

Ministry of Foreign Affairs – (Department for Green Diplomacy and Climate)

Meeting in the Council for Development Policy on 10 April 2025

Agenda Item No. 5

- 1. Overall purpose:** *For discussion and recommendation to the Minister*
- 2. Title:** Danish Organisation Strategy for IUCN 2025-2029
- 3. Amount:** DKK 100 million
- 4. Presentation for Programme Committee:** 3 December 2024
- 5. Previous Danish support presented to UPR:** 29 October 2020

Danish Organisation Strategy for IUCN 2025-2029

Introduction: The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) is one of the key international organisations working with nature, people and development. It has a vast network of members including Governments, civil society and academia, which put it in a unique position to create evidence on the state of nature and biodiversity, and with this knowledge to inform and implement solutions for sustainable management of natural resources. It has an annual turnover of CHF 165 million, is accredited to GEF, GCF and EU, and has globally a strong presence on the ground, including in most African countries. The OS covers DKK 20 mill. for 2025 guided by an addendum to the existing agreement and DKK 80 mill. for the 2026-29 IUCN program.

Key results: The Danish support will contribute towards the following overall impacts of IUCN: (1) Conserving biodiversity effectively, (2) Addressing the nature-climate-poverty nexus, (3) Advancing a more just and equitable society

Justification for support: The Danish support to IUCN aligns with the Danish objective of strengthening actions to support climate change adaptation/action, nature, the environment and resilience in the poorest and most vulnerable countries. It aligns with the strategy of strengthening partnerships, particularly in the Global South and Africa. The funding will help advance IUCN's goals of biodiversity conservation, addressing the nature-climate nexus, and promoting equity, while contributing to SDGs 1, 13, 14, 15, and 17. Environment and climate targeting will be 100% on biodiversity conservation/nature and on climate adaptation.

How will we ensure results and monitor progress: There will be bi-annual consultations with IUCN, where Denmark will discuss progress and effectiveness of the implementation of IUCN Work Programme (in 2025 with focus on results in the last year of the current programme period and from 2026 on the new work programme 2026-2029). The discussion will be based on monitoring results from IUCN M&E system (to be further improved in the next WP phase 2026-29) