultation; data analysis; and Writing and Internal review (Fig. 1.1).

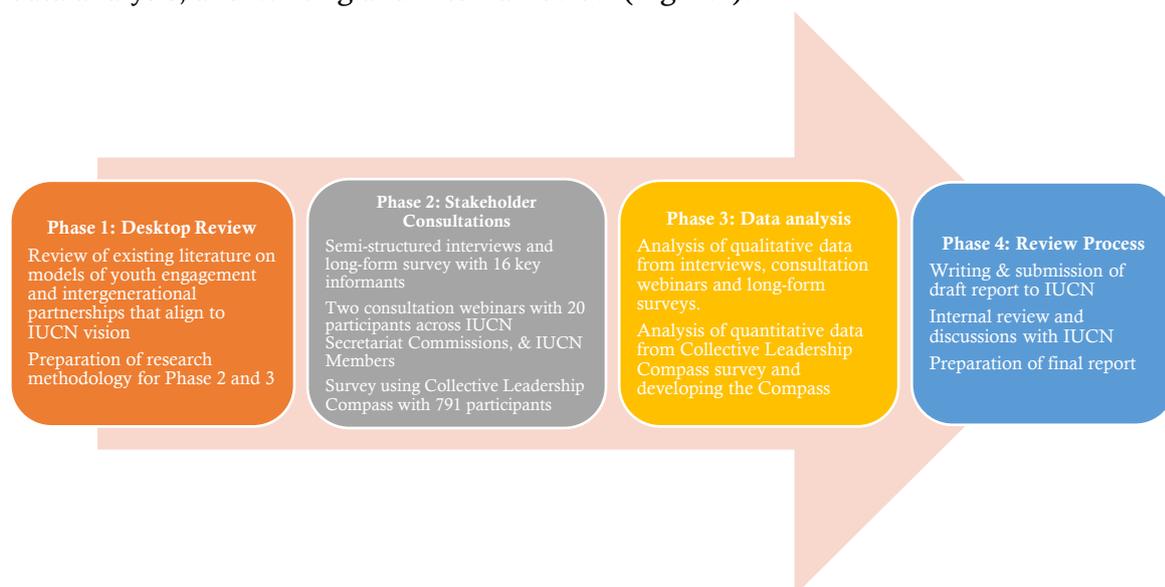


Figure 1.1. Four stages of the review process

Section 2: An Overview of Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Partnerships within and outside IUCN

2.1. Introduction

In attempting to understand youth engagement in the context of intergenerational partnerships, there are three ways in which relationships between ‘younger’ and ‘older’ people may be structured³, even though the engagement varies in terms of impact depending on identities. First, young people may be viewed as subjects whereby adults assume they know what is best for young people and control situations in which they allow them to be involved. Secondly, young people may be viewed as recipients whereby adults allow young people to participate in decision-making because they think the experience will be ‘good for them’. Thirdly, young people are viewed as partners whereby adults respect suggestions and criticism of young people as having something significant to offer, recognise the greater impact and collaborative opportunities they bring to an institution, and they are increasingly encouraged to become involved in discussions and decision-making processes.

The discourse of youth in citizen science has made significant contributions to fostering youth participation in global conservation actions and in building their capacity for conservation actions and leadership (Ballard et al., 2017). Beyond behavioural change, citizen science helps to reframe environmental education targets to focus on developing the individual and community capacity for thinking critically, learning continually and acting more adaptively to promote resilient socio-ecological systems. As young professionals learn about environmental sciences and practices, they also start to identify their interest areas, develop an attitude, and understand that their agency matters in the broader context of nature conservation.

Therefore, investing in the engagement of young professionals promises multiple benefits to global conservation in the twenty-first century that include, among others, the building of a critical mass and hence increasing the pool of motivated conservation experts and leaders; changing the attitudes of new generations towards conservation; and most importantly, ensuring the inclusion of often marginalised groups in efforts to achieve sustainable development (Jana et al., 2008; Mulongoy & Chape, 2004). There is also a belief that new generations come with innovations (revolutions or new ways of doing things) and bring in new energy and perspective which, when combined with existing knowledge and tools, achieve a greater goal of transformation (Zeldin et al., 2013).

A meaningful approach to the engagement of young people in global conservation must take into consideration the centrality of power dynamics in being ‘old’ and in being ‘young’ and the interplay with efforts to achieve intergenerational equity. This has to be coupled with contextualising definitions and discourses surrounding the terms ‘young’ and ‘youth’ particularly when this concerns the heterogeneity and related future aspirations (Ramey et al., 2017). Youth engagement is also anchored in intergenerational partnerships as a way of embodying strength, reciprocity, respect, and inclusion in the processes through which the ‘old’ and ‘young’ work alongside each other to achieve mutually shared goals.

³ Adapted from YouthDoIt: <https://www.youthdoit.org/themes/meaningful-youth-participation/>

It is also about key conservation actors acknowledging that young people in their unique disposition, perceptions, ingenuity, and creativity, can, and indeed do, make significant and innovative contributions towards addressing complex global challenges of biodiversity conservation, restoration, and climate adaptation and mitigation (El Zhogbi 2015; Scheve et al., 2006; Zeldin et al., 2000). As such, there is a need to design and implement strategies that enable meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships in global conservation.

Recent studies show evidence of varied efforts to recognise and empower young people towards bringing constructive change in global conservation efforts in particular and sustainable development in general (Arnold et al., 2009; Browne et al., 2011; Dickson-Hoyle et al., 2018). These include increasing the knowledge base, developing technical and soft skills, providing leadership opportunities, and engaging in experiential learning among many others.

IUCN has a unique role to play in accelerating youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships as a critical catalyst to its global conservation efforts. Best practices from ongoing initiatives need to be identified, scaled and sustained. Doing so goes beyond ensuring young people are included; it is an assurance that futuristic targets embodied in the SDGs, CBD post-2020 biodiversity targets, the Paris Agreement, and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, among other global commitments, are achieved. The following subsections provide an analysis of past youth engagement initiatives to inform evidence for the reasons and pathways recommended to achieve the targets of youth mainstreaming⁴ and intergenerational partnerships at IUCN.

2.2. Opportunities and Challenges in Youth Engagement and Intergenerational Partnerships

To engage in global conservation is to engage in the complex work of shaping and transcending science and policy interface and boundaries between different knowledge systems (e.g., scientific, Indigenous, and local knowledge) as well as between generations (Gustafsson et al., 2019). To engage young people in global conservation is not only an embodiment of conservation efforts, but it is also about acknowledging the context, narratives, and frames that shape the engagement of young people in decision making and other spaces. An intergenerational approach to youth engagement benefits people of all ages. For the younger professionals, they are supported to access resources and networks that they often have less access to, while also benefiting from the experience of the senior professionals who offer mentoring and role-modelling. On the other hand, one can learn from young professionals new ideas, emerging technologies, approaches and gain enthusiasm for solving emerging conservation issues.

⁴ Taking into account the distinct and expressed needs and aspirations of young people in fields of competence and promoting opportunities for young people to take on greater responsibilities: https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/tc_addis06_1_unesco.pdf

2.2.1. Institutions and policy frameworks

However, the lack of, and/or limited institutionalisation of youth engagement in governance structures has so far been a significant concern in the meaningful engagement of young people in global conservation. Indeed, the current forms of collaboration between 'the young' and 'the old' have been observed to be often fragile, with younger generations having relatively little influence on and/or involvement in strategic decision-making processes and actions (Jørgensen et al., 2019), or the older people being hands-off in the engagement. The role of expertise in decision making is also important to discuss in this context, and some of the exclusion of youth is because important directions and decisions are usually allocated to those with the most specific knowledge and expertise. Overall, achieving intergenerational partnerships is challenging because of the age-stratified nature of most societies (Taft & Gordon, 2015); limited resources (including time) required to meaningfully engage people of all ages; the lack of trust across generations; and systematic challenges of inclusion of minority groups, including Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC), young women, girls, LGBTQIA2S+, and people with disabilities. Inequalities and discrimination may also overlap due to multiple identities (e.g., young Indigenous women face multiple layers of exclusion compared to young men).

Additionally, challenges arise from the alienation of young people from their communities and institutions and the ritualistic and tokenistic rather than real and meaningful engagement which curtails their voice (Brady et al., 2020).

Another key challenge in youth mainstreaming (youth engagement and intergenerational collaborations⁵) has been the inclusion of the voices and perspectives of young people, especially within decision-making processes (Ramey et al., 2017). While young people have always been part of the communities where conservation actions are taking place, traditional stakeholder engagement strategies have often failed to acknowledge youth as distinct and independent actor (Gopnik et al., 2012). This also overlooks the fact that the future of conservation frameworks will depend on the actions taken by the next generation of decision-makers.

Interrogating such generational dynamics to find a middle ground starts with the process of building trust and exploring the potential roles of different actors within intergenerational partnership models. Additionally, youth agency must be considered and incorporated in international governance processes.

For example, the centrality of young people in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is evidenced by the over 20 youth-specific targets spread over six key SDGs, including Goal 2 (zero hunger), Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goal 10 (reduce inequality) and Goal 13 (climate action) among others (UN, 2018). Consequently, young people actively engage in localising the SDGs through

⁵ Intergenerational programmes increase cooperation, interaction, and exchange between people of different generations, allowing the sharing of talents and resources, and the support of each other in relationships that benefit both the individuals and their community: <https://www.gu.org/resources/because-were-stronger-together/>

efforts such as those to help avert the threats of and manage the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, unemployment, poverty, gender inequality, conflict, and migration, among others.

In the context of biodiversity conservation, paragraph B of Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) Decision COP XI/8⁶ clearly stresses acknowledging the importance of youth participation in decision-making processes at all levels. It further encourages Parties and other governments to fully include young people in all relevant processes and national biodiversity strategies and action plans. CBD invites Parties to support youth initiatives and networks that support the three objectives of the Convention. As a result, three youth initiatives have emerged—Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), the Young Naturalist Network, and the “GO4BIODIV”.

Similarly, the New Delhi and Doha work programmes of UNFCCC in Article 6, adopted in 2002 and 2012, respectively, target youth as a major group for effective engagement in the formulation and implementation of decisions on climate change. A youth constituency (YOUNGO) was adopted by the UNFCCC in 2009, allowing a representation of youth organisations and hence youth voices at the international climate negotiations. This, however, was also a result of years of continuous advocacy by young people at the UNFCCC Conference of Parties.

Despite this wide reference to young people in most of the SDGs and UNFCCC and CBD which are relevant to global conservation, some studies have observed insufficient efforts and/or indicators to address these commitments (Narksompong & Limjirakan, 2015). With such crucial gaps, international and agenda-setting organisations such as IUCN that are viewed as pacesetters in global conservation ought to also offer guidance and leadership on the necessity and value of mainstreaming youth engagement in global conservation and even work on enhancing the reporting of their contribution to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership.

2.2.2. Youth tokenism

Arising from the forms of engagement at the international fora mentioned above is youth tokenism that hinders the potential for developing unbiased, transparent, equitable and just partnerships. There are several indicators of tokenism, such as: young people are present but have no clear and defined role; young people are assigned tasks that adults do not want to do; young people make appearances and get involved in work without previous training; and one young person is appointed into a board or council with not enough decision-making powers or his/her voice is not clearly and thoughtfully heard or accepted. Consequently, young people lack and/or have limited opportunities to interrogate or challenge decisions made by those in power, thereby not achieving meaningful outcomes from contributions that demand meaningful intergenerational collaboration. The side-lining of a generation removes the potential for multi-generational input and assumes that only one generation (often the older and more experienced) has the valuable knowledge to solve existing crises (Wexler, 2011).

⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/decisions/cop/11/8>

Past reports addressing youth tokenism have proposed some principles towards embodying meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnership (Women Deliver, 2016):

- Involving young professionals in all stages of developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating global conservation programmes and initiatives;
- Diversifying representation in global conservation by including young professionals from marginalised groups (young women, young men, and Indigenous men and women);
- Enabling young people's access to information to effectively understand the technical content, and the socio-economic and the political context upon which global conservation is realised;
- Intentionally promoting power-sharing amongst all stakeholders so that young people are partners and leaders, rather than recipients;
- Promoting clear, unbiased, just, and transparent communication in global conservation that people of all ages can understand;
- Ensuring that young people are adequately compensated for their contribution to any form of work in global conservation (advice, coordination, mobilisation, etc)

Box 2.1. Diversity and inclusion

The engagement of young professionals must consider the involvement of marginalised/equity-seeking groups such as youth with disabilities, youth from Indigenous and local communities, as well as gender, transgender and LGBTQIA2S+ community.^{7,8} For the Indigenous youth, this is provided for in the world heritage, biological diversity, and climate conventions, which propose developing integrated strategies to build bridges between the biological and cultural diversity agendas (Belfer et al., 2019). Among other things, the inclusion of Indigenous people facilitates the intergenerational transfer of Indigenous knowledge and supports dialogue over conversation (Fernández-Llamazares & Cabeza, 2017). Furthermore, Indigenous youth have immersed roots through their ancestral lineage, wisdom, and intelligence, which gives them a sense of belonging, a strong cultural identity and ability to become resilient and influential individuals. Since they are the future leaders for their communities, it is critical to empower them to control the erosion of their traditional knowledge, practices, and habitats and begin to create more equitable, sustainable, and interdependent systems for the coming generations. Examples from Oceania, North America, and Asia highlight the importance of hybrid knowledge frameworks that include both Indigenous knowledge and western science for developing suitable programmes that can play a role in the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge. The approach draws attention to the complexity involved in establishing clearly articulated pathways for Indigenous youth to enter and then retain employment in the natural resources sector and its management (Fordham & Schwab, 2012; Dhyani et al., 2020).

⁷https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/annex_9_to_c_95_8_iucn_gender_equality_and_womens_empowerment_policy.pdf

⁸ https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/iucn_ip_unpfii_update_april_2017.pdf

Based on this analysis of opportunities and challenges of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships, the next subsection provides an analysis of the current initiatives in youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN and is then followed by a summary of similar initiatives outside IUCN in Table 2.1.

2.3. Youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN

IUCN's efforts to focus on young people and future generations are almost two decades old. The former South African President Nelson Mandela's address at the 2003 IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, *Outcome 6: 'Younger generations are empowered in relation to protected areas'* in the Durban Action Plan (2003) was the critical manifesto that initiated the first step to engage young professionals within IUCN Commissions. This was closely followed by the establishment of an 'inter-Commission task force on intergenerational integration within IUCN' (IUCN, 2005a) led by IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and then later the passing of Resolution 3.029, *Capacity Building of Young Professionals* (IUCN, 2005b) at the 2008 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, Thailand that committed to 'establish a Young Professionals Programme within IUCN'.

These commitments set a precedent for IUCN and triggered a series of future resolutions, recommendations, and actions in the capacity development and empowerment of young conservation leaders (Bianco et al., 2016). Resolution 4.008 adopted at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Jeju, South Korea in 2012 committed IUCN to promoting and empowering a diverse new generation of young leaders through intergenerational partnerships in order to meet the complex conservation challenges and cultivate a just, sustainable, and peaceful world. Consequently, the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia provided a launchpad for such collaborative efforts with the 'Inspiring a New Generation' (*ING*)-Stream 8 focusing on the legacy whereby future generations would develop and nurture life-long relationships with nature and the support for conservation that flows from that connection. From this stream of youth-related events, young people and National Park and Protected Area leaders were poised to build on the simple equation that LOVE of Nature + ACTION = CHANGE with the desired outcome of an enduring connection to nature (Lopoukhine et al., 2014). The Stream also delivered on CBD Aichi Target 1, 'people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably' (CBD, 2010).

The present response by IUCN to the ongoing push for intergenerational collaboration has been to bring "engaging the next generations" back on the agenda for the 6th IUCN World Conservation Congress to be held in Marseille, France, in 2021. At this Congress, the 2021–2024 IUCN quadrennial programme will be launched, setting the global conservation agenda for the next four years. Unlike past IUCN programmes, the current draft makes significant reference to youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships (IUCN, 2019). Through this programme, IUCN intends to define its mandate in youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships and proceed to actualise this through programme implementation. Indeed, related efforts are evident in the commitment to a Global Youth Summit as part of the upcoming 2021 IUCN World Conservation Congress activities. Additionally, a youth component is included in each Forum event. The present review, which

is the basis of this report, is part of these initiatives. It is hoped that these initiatives will inspire young people to take forward the cause of global conservation and sustainable development.

2.3.1. Youth engagement through IUCN Commissions

Historically, youth engagement within IUCN, apart from that associated with the Junior Professional Officers hired at the secretariat, has often been linked to initiatives of IUCN Commissions, owing to their flexible nature of inviting members. While each Commission created a young professionals network at a different time (Enkerlin-Hoeflich et al., 2015), most of the young people in IUCN are found in Commissions and then as staff at the Secretariat. IUCN Membership and top leadership are the places where youth representation has been lagging, with only one young person ever having been appointed into the Council and this trend not continuing thereafter.

Creation of young professionals networks within Commissions not only increased membership of young professionals to Commissions (thereby increasing youth interest in IUCN overall), they also increased Commission membership, which subsequently contributes to the Commission work. As per IUCN commission membership statistics of November 2020, presently 27% in CEC and WCEL are young professionals, followed by 23% in CEM, 19% in CEESP, 14% in WCPA and 10% in SSC⁹. Their presence in Commissions has also become an opportunity to build leadership skills of young professionals, as they contribute to Commission Steering Committees, task forces, and working groups, and work in the secretariats of Commissions. In return, these young professionals have benefited from mentoring (e.g., the buddy experiment that involved senior professionals and younger professionals from across Commissions), training, and even varied award opportunities funded by the various Commissions (Jana et al., 2008).

Some of the significant youth engagement opportunities from Commissions include the involvement of young professionals networks in the design and delivery of major IUCN events. At the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) collaborated with Futerra and the Korea Parks Service to deliver the Jeju Declaration that committed attendees to a global campaign dedicated to connecting people of all generations to nature. At this Congress, young professionals were actively involved in developing the Resolution 4.098 that led to the formalisation of the Intergenerational Partnerships for Sustainability (IPS) task force within IUCN. These networks were also central to the design and delivery of Stream 8 'inspire a new generation' of the IUCN World Parks Congress in 2014 that included, among other activities, a young professionals' Pact for Parks, People and the Planet. The involvement of WCPA youth during the Fourth International Marine Protected Areas Congress (IMPAC4) in 2017 in Chile signalled an important moment in marine conservation through Marine Protected Areas as an IUCN WCPA Young Professionals Marine Task Force was established (Chen et al., 2019; Bianco et al., 2016).

Commissions such as CEC and the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), because of the nature of their mandate (education and

⁹ <https://portals.iucn.org/union/node/26401>

communication), tend to attract younger members and have therefore consistently had the highest number of young professionals in their membership. These YPs also actively engage in the various thematic working groups, and the steering committee has occasionally invited them to Steering Committee meetings. The statistics have been gradually changing with more Commissions increasing their membership of YPs, including young professionals in leadership positions, and in funding some awards such as the 2012 CEC Young Champions Award, and the 2014 and 2016 IUCN's Commission on Ecosystems Management (CEM) Chair's Young Professionals Award.¹⁰ Since 2000, IUCN SSC initiated the George Rabb internship¹¹ for young professionals seeking a long-term career in conservation where they get the opportunity to work in the SSC/IUCN Office in Cambridge, UK. IUCN's World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) provides young lawyers with opportunities to learn and advance environmental law and policy under its Dr. Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin Fellowship to advance implementation of Resolution 8 of the 2012 World Conservation Congress (Increasing youth engagement and intergenerational partnership across and through the Union) by helping to mentor the next generation of conservation leaders¹². CEESP calls its youth group an 'emerging leaders network' not a 'young professionals network'" and the Commission has supported young professionals by providing them fellowships to participate in the IUCN World Parks Congress, 2014, IUCN's World Conservation Congress and many other relevant conferences outside IUCN, like Planet under Pressure in 2012. As a result of these changes, in the last decade several of the leaders in the Commission's steering committees, regional Chairs, and specialist and thematic groups have been below 40 years of age.

While we applaud the efforts put in by all the IUCN Commissions to engage with young professionals, some of them have not sustained the inclusion of young people to the decision-making table. A significant challenge to how Commissions sustains their support for young professionals has been funding due to the reduction of the core funding from the secretariat for IUCN Commissions and limited funding opportunities for some Commissions. As well, the agency of the young professionals' networks within IUCN Commissions to advocate for the implementation of the resolution regarding youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships has often been lacking. Nevertheless, the model of young professionals networks has been successful in increasing youthful membership into all commissions and is worth emulating and scaling.

2.3.2. IUCN IPS Taskforce and the decade-long intergenerational conversations

With the challenges of engaging youth in Commissions, it was hoped that a task force on Intergenerational partnerships might address this question of agency and elevate the youth voice, while also driving commitment towards resource mobilisation for intergenerational collaboration within IUCN. The discussions for a cross-commission and intergenerational taskforce were first held in 2007 at the UNESCO Tbilisi+30 conference led by the CEC. In

¹⁰https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/iucn_cem_young_professional_aaward_2020_final.pdf

¹¹ <http://wgbis.ces.iisc.ernet.in/envis/doc99/jbintb991222>

¹²<https://www.iucn.org/theme/environmental-law/fellowshipinternship/dr-fran%C3%A7oise-burhenne-guilmin-fellowship>

2009, the CEC was joined by the WCPA in solidifying this concept, and the efforts of their young professionals networks across Commissions resulted in the appointment of a young person into the IUCN Council in 2010 (Lopoukhine et al., 2014). In 2012, this informal cross-Commission taskforce of young professionals and the appointed young Council Member mobilised IUCN Commissions and Members towards the development and adoption of Resolution 008— ‘Increasing youth engagement and intergenerational partnership across and through the Union’, which formalised the Task Force on Intergenerational Partnership for Sustainability (IPS)¹³ with a mandate to increase youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships vertically and horizontally across IUCN (Resolution 3.029: IUCN, 2008).

As a platform for people of all generations and cultures to exchange experiences and new ideas, collaborate, and take action toward the shared vision of global conservation and sustainability, the task force has since focused on influencing the IUCN community towards being a fully intergenerational global governance system for nature conservation (Zurba et al., 2020). Diverse approaches used so far have been the participation of YPs from all commissions in iAct Dialogues for Sustainability, an intergenerational series of global webinars on key sustainability, systems, and leadership topics, active participation in the New Social Compact, and developing the proposal and collaborating for the implementation of “Stream 8. Inspiring a new generation” during the WPC, 2014¹⁴.

The role of the IPS is to provide advocacy and knowledge brokering between the IUCN Secretariat, Young Professionals networks across IUCN Commissions, across IUCN programmes, and members. Some of the milestones of the IPS were the leadership of young people in international events, for example, the Youth and Intergenerational Journey at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress, Jeju that resulted in Resolution 5.008 and the ‘Inspiring a New Generation’ Stream at the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress that brought the Promise of Sydney, especially endorsed the commitments to “Inspire a new generation to prioritise conservation.” By leveraging delegates at these gatherings, young leaders collaborated with senior professionals to encourage IUCN Commissions to implement key recommendations. Owing to this intergenerational support, a range of initiatives and programmes were designed and delivered by young leaders across IUCN Commissions. These face-to-face opportunities allowed young leaders to meet one another, socialise, share their successes, experiences, and ongoing challenges, co-create action plans fed into IUCN programmes of work, and co-design international-scale projects (IPS, 2015). These initiatives addressed the needs of a growing global network of young conservation leaders within IUCN.

A major challenge in the leadership of the IPS task force has been that while a few 'older' and long-serving members from IUCN commissions were involved in pushing for its formation, the composition of the leadership was eventually comprised of young professionals, therefore positioning the task force as a 'youth project' and lacking in some of the principles of intergenerational partnership. Consequently, disillusioned young professionals, upon leading various projects within their professional networks and the task force have opted to 'take time off from IUCN' as they often foresee no real opportunities for continued engagement. The IPS

¹³https://www.iucn.org/downloads/report_on_commission_chair_survey_on_youth_engagement_and_intergenerational_partnersh.pdf

¹⁴ <https://intergenerationalpartnership.wordpress.com/>

Taskforce has so far been led by a global team of six co-conveners representing different Commissions and regions having gender and geographical balance¹⁵. It is hoped that these predicaments will be addressed through the recommendations emerging from this review on how to make such task forces effective and enabling the wider IUCN community to embody meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships.

2.4. Youth Engagement outside the IUCN

In Table 2.1, we showcase some examples of organisations worldwide that have adopted different models of engaging with young people.

Notably, from these case studies, it is evident that each organisation, given its mandate, attempts to establish a process through which they engage with young people. Some of them are mid to long-term initiatives such as the World Scouts Youth Movement, UN MGCY, UNEP Children and Youth Programme, and the youth constituency at UNFCCC (YOUNGO). However, it is evident that others are based either on current strategies of those organisations or on ongoing interests to engage young people. Some organisations such as Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) have a clear mandate - they are connecting to young professionals in connection with expert contributions, they are mentored to ensure that there will be sustained contribution to the institutions' mandate by experts across the world. These programmes have been particularly useful in ensuring diversity and inclusion of young professionals from regions and countries under-represented in contributing to IPCC reports. Lacking from most of these initiatives is the value attached to intergenerational partnerships. This is especially important because most of these initiatives are initiated 'for' young people and would be more meaningful if intergenerational collaboration were emphasised.

There are connections and overlaps in these initiatives. For example, the World Scout Movement is reliant on parks and protected areas for their life skills training, meaning that there are opportunities for collaboration with initiatives that target connecting young people to nature. Evidently, this movement has in the last decade become very much involved in climate change work under the International Youth Climate Movement (IYCM). Similarly, Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) work has elevated the engagement of young people with biodiversity policy processes enabling the youth initiatives under them to cut across other issues such as in climate change at the UNFCCC meetings and at the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) meetings. The IUCN 'Nature for All' Campaign not only engages from within the Commissions, but also in the context of CBD and achievement of Aichi Targets, thereby widening the scope and reach. Overall, all these case studies present a variety of lessons for IUCN to learn from, and most importantly, avenues for partnership based on the intersections that exist in their mandate and that of IUCN in the context of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. In spite of very limited success in intergenerational partnerships, IUCN stands out as perhaps the only global

¹⁵ <https://intergenerationalpartnership.wordpress.com/task-force/>

conservation organisation to have attempted to work across generations, and this signals the need for commitment to this mandate.

Table 2.1. Models of youth engagement around the world and some examples of case studies

Models of youth engagement & intergenerational partnerships	Examples of initiatives
Models focusing on capacity development for young people (skills training, professional development, mentoring, institutional capacity strengthening, leadership training etc.)	IPBES Fellows Programme IPCC Early Career Researchers Programme UNEP Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES) The World Scout Movement Youth Programme
Models designed, implemented, and led by young people	Youth constituency to the UNFCCC (YOUNGO) UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) International Youth Climate Movement (IYCM) African Youth Initiative on Climate Change (AYICC) CoalitionWILD
Models that focus on engaging young people at global policy processes	IPBES Fellows Programme IPCC Early Career Researchers Programme Youth constituency to the UNFCCC (YOUNGO) UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) IUCN Nature for All Campaign
Models that focus on including young people in decision-making platforms	Youth constituency to the UNFCCC (YOUNGO) UNEP Tunza Youth Advisory Council Youth Engaged in Wetlands (YEW)
Models that award young people (Youth Awards)	UNEP Young Champions of the Earth Award UNESCO Man and Biosphere Youth Programme
Models that aim at connecting young people with a global cause (for awareness creation, experiential learning, behaviour change, advocacy, etc.)	IUCN Nature for All Campaign UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth (MGCY) UNESCO Man and Biosphere Youth Programme International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRC) Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN) South Asia Youth Environment Network Youth Engaged in Wetlands (YEW)
Models that focus on including youth engagement in organisational strategies	WWF's New Deal for Nature and People International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRCRC) UNEP Education and Training Unit

References: CBD, 2018a; CBD, 2018b; Charles et al., 2018; Gustafsson, 2018; Gustafsson et al., 2019; Gustafsson & Berg, 2020; IFRCRC, 2013; Lambini & Heubach, 2017; Metternicht et al., 2020; van der Veer et al., 2014

2.5. Findings from Review of Literature

Evidently, by collaborating and empowering young professionals in decision making and planning through open and transparent dialogue, different organisations, including IUCN, have been able to catalyse a critical mass of young people in the public sphere to engage with nature and embrace and support successful initiatives that help them do so (Lopoukhine et al., 2014). There has been a slow but steady increase in the number of youth-led initiatives within the different bodies of IUCN.

Young people have also challenged IUCN structures and models of engaging with them. For example, during the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Jeju, a young Commission member, Caroline Seagle, was nominated and supported by various IUCN members to run for an elective position in the IUCN Council. While this was not successful, it set a precedent for the future entry of young professionals into IUCN leadership. Most importantly, it sent a strong message to IUCN that young people have an interest and a commitment to the vision of global conversation embodied by IUCN.

Overall, across many organisations as indicated in Table 2.1, there is a level of tokenism when it comes to youth engagement. A major indicator is the invitation of young people to speak at events, including high-level panels, without a concrete plan by the inviting institutions on what actions they intend to take following the contribution of young people. Another challenge with this tokenistic engagement is that it is limited to a small percentage of young people, often the leaders of any existing groups, and/or those with charisma to move the audience with speeches. Oftentimes, there is a real opportunity for capacity strengthening or enabling an environment that trickles down to many other young professionals absent at these events.

The positioning of young people for image only can be worrying because when they commit to demonstrate their contribution to programmatic work, often this is met with silence. This was the case when young professionals networks made an attempt to contribute to the development of the IUCN global quadrennial programme in 2011 (Burlando et al., 2011) (which informs the fundraising efforts of IUCN). Not only was there no response to their document, there was also no evident inclusion of their views in the programme that was launched in 2012.

However, it has also emerged from this analysis that some of the approaches employed across IUCN have been inclusive of young people. Despite being poorly funded, they have been sustained for over a decade and present clear opportunities for scaling and further investments. For instance, the model of young professionals or emerging leaders networks within IUCN Commissions is a significant one in positioning IUCN as an ambassador for young people intending to excel in careers in global conservation. Equally, the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) scheme within the Secretariat enables young professionals to work alongside senior professionals and eventually become integrated as staff.

Nevertheless, despite the above efforts, IUCN continues to struggle and has been criticised for not fully institutionalising youth engagement into its structures. A recent publication echoed these concerns, noting that efforts to drive structural change with regards to youth engagement in IUCN have resulted in further invitations to participate in dialogue sessions with no follow-

up action (WCPA, 2020; Zurba et al., 2020). One of the studies argues that the lack of inclusion of all generations in substantive decision-making processes concerning global conservation prohibits learning at the level of governance where rules, norms, and principles are formed (Zurba et al., 2020).

Moving forward, while different forms of youth engagement already exist (Table 2.1), a critical question to pose concerns whether these initiatives are indeed mechanisms of genuine sharing of power with young people or they are merely agendas to 'fit in' young people in the agenda of the institution (Brady et al., 2020; Checkoway & Aldana, 2013). Recognising the centrality of the role of young people opens the door for more robust and comprehensive collective efforts for meaningful and continued youth engagement. This initial effort to engage young people directly and to listen and consider the barriers that they encounter and the tools and resources they need to engage effectively offers a snapshot of the path ahead.



Figure 2.1. Models of Youth engagement and intergenerational partnership

In the subsequent two sections, we unearth the key issues and trends within IUCN that have led to the successes and failures of youth engagement in IUCN by presenting key findings from discussions with a purposive sample of key stakeholders drawn from the wider IUCN community. We follow this by providing recommendations and considering what value youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships might bring to IUCN in its new programme. With these, we hope that we can inform a set of priorities for IUCN to consider regarding collaborative leadership and governance, resource mobilisation, and investments, as well as in future-proofing IUCN operations.

Section 3. Findings from Key Stakeholder Consultations

3.1. Introduction

In a span of two months, INTERGENS engaged with a total of 827 stakeholders, 36 through interviews, focus groups and long-form surveys, and another 791 through the Collective Leadership Compass survey. Stakeholders from the interviews, focus groups, and long-form surveys were from or affiliated with IUCN, and most had several years of experience in pursuing youth engagement and intergenerational collaboration through IUCN. Stakeholder consultations enabled a better understanding of how IUCN might mainstream and sustain youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. Figure 3.1 shows the number of participants that were engaged in each qualitative research approach (interviews, webinars, and long-form surveys), as well as their affiliation with IUCN, their age category (young professional or non-YP), gender and region.

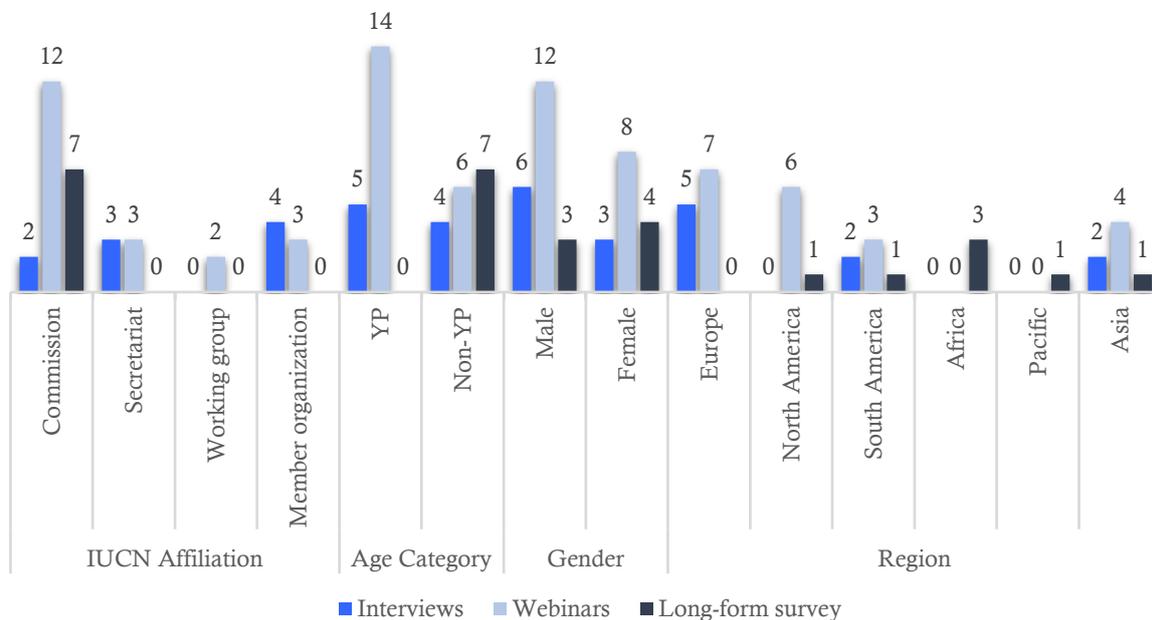


Figure 3.1. Summary graph on the stakeholders involved in the qualitative research approaches

The findings from these consultations are presented below as themes (Annexure IV) following the structure of the questions that were used to engage the stakeholders, and also include themes that emerged directly from the data (that is, they were recurring and thus important to the stakeholders’ understanding of the issues).

Figure 3.2 presents a word cloud from the 100 words mentioned from the 35,186 words collected under the theme and sub-theme that results from the codes generated for the project. Some words, such as “for”, “but”, and “and”, are excluded from the analysis. The result examined stand-out words such as Youth, IUCN, People, Engagements, Intergenerational, Congress, Partnerships, Organisations, Communications, Conservation, etc.



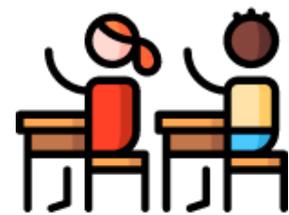
Figure 3.2. Word cloud based on the contribution of the key stakeholders.

3.2. How Youth is Understood across IUCN

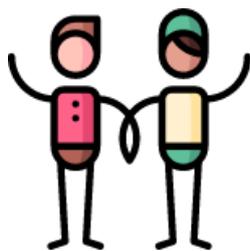
There is a broad understanding across IUCN of young people as those individuals aged 15 to 35 years. Defining specific age groups was seen as an important step to youth mainstreaming and intergenerational collaboration in terms of focusing attention on different age groups accordingly. It is also helpful in ensuring that young people are not viewed as children. Consequently, the following developmental stages offer clear distinctions between the different ages of young people:

i. School-Age Children

School children are an underrepresented age group within IUCN, yet educational programmes offer a great avenue for connecting young children to nature and promoting the conversation values. Stakeholders felt that the IUCN community has a high level of capacity and capability to support the development and delivery of educational tools and programmes for school-age children, especially if IUCN worked in collaboration with member organisations and Commissions that specialise in the development and delivery of education for this underrepresented group.



ii. Adolescents



Similar to children, teenage youth are not well-connected within IUCN, yet they continue to be a highly active group engaging in topics related to nature conservation. For example, the most recent climate strikes have been led by this cohort of young people. This is an indication of how informed, highly active, and motivated this cohort is and that it is useful in nature conservation and social action as well. IUCN would benefit from the momentum that this group offers by engaging with adolescents and supporting their actions. Support could involve enabling adolescents

to use the IUCN platform to communicate their concerns and garner further support for their movements.

“...you tell [teenagers] what to do, and they'll go build a bridge to the moon if you want them to, you just have to not to stand in there, not stand in their way and tell them and not tell them no because if you tell them no, they will just go around you and do it anyway”—*Mike Bingley, Youth Scouts; Director of Education, Canadian Wildlife Federation.*

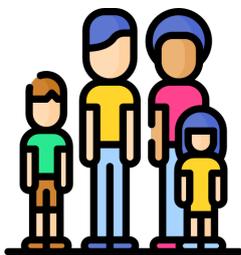
iii. Young Professionals

IUCN defines young professionals (YPs) as individuals aged between 18 and 35 years who have shown exemplary engagement in scientific research or activities related to nature conservation. Historically, they are the most engaged group of young people within IUCN. Young stakeholders reflected on their YP label as being advantageous in some ways, and problematic in others. Advantages included special networking possibilities and some opportunities that were specifically geared towards people under 35 years of age. However, one of the most problematic issues described by YPs about the YP label was that they felt it often did not reflect the amount of experience or professionalism that the YP was bringing to IUCN, sometimes making them feel like their role was diminished or tokenistic. Furthermore, none of the opportunities offered to YPs within IUCN are long-term. This reduces the potential for engagement and leadership among this group.



Stakeholders felt that it was important to understand and do more research around what age range is suitable for an IUCN YP category. Several suggested that this category could vary in different parts of the globe and that information from and collaboration with regional IUCN offices would be important for understanding the context, entry points, and support required for YPs within the IUCN regions.

3.3. How Intergenerational Partnerships are understood across IUCN



Stakeholders described intergenerational partnerships as special relationships between senior professionals and youth (different categories: school-age children, teenagers, YPs) that could be part of a mentoring relationship or supervision. Many stakeholders agreed that intergenerational partnerships would look different depending on the region. Regardless of the configuration, stakeholders felt that partnerships must involve genuine appreciation of the different qualities that each generation brings to the partnership and that partnerships involve reciprocity and two-directional mentoring.

“Intergenerational partnership in the context of IUCN could be interpreted as the possibility to be mentored ...especially giving advice and as long as you are coachable and open to hearing advice or even constructive criticism. I think it is something that lots of young professionals can benefit from to advance and ... get better at their professional career path”—*Roxana Bucioaca, BIOPAMA, IUCN Secretariat.*

3.4. Experiences and Learning within IUCN

Learning is an essential mechanism for collaboration and mobilising social and organisational change. INTERGENS aimed to understand *how* stakeholders learned about youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships and explored opportunities and barriers to learning within IUCN.



i. Learning about youth mainstreaming youth and intergenerational partnerships

Stakeholders related their learning to experiences both within and outside of IUCN contexts, organisations, and events. YP stakeholders in particular discussed how they learned best within IUCN through active engagement in networks that they were involved with (both IUCN and others). YPs also reported that mentoring contributed significantly to how they learned about how they could engage meaningfully within IUCN. YPs also learned about IUCN through attending IUCN World Conservation Congresses, other conferences and events, as well as through the Commissions and working group activities. One stakeholder described learning processes within IUCN as “trial and error” and said that IUCN could learn from other organisations that had been engaging youth for a longer period of time.

ii. Opportunities and barriers for learning

Opportunities for supporting learning within IUCN included:

- Taking advantage of the experiential and regional knowledge that youth can bring to IUCN;
- Maximising the existing spaces for dialogue (e.g., WCC Youth Summits) within IUCN;
- IUCN supported events and educational programmes that are geared toward supporting ongoing learning opportunities for youth;
- Using the relationships IUCN has with other conservation organisations to learn from their successes.

Barriers hindering learning within IUCN included:

- The language limitations (English, French, Spanish) were identified as a barrier to learning within IUCN, especially for those who do not speak English as their primary language;
- The bureaucratic and multi-layered structure of IUCN was described as being a hindrance to learning and accessing opportunities within IUCN, especially for YPs;
- Lack of adequate pathways for Indigenous youth to engage in IUCN in meaningful ways;
- The lack of strategic planning around youth engagement and lack of clarity about career development opportunities with IUCN were identified as hindering learning by youth within IUCN.

3.5 Assessing youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN

Following engagement with stakeholders, a SWOT analysis was conducted so that the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats relating to youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN could be identified. Figure 3.3 summarises the assessment and further details are provided below.

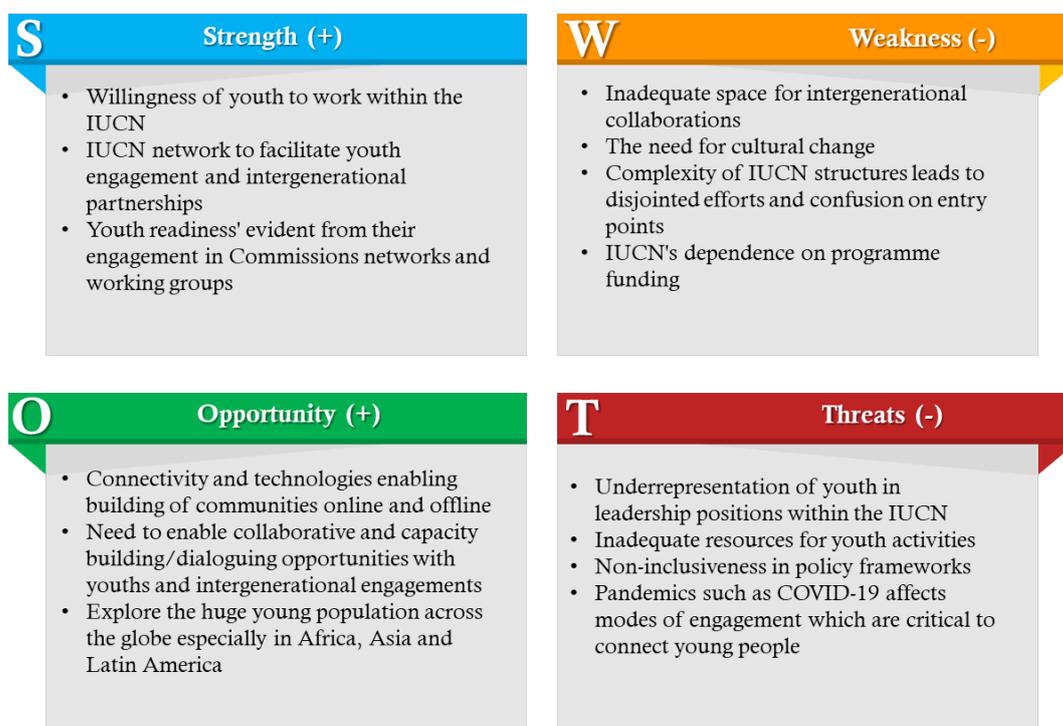


Figure 3.3. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within the IUCN

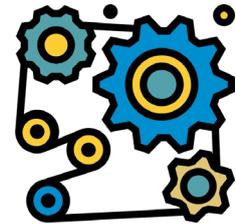
“...IUCN has a robust youth base, and it is important to share experience from these youth. as well as there is a bigger movement than each of us individually”—*Roxana Bucioaca, BIOPAMA, IUCN Secretariat.*

“You need the elders to understand youth potential; you also need decision-makers to understand that youth should be an integral part of the decision-making structure”—*Mika Tan, Coordinator of the ASEAN Youth Biodiversity Programme (AYBP) under the ACB-EU Biodiversity Conservation and Protected Area Management in the ASEAN Project (BCAMP).*

“[IUCN] Staff can be in a position for over 15 years, such cannot be challenged, but also, they block opportunities for young people to engage”—*Michael Wong, Regional chair, North America, IUCN WCPA.*

3.6. Organisational mechanisms, support structures, and models for mainstreaming youth and building intergenerational partnership within IUCN

Almost every stakeholder INTERGENS engaged with talked about the need for organisational mechanisms to support meaningful youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN. Some stakeholders talked about structural changes to the IUCN governance system, while others talked about the different types of support systems that could be brought into IUCN.



i. Organisational mechanisms

In reflecting on the IUCN governance system, stakeholders talked about the need for the creation of organisational mechanisms across all levels of IUCN (Council, Secretariat, Commissions and member organisations) in order to mainstream youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. Some stakeholders spoke specifically of the need to generate acceptance of youth having a voice in the Council and that it was important that the Director General and Council be supportive of youth mainstreaming.

“[We need] some mechanism to bring youth into Council discussions at a real level and not side table level”— *Bibiana Sucre, Executive Director, IUCN SSC.*

Positions for YPs should come with decision-making power and financial support (not just an advisory role), and that youth positions should exist both within the Secretariat and on the Steering Committees of IUCN Commissions. Ambassador Masahiko Horie, who is a champion for youth engagement, suggested the institutionalisation of youth engagement including hiring a staff position dedicated to deliver this mandate and whose title reflects ‘youth’ engagement.

“Setting-up a permanent ‘Unit on Youth’ at the Secretariat is indispensable for mainstreaming and institutionalising youth engagement and intergenerational partnership effectively.”— *Masahiko Horie, IUCN Council Member from Japan; Ambassador for Global Environment Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan.*

Avoiding tokenism in youth positions is critical to successful youth engagement. Stakeholders talked about how they had witnessed tokenism within IUCN and how it was increasingly becoming detrimental, causing rifts between emerging youth leaders and established leaders within IUCN. Stakeholders felt that initiatives for mainstreaming youth engagement needed to be co-developed to foster ownership and engagement of youth.

ii. Organisational supports systems: mentoring, dialogue, funding, and professional development

Mentoring and intergenerational dialogue

Mentoring was suggested as a critical addition to the youth positions and organisational mechanisms suggested above so as to offer guidance and support as YPs take on leadership. Several stakeholders stated that youth are often on the receiving end of information and are

not meaningfully engaged in dialogues. They expressed the need to create environments that support intergenerational dialogue within IUCN so that they are two-directional and mutually beneficial. Peer-to-peer mentoring was also viewed as helpful for navigating IUCN as a complex and multi-layered organisation.

“As a young person, you are able to engage within IUCN if: i) you are extremely proactive, ii) if a senior person walks you through, iii) if another young person that has been able to access the IUCN web guides you to get in”—*Bruno Monteferri, IUCN WCEL*.

Funding mechanisms

Funding was mentioned by almost every stakeholder who participated in the review. Stakeholders talked about the need to direct more resources towards youth engagement and said that they thought that this was an issue well-known to the IUCN Secretariat. More nuanced discussions about funding revealed a desire for funds to be specifically designated towards youth mainstreaming and intergenerational collaboration, not just a subsection of other allocations of funds and resources. However, the overall status of funding in IUCN is critical and therefore, there is a need to increase the core funding from which a youth engagement budget could be anchored.

“IUCN's dependence on programme funding is also a challenge for youth engagement, and there is a need to increase core funding”—*Bruno Monteferri, IUCN WCEL*.

Professional Development

Stakeholders talked about professional development opportunities in a number of different ways and how it provides a starting point for youth to understand how they could take on meaningful roles within IUCN. Some stakeholders talked about the importance of active engagement in training as an important way that youth can be engaged and directed how to engage in IUCN, which was often described by YPs as a very large organisation that is tough to navigate. Stakeholders often talked about the connection between professional development and the creation of positions for YPs in IUCN. From the training, young people would be encouraged to utilise their advanced skills in conservation initiatives of the IUCN community. Some of these already exist, for example, in the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management (BIOPAMA) Programme and the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC).

iii. Models for youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships

Several stakeholders stated that IUCN should be based on models for intergenerational engagement. Stakeholders provided reflections on what they considered to be models representing best practices for youth engagement and intergenerational collaboration. Examples were given from other organisations; however, many stakeholders also pointed to the work being done by Commissions, especially the CEC, CEESP, CEM, SSC and WCPA.

Targeted youth events at the IUCN Congresses (Conservation Congress, Parks Congress, etc.) were also highlighted as important examples of youth engagement; however, some

stakeholders felt that such events maintained a separation between youth and seniors (resulting in tokenistic involvement) and did not foster intergenerational collaboration.

Technological advancements and connectivity were viewed as important to bridging knowledge and communication across regions and with IUCN Headquarters. The IUCN Portal was highlighted as being an important tool for information seeking and connecting youth in different regions, but that more training on how to use the Portal would be important to use it to its full potential.

3.7. The role of IUCN regional offices

“Right now in the Pacific, ... climate change is happening. People are seeing it, they are living it. So, there is no institutionalisation of experiential knowledge. And that is what youth can bring in, very young experiences, very preliminary ideas of how they are starting to make sense of the world” —*Radhika Murti, Director, IUCN Global Ecosystem Management Programme.*

Stakeholders stated that regional IUCN offices could potentially play an important role in youth engagement because they have a better sense of what youth are doing in their region and can mobilise them for regional action on conservation issues that they are closely connected to. Because of this, additional support to regional offices was suggested in order to engage in youth mainstreaming in a way that is regionally and culturally relevant. Some YPs expressed that it was easier to gain support from seniors who were working regionally and that this led to active engagement in their region. One YP related the need for greater regional support to bridge regional action with global action through IUCN. One suggestion was that YPs from regional offices could spend time at IUCN headquarters where they could train and build global connections for YP engagement. Salaried positions for YPs at regional offices, as well as support for YPs to attend Congresses, were also suggested as an important way to build YP regional capacity.



Many stakeholders agreed that communication on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships should be focused around regions so that messages could be clearer, louder, and more focused on topics that are relevant to youth in their respective regions.

“I guess the more global you get, the more you get lost in many different places, and the more regional you are, the more you can specifically understand, like, Hey, we need help with this Mesoamerican corridor project! Okay, cool!” —*Vania Olmos Lau, Youth4Nature, IUCN CEM YPN.*

Regional conferences were also discussed as important venues for YPs to learn about how they could become involved in IUCN. Other tools, such as a lecture series, were suggested as a way of bridging YPs from regional offices with IUCN Headquarters. A focus on the global south was emphasised as an important focal point given the growing youth population in these regions and their potential to contribute to conservation.

Some stakeholders felt that structural changes were also needed in regional offices and suggested that universities could play a role in developing knowledge and training modules required for such structural shifts. Several stakeholders also talked about how they thought that some regions were more active in youth engagement and intergenerational collaboration than others. Canada and Latin American country offices were highlighted several times as being leaders in youth engagement and from where other regional offices and the secretariat could learn and benchmark.

3.8. Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs)

“The [Indigenous People and Local Communities] initiative is vital and should be fully integrated so that when we are talking about YPs, we ensure we are thinking inclusively across location, gender, ethnicity and particularly including Indigenous people. We need to ensure that experience and cultural knowledge is fully respected, and that academic qualification are not the only expertise we acknowledge”—*Penelope Figgis AO, Vice-Chair Oceania, IUCN WCPA.*

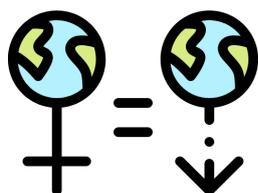
Many stakeholders expressed that any movement towards youth engagement and intergenerational collaboration must include special consideration for Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) and acknowledged their roles as traditional authorities and/or special knowledge holders. Several stakeholders felt that the way that IUCN operates as a political organization provides pathways for IPLCs to have their voices enter into decision-making forums.



“The fact that you have governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations under one roof. The World Conservation Congress that we have, you know, Indigenous Peoples organisations sitting next to the delegation of the European Union. And they pretty much have the same voice in the same weight and votes”—*Jon Paul Rodríguez, Chair, IUCN SSC.*

Stakeholders also acknowledged that IPLCs had been the most impacted by environmental change, specifically by climate change. Stakeholders also talked about how IPLC youth are limited in their participation in IUCN and mentioned limited participation due to socio-economic challenges and accessibility issues, such as internet access. Stakeholders suggested reducing barriers to IPLC youth participation in IUCN was important, but that it would be important to engage IPLCs in order to better understand their barriers. Several stakeholders called for research in this area, especially case studies that look at how IPLC youth are engaged in IUCN and how such engagement can become more meaningful for youth and how participation translates into on-the-ground outcomes for communities.

3.9. Gender



The IUCN Gender Programme and the process of mainstreaming gender in IUCN has been viewed as a successful story worth replicating to address other intersectional issues. However, stakeholders observed that within top leadership, and in the context of engaging young people, gender principles were not evident. One of the stakeholders was impressed with gender inclusiveness as an emerging strategy within the Commissions and gave the example of the CEC ‘Nature for All’ initiative. Additionally, stakeholders stated that IUCN policies needed to be sufficiently intersectional, acknowledging how age groups and/or racialized groups might intersect with gender.

3.10. The role of IUCN in the global youth movement

Stakeholders often talked about the role of IUCN in the context of the global youth movement and reflected on the actions and leadership within that movement. YP stakeholders talked about youth leadership in conservation as being critical because they are a generation that has grown up in a globalised world, which has made them more aware of certain issues.



“It is a youth thing. Young people now are the ones at the front, leading these kinds of movements for racial justice, gender justice, and so on. We were born in a globalised world, the connected world. I think we see more how we are similar than how we are different”—*Melina Sakiyama, Co-founder, Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN)*.

Stakeholders felt that IUCN could play a role in the larger youth movement as an organisation that brings with it power, capacity, and credibility. Stakeholders talked about how IUCN can set standards for youth engagement in conservation, much like it has set standards for other conservation-related issues (e.g., species at risk and protected areas).

Stakeholders also talked about IUCN having a strong role in introducing YPs to conservation decision-making processes and facilitating connections between youth groups and with larger organisations and senior conservation professionals. Some other stakeholders elaborated on the role of IUCN as a coordinator with other large conservation organisations like WWF and how global coordination could lead to establishing a global youth action team. Stakeholders felt that IUCN could open up spaces for youth to lead campaigns and that IUCN could play a leading role in recognising the contributions of youth that are leaders in conservation.

Section 4. Findings from the Collective Leadership Compass Survey

To complement the more intimate data collection on youth engagement and intergenerational partnership gained from highly targeted interviews and small group webinars, the review team also perceived the need to obtain data from a broader expanse of the IUCN collaboration system. With this intention in mind, the reviewers used an open survey based on the Collective Leadership Compass. Following preliminary analysis of the data emerging from the stakeholder engagements, the Collective Leadership Compass survey was designed, launched, and disseminated across the entire IUCN system, including the Secretariat, Commissions, and Member Organisations. The survey was available in English, French, and Spanish and remained open for three weeks. The survey collected 791 responses, which serve to elucidate the perceptions of collaboration qualities related to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. Insights about the different collaboration qualities (detailed further below) then make it possible to understand the potential for transformation towards greater mainstreaming of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships within the IUCN governance system.

The Collective Leadership Compass provides several lenses through which to perceive vital dimensions within a collaboration system. These lenses can offer those who use the Compass a multi-dimensional perspective of the different qualities and capacities that, when balanced, bring collaboration systems to life, and have the potential to lead those who apply it to insights regarding patterns of “aliveness” or the lack thereof in collaboration systems. Systems aliveness (Kuenkel, 2019) can be understood as the capability of a system, in this case, the IUCN collaboration system, to develop a sufficient level of vitality and resilience along with the ability to renew these in collaboration and interaction with other systems. The perceptions gained through the application of the Compass can indicate both general and specific responses to strengthen the collaboration system around a common objective, in this case, youth engagement and intergenerational partnership.

The Compass is split into six Dimensions, each with three related Aspects. The Compass survey was designed with these 18 Aspects in mind, and While their use was tailored specifically for this survey, the Aspects general definitions may be understood as in Box 4.1.

The survey was designed as a series of 18 statements for which respondents qualified them on a 1–10 scale (Annexure V & VI). These statements are based on aspect descriptions below, related to the six Compass dimensions (Kuenkel, 2019), which show essential indicators for the quality and effectiveness of a purpose-driven collaboration ecosystem, such as IUCN in its work related to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. The statements were adapted following the qualitative interviews, substantive survey, and online focus groups. With the number of respondents, it is then possible to see variations and patterns for which inferences about the quality and effectiveness of the collaboration ecosystem may be made. The spider graphs below show the results, and the green points represent aspects in the higher third of the total range of responses for each population, the red for those aspects in the lower third within the range of responses¹⁶.

¹⁶ In this case, it was sufficient to allow for the emergence of perceivable patterns through dividing responses into low, middle, and high for the range of answers received.

Box 4.1. Dimensions and Aspects with attention descriptions of the Collective Leadership Compass® (Kuenkel, 2019)

Dimensions	Aspects	Attention	Dimensions	Aspects	Attention
Wholeness	<i>Contextuality</i>	connection to the larger context	Future possibilities	<i>Future Orientation</i>	focus on potential, future vision
	<i>Mutual Support</i>	presence of a culture of support, mutual enhancement		<i>Empowerment</i>	encouragement and enabling environment
	<i>Contribution</i>	awareness of the contribution to a sustainable future		<i>Decisiveness</i>	existence of plans, commitment, monitoring
Collective Intelligence	<i>Dialogic Quality</i>	attendance to structure and quality of dialogue	Engagement	<i>Process Quality</i>	transparency of plans, inclusion, structured engagement
	<i>Diversity</i>	fostering diversity in thought		<i>Connectivity</i>	activity of network related to common goal
	<i>Iterative Learning</i>	presence of regular learning		<i>Collective Action</i>	active collaboration and result delivery
Humanity	<i>Mindfulness</i>	reflection and appreciation	Innovation	<i>Creativity</i>	openness to new ideas
	<i>Balance</i>	integration of multiple perspectives, aspirations, ways of doing		<i>Excellence</i>	awareness of good practices, mastery, knowledge
	<i>Empathy</i>	openness to others' perspectives		<i>Agility</i>	openness to change, cultivation of risk taking

What is important when looking at the results is to note the patterns of strengths and development (weaker) areas, as perceived by the respondents. These provide insights on how to (1) more consciously work with the strength to increase the effectiveness of youth engagement strategies; (2) use stronger areas to strengthen those areas that respondents perceived as less strong; and (3) specifically improve development areas. This informs general ideas of how the system could address the challenges of youth engagement and intergenerational partnership.

From Figure 4.1, covering all 791 respondents, we can see that the perceived strengths lie in the *Innovation* and *Wholeness* Dimensions, with particular strengths in *agility* and *creativity* and in *contribution* and *contextuality*. This is a **pattern typical of collaboration systems that are mission-driven, connected to the bigger picture, and are practised in finding solutions to emerging challenges**. The association of *creativity* and *agility* to youth movements is also typical. On the other side, it is also apparent that this system demonstrates a perceived weakness in *Future Possibilities*, *Engagement*, and *Collective Intelligence*, especially in integrating formalised and structural measures to address youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. This is clear in the perceived development aspects of *decisiveness* (*Future Possibilities*), *process quality* (*Engagement*), and *iterative learning* and *dialogic quality* (*Collective Intelligence*). This **pattern is typical in collaboration systems that have not yet made the commitment to institutionalising work areas** of interest and import. This confirms the reality of youth engagement and intergenerational partnership at IUCN.

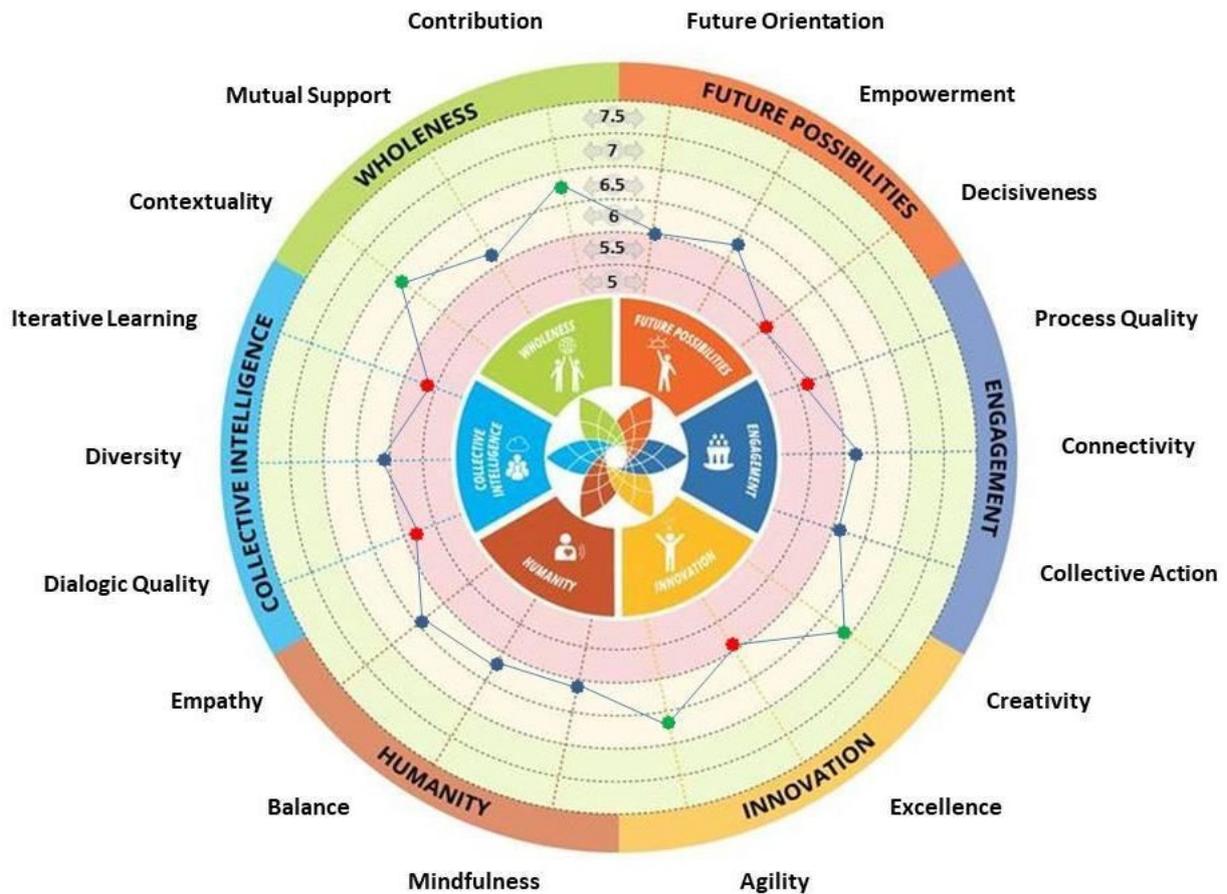


Figure 4.1. The Collective Leadership Compass spider graph for 791 survey respondents with aspects. The graph is zoomed in on the 5–8 range to show the variations and patterns better.

Additionally, we can look at different segments of the total respondent population. These may give us more targeted information about the perceptions in different sub-populations of the larger IUCN collaboration ecosystem.

Figure 4.2 represents the respondents from the Secretariat and the pattern shows perceived development areas in *future orientation*, *empowerment*, and *decisiveness* (*Future Possibilities*) and in *iterative learning* and *dialogic quality* (*Collective Intelligence*). This **pattern implies a sense of lack of clarity of vision and formalised structures** to address youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. *Innovation* and *Wholeness* are the strongest Dimensions, reflecting the strengths in the larger system (see above Fig. 4.1).

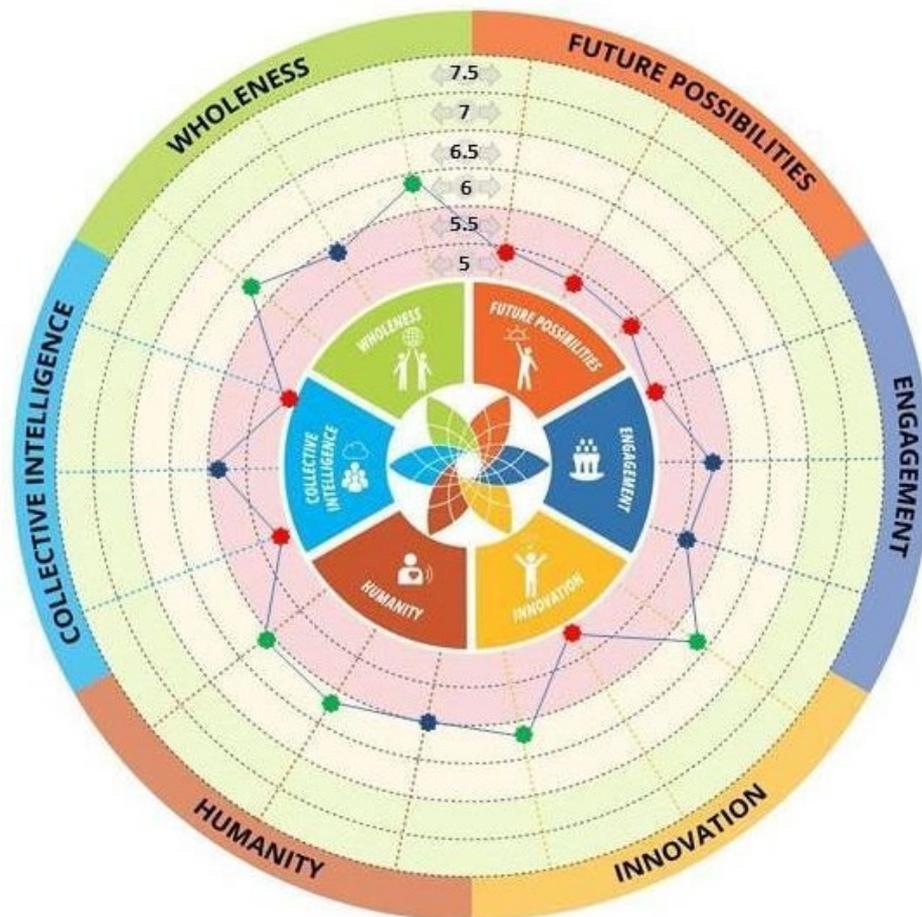


Figure 4.2.
Compass graph
for the 49
respondents from
IUCN Secretariat

Figure 4.3 reflects the 109 responses from IUCN Member Organisations. Again, we see a **similar pattern in the perceived strengths in *creativity and agility (Innovation) and contribution and contextuality (Wholeness)***, and development areas in *iterative learning and dialogic quality (Collective Intelligence)*, *decisiveness (Future Possibilities)*, and *process quality (Engagement)*. **This pattern**, similar to the pattern of the larger IUCN collaboration system and the Secretariat subsection, **reflects the connections to the larger picture, associations with youth regarding *Innovation*, and a notable perception of strength in the *empowerment* aspect of *Future Possibilities*, but again a perceived dearth of formalised and institutionalised measures to address youth engagement and intergenerational partnership.**

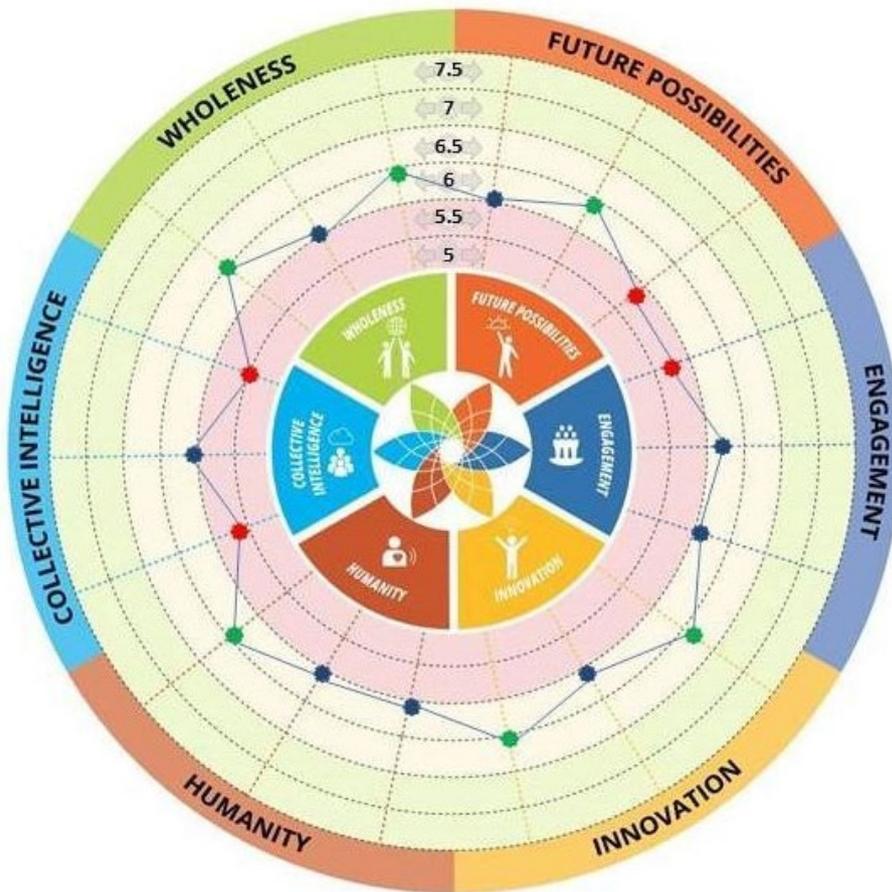


Figure 4.3.
Compass graph
for the 109
respondents from
IUCN Member
Organisation

The two graphs in Figure 4.4, below, represent all but 20 of the total respondents and are interesting in that *the patterns are essentially the same, only that the Young Professional population scored the values consistently higher, reflecting a slightly more optimistic view within the youth population for youth engagement and intergenerational partnership than the IUCN population not identifying as Youth Professionals.* Otherwise, the patterns remain consistent with the total population and continue to speak of the mission-driven nature within the collaboration system, the perceived strengths in *creativity and agility, contribution and contextuality*, and the development areas in *Future Possibilities, Engagement, and Collective Intelligence*.

These results are mostly consistent across the different sections of the IUCN collaboration system. They reflect **patterns that are typical of expert organisations and networks whose members may be working in silos that hinder them from conversations and concrete efforts to reform or institute shifts at a systemic level.** The patterns are evident in showing that respondents across IUCN are passionate about the work that they do (reflected in the consistently higher scores in the *contribution and contextuality* aspects) but have some **challenges in shifting to collective action at the collaboration system level** to address youth and intergenerational partnership effectively and sustainably.

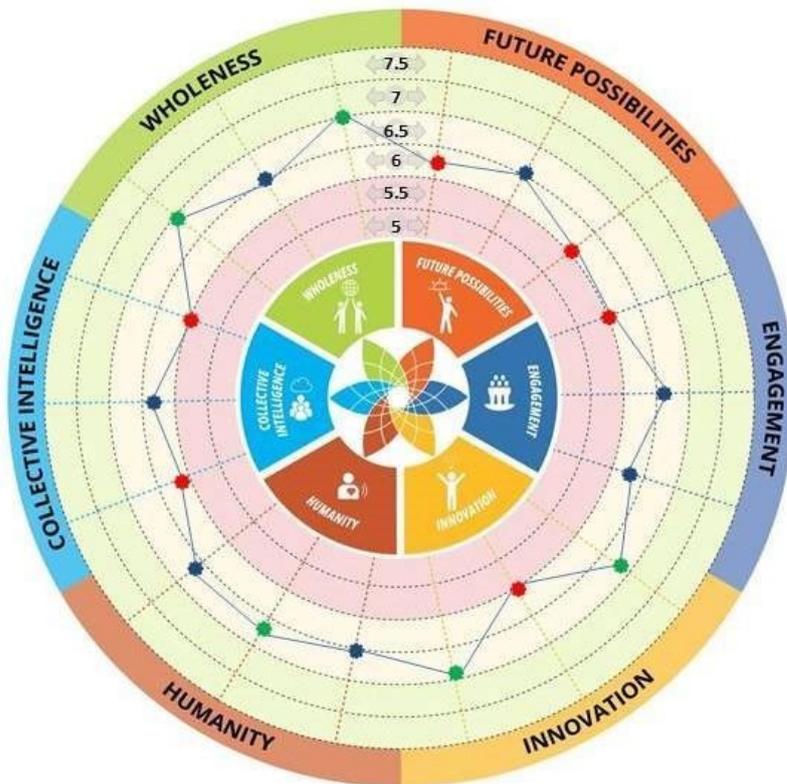
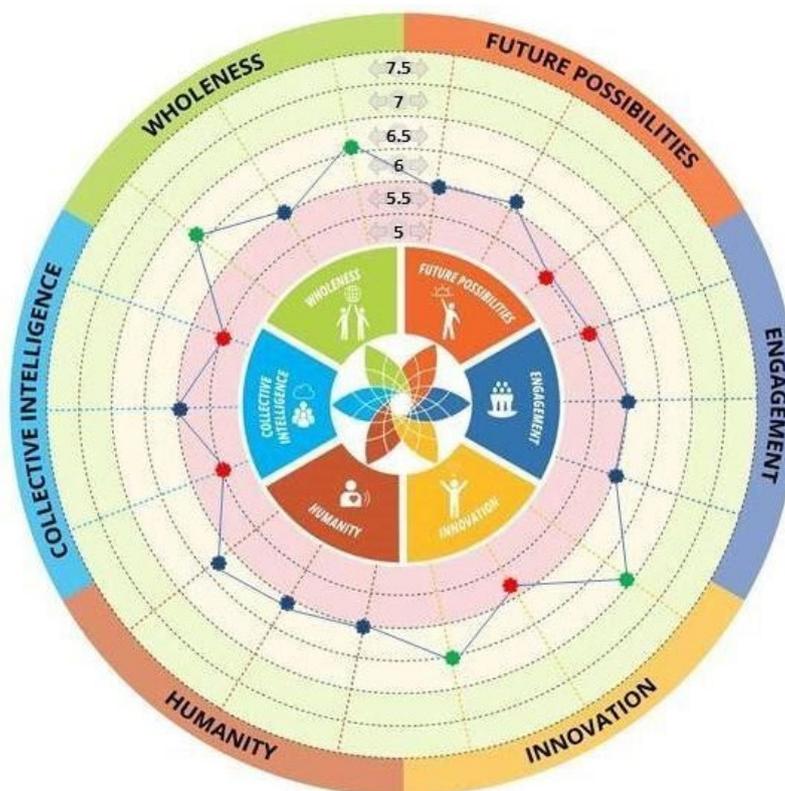


Figure 3.4. Compass graphs for the 238 respondents from the Young Professional population (top) and the 533 respondents from the Non-Young Professional population (bottom).



The patterns also reflect a lack of clarity on the direction that the collaboration system should take to address youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. This emerges from the lower scores in *future orientation* and *decisiveness*. The lack of a concrete vision for youth and intergenerational partnership is connected to the perceived lack of *process quality* in

the *Engagement* Dimension, implying an **absent roadmap** for improving the situation. This is also connected to the perceived development areas in the *Collective Intelligence* Dimension whose *iterative learning* and *dialogic quality* aspects are lower across the IUCN population regarding youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. This implies an **absence of governance structure or plans in place that can be monitored**.

On the other side, there are **plenty of strengths** that the IUCN collaboration community perceives in itself that may help to bring more vitality to the areas for development within the system. The *Humanity* Dimension across the system scored consistently in the middle, **reflecting the empathetic values one would expect in the mission-driven IUCN community**. More valuable as potential leverage points or entryways into enlivening the collaboration system around youth and intergenerational partnership are the *Innovation* and *Wholeness* Dimensions. These two Dimensions show us **potential gateways to organising actions that may increase the balance in the collaboration system** around youth engagement and intergenerational partnership.

Just from the Compass analysis on its own, we can begin to form some general recommendations. It is clear that the IUCN community is deeply connected to its mission, and members are ready to confront urgent conservation and sustainability challenges. These strengths in *contribution, connectivity, creativity, agility*, combined with a renewed commitment to *empower* the next generation of conservationists to increase the *connections* and *joint implementation* (collective action) across the Union of conservation efforts, especially those that would include youth (*diversity*) in structured events for learning from good experiences and practices (*iterative learning*) and co-creating new approaches to address emerging challenges. With the power in cutting-edge communication and collaboration tools (*Innovation*) that youth can often bring to a system combined with their *agility* and *creativity*, the Compass could indicate **the creation of youth-heavy rapid response teams to assist in urgent conservation challenges**. The Compass could also recommend **the establishment of regular intergenerational learning sessions around specific conservation challenges**. Also, the Compass would recommend **communication and coordination on youth and intergenerational partnerships across departments, members, and commissions**.

The Compass analysis leads us to general recommendations for increasing the quality of collaboration for and the effectiveness of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships across IUCN and indicates more specific directions for actions towards the same. This requires fostering the different dimensions and their aspects in a more balanced way in the IUCN collaboration system related to youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. Focusing on deliberately reinforcing the strong Dimensions of Wholeness, Humanity, and Innovation combined with the Dimensions that need development, Future Possibilities, Engagement, and Collective Intelligence could lead to a cultural shift in how IUCN can strengthen its work on youth engagement and intergenerational partnership. Such a **deliberate focus could be signalled by the commitment to establish a dedicated and formalised effort to address youth empowerment and intergenerational partnership**. This is underlined by the concrete points in the recommendations section to follow.

Section 5. Recommendations

In this final section, we articulate key recommendations derived from our review. We have indicated where we think recommendations can be implemented in the short-term or where they will require a long-term commitment.



= Short-term



= Long-term

A. Implement an IUCN-wide mandate/policy statement on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. This includes the following sub-recommendations for immediate action:

1. Establish a permanent Office/Unit on Youth with a Director for Youth and Intergenerational Partnerships:



The Compass analysis, the interviews, and the focus groups all clearly demonstrate the need for a formalised structure and dedicated funding and leadership to steward an IUCN-wide internal process for mainstreaming youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. This plan shall begin with an initial resource mobilisation strategy that would be the responsibility of the Director-General and the Council. This would support the establishment of an office/unit for Youth with Director-level leadership and support staff who can lead the engagement of youth and programming for their meaningful inclusion across IUCN. The unit would be shaped and led by YPs to maintain legitimacy in its actions. The Unit for Youth would be responsible for developing an IUCN Strategy and Implementation Plan for youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships that aligns with IUCN's vision, the current IUCN programme, Commissions, national committees, the Secretariat, and donor partners. A formalised structure increases the likelihood of successful implementation, adequate monitoring, iterative learning, and broad-based acceptance and ownership across the Union to establish a cultural change for the benefit of youth and intergenerational partnership.

The responsibilities of the unit should include:

- Creating a youth engagement and intergenerational partnership strategy; establishing youth focal points in all IUCN bodies;
- Organising forums for intergenerational partnerships;
- mining the Union for youth engagement and intergenerational partnership activities and best practices;
- Mobilising investments to drive the youth and intergenerational partnerships agenda across IUCN, among other responsibilities.

The Director for Youth and Intergenerational Partnerships would be responsible for implementing IUCN resolutions relating to youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships, including delivering on the mandate of the Taskforce on Intergenerational Partnerships for Sustainability (IPS). It is recommended for the upscaling of the IPS already existing in IUCN to a governance body rather than setting

up a new unit.



2. **Establishment of a Youth Endowment Fund:** We recommend that IUCN build partnerships with relevant stakeholders towards the establishment of a Youth Fund from membership dues of current IUCN member organisations, as well as from philanthropic contributions. In its resource mobilization strategy, IUCN should target funds that can contribute to core funding and/or the establishment of an Endowment Fund from where consistent funding can be allocated to youth engagement annually and provide support to staff positions for further programme-focused resource mobilization. Additionally, contributions coming from IUCN membership fees would encourage more members to contribute and take ownership of youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. Youth would play a central role in the governance of the fund. The endowment funds would be used to:

- a. **Establish the permanent Unit of Youth at the Secretariat:** The official and institutional establishment of a funded office and position at the IUCN Secretariat will be solely responsible for youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships. It will signal the Union of the earnestness of IUCN's intent and add credibility and legitimacy to this intention. Allocating financial resources to mainstream meaningful youth engagement should be a priority to initiate youth involvement without any further delay. Every year a substantial amount of core funding should be allocated that should be increased simultaneously every year to support secretariat, regional, and country office youth engagement along with the projects and efforts of Commission youth networks.
- b. **Enhance financial support for youth participation in IUCN Congresses and Commission meetings from different regions:** The IUCN Secretariat and Commissions should allocate more funds for youth participation in IUCN Congresses and other global forums for enhancing opportunities for the intergenerational dialogues. IUCN should also ensure increased meaningful participation of youth in half-yearly Commission steering group meetings. Financial support for youth should focus on having enhanced youth involvement from the global south and representatives of marginalised, Indigenous, and local communities.

B. Recommendations for IUCN systems strengthening in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational collaboration



1. **Foster a “culture” for meaningful youth engagement through transparent, regular, and widely communicated youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnership within IUCN:** The Secretariat HQ should work closely with Regional and Country offices, Commissions, and Member organisations to foster a culture of meaningful youth engagement, empowerment, and intergenerational partnership across IUCN. Tokenistic roles for youth should be avoided, and approaches for building such a culture must include normalising meaningful and substantive youth participation at all levels of IUCN with a focus on youth engagement in leadership, planning, and at technical levels.

2. **Establish a structured scheme for mentorship and intergenerational dialogue opportunities within the IUCN Secretariat, Council, Commissions, and membership. Ensure at least one third (33%) of positions within IUCN are dedicated to youth:**



Innovative mentorship and leadership approaches have a pivotal role to guide and support skill development in younger generations through the complex changes and uncertainties affecting their communities. Intergenerational partnerships are premised on the fact that meaningful engagement and collaboration of younger and older people will generate new knowledge, ideas, and approaches through two-way, and even multi-directional, multidisciplinary, transdisciplinary dialogue and collaborative processes. Establishing a structured pathway for youth and senior professionals to enter into a co-mentoring relationship will ensure mutuality of learning and respect across generations and better contributions to the global conservation agenda.

Formal youth representation as paid positions within IUCN are critical for ensuring the success of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational partnerships within IUCN. Positions should promote meaningful youth engagement in substantive roles and should promote involvement in two-directional mentorship (youth also mentoring seniors) with their senior colleagues. Paid positions and two-directional mentorship are key to enhance meaningful engagement of youth and provide early opportunities to substantially contribute to the global agenda of conservation. The percentage here (33%) is relevant to countries in the North with an aging population, but would shift upwards in Africa, Asia, and Oceania where a youthful workforce is already present.

3. **Enhance efforts in intergenerational collaboration in key IUCN programmes through joint-research and setting of standards for youth mainstreaming:**



We encourage enhanced efforts to support collaborations among young and senior members of IUCN to embark on joint research projects that have the potential to facilitate meaningful youth participation and intergenerational engagements. Programme leads should consider meaningful engagement of youth in nature-based solution (NbS) standard-setting, and implementations in different ecosystems across the world; incorporation into IUCN global programs, such as the Global Program for Governance and Rights (GPGR); and mainstreaming and implementing red listing of species (RLS) and ecosystems (RLE) as strategic tools to contribute to the UN Decade of Restoration Bonn challenge and forest landscape restoration. Youth in different IUCN regions can significantly help in contributing, improving, and realising these strategically relevant high-value technical conservation approaches and efforts. Lessons here can be learnt from the CEC CEPA toolkit that actively engages youth.

4. **Develop educational programs and training opportunities that are targeted towards specific age groups:**



IUCN regional offices and Commissions should collaborate with educational institutions and Member Organisations to develop skill development, educational programmes, and informative publications that are targeted towards different age groups (school-age children, teenagers, YPs). Educational programmes in collaboration with top educational institutions in countries on culturally relevant and recognizing local solutions for conserving biodiversity should be implemented.

Training opportunities for YPs, should be co-created with them so that the training can be focused on understanding youth expectations and delivering knowledge and skills that are valuable to youth. An example of a training opportunity is a Youth Lecture Series where mentorship, reverse mentorship (youth mentoring seniors), and engagement with emerging and established regional leaders who can also further help in creating job opportunities can occur. This has the potential to enhance understanding of existing and emerging regional issues in conservation and will provide opportunities to identify challenges, ongoing efforts, and feasible solutions for enhancing youth cooperation.

Universities and other academic institutions, research and development organisations including environmental and conservation NGOs that focus on building youth knowledge and capacity for enhancing youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships in global conservation action should play an important role in supporting IUCN in enhancing its work in these areas. An example of an academic collaboration could be the creation of massive open online courses (MOOCs) and other offline programmes offered by experts for effective and meaningful skill development in IUCN priority areas. MOOCs run by the Programme on African Protected Areas and Conservation (PAPACO) programme of IUCN dedicated to protected areas and conservation open to professionals or mere interested ones since 2015 has reached more than 18,000 participants are good examples.

A broad and multi-level, multi-scale skill development and capacity building programme is to be identified as per new emerging areas of concern for the global conservation community and developed by the Youth/IPS Director based at the Secretariat. The programme should directly and indirectly engage more youth, educators, community leaders, and conservation professionals to fulfil the growing demands of a meaningful global conservation and sustainability agenda. The mechanism should have the potential for wide acceptance, application and support for intergenerational collaboration, while also supporting and integrating diverse global youth requirements and perspectives, especially those coming from developing, underdeveloped countries, and those belonging to marginalized communities or groups. The UNFCCC REDD+ implementation online course is an example of this type of programme.

5. Develop youth engagement models that cater for the heterogeneity of young people, including school-going children and youth, BIPOC, and other groups of young people:

In several parts of our review, it is clear that youth, especially *school-age children* and *teenagers*, are often excluded from defining how they engage in nature conservation and are often assigned roles that are less than meaningful. Engagement of school children and teenage groups in nature conservation can help develop a motivated generation of future enthusiasts in global conservation action. We strongly support and recommend that IUCN supports participatory processes where youth from diverse communities, including youth belonging to BIPOC communities, can themselves define and propose their involvement in nature conservation in their own terms. A sound agenda and a clear approach for engaging youth of different age groups should



be developed that highlights and ensures how IUCN plans to contribute in skill development and youth involvement for mainstreaming different age groups of young professionals in global conservation action. The existing network of young professionals who are actively engaged in IUCN Commissions should also be supported to establish their own set of principles and models for youth engagement in various priority areas and key programmes for realization of the IUCN Programme.

6. Encourage collaborations that ensure that youth leaders from Indigenous and equity-seeking communities, especially communities in the global south are included in IUCN conservation efforts:



There is a growing and pertinent need to support youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships to address and contribute to IUCN efforts and programmes implemented in the global south. Equity-seeking youth and communities of countries based in the global south are facing tremendous nature, climate and sustainability challenges that require greatest conservation focus and need. This has also been well acknowledged in the previous IUCN quadrennial programmes. One important way this work could be supported is by developing a framework and mechanism for skills and capacity-exchange that links regions and large conservation organizations (such as WWF, UNEP, UNESCO, UNDP, CITES, TRAFFIC, RAMSAR etc.) working across regions. It will be important that partners and youth leaders from the global south are not marginalised in such collaborations and are able to define their own objectives, missions, and visions.

The work on youth engagement and intergenerational partnerships being done by regional offices is already demonstrating success and effectiveness that should be adopted as a model approach to be further supported by better collaboration and contributions from IUCN Commission experts and established leaders in developing skill and capacity of emerging leaders for maximizing the benefits and outputs for youth involvement in IUCN conservation action. Regional offices should develop geographically and culturally relevant programmes and approaches that should be supported by the Youth Unit and Director based in the Secretariat to continue and upscale their work in these areas. The Secretariat's support to IUCN regional and country offices should include (but not necessarily be limited to) financial resources and technical support to youth/intergenerational partnership focused collaboration within IUCN Programmes.

IUCN Council should consider the possibilities of discounting membership fees of organisations run by young professionals, marginalised youth leaders, or Indigenous young professionals whose work has constituted progress in the conservation of nature at local and/or community levels, and who have already been recognised by environmental or traditional authorities. A discount of up to 100% on membership fees should be given to these non-governmental, community-based organisations, and such member organisations should be given advantages for training, mentoring, and dialogue opportunities in IUCN meetings and events.

- 7. Establish IUCN Young Champions Award for youth in conservation and enhance skills development through an internships programme:** Similar to youth award established by other international organisations like the UNEP Young Champions of the Earth award, UN Secretary General's envoy on youth, the UN SDG Young Leader, all IUCN's Commissions, and regional offices should establish annual youth in conservation awards. Winners of these youth in conservation awards should be given opportunities for internships in IUCN regional/country offices to get professional work experience. IUCN member organisations should also participate in these internships programs to enhance more meaningful involvement of youth and also these organisations across the entire IUCN network.



C. Recommendations for communication in support of youth mainstreaming and intergenerational collaboration

- 1. Develop and deliver effective communications that facilitate a clear understanding within the larger IUCN community about the importance of empowering younger generations and intergenerational collaboration:** The intention to foster effective future nature conservation work should translate directly and efficiently into actions to empower young and emerging conservation leaders. Further, it may be in the *Innovation* dimension of the Compass, where youth have the most to offer towards fostering conservation actions. The matching energies of youth innovations, approaches and the intention to improve nature conservation efforts should be effectively channelled towards setting achievable and clear goals, that precisely involves including youth in leadership roles of decision-making, formulating and co-creating strategies, approaches and actions across generations to achieve global and IUCN conserve nature goals.



- 2. Develop a communication portal to facilitate streamlined sharing of information relating to IUCN structure, activities and opportunities for youth:** Technology has the potential to use science and social networks to connect, collaborate and enhance youth involvement and intergenerational partnership work within commissions, regional, country offices and IUCN member organizations. There has to be a proper network in place that can be developed by innovative technological tools and communication platforms tools, such as a platform for youth engagement and intergenerational partnership, should be built and have the dual function of helping IUCN achieve its goals and creating opportunities for youth. An online platform is an appropriate tool for supporting collaboration within IUCN, especially across regions and countries, to support youth involvement and mainstreaming.



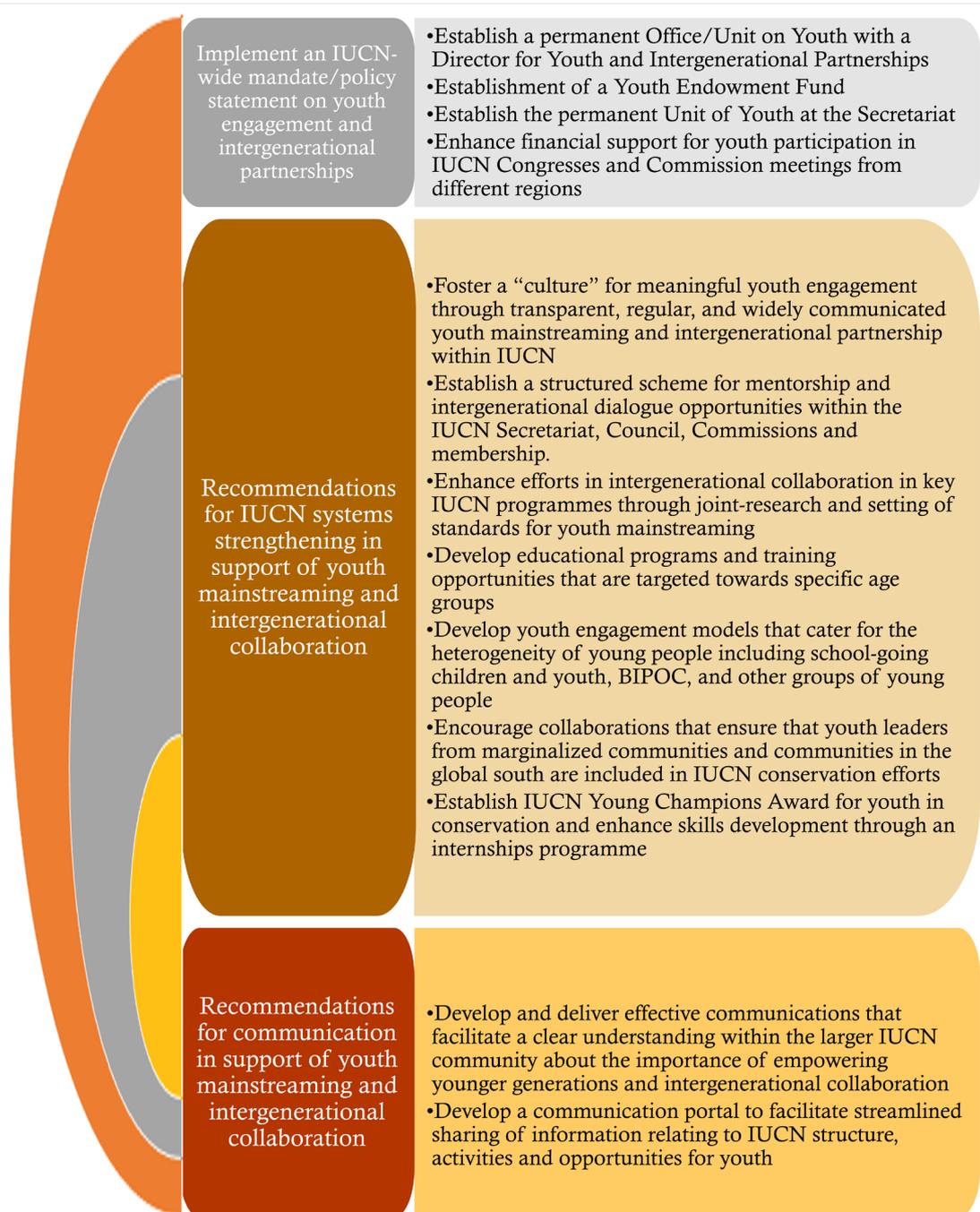


Figure 5.1. Overview of the recommendations

The above figure 5.1 presents an overview of the recommendations, and the INTERGENS Team sincerely hopes that IUCN and the broader IUCN community commit to implementing these recommendations promptly to ensure the meaningful contribution of young people as the present and future stewards of nature conservation, the inheritors of a multitude of sustainability challenges, and the hope for a flourishing and peaceful Earth community.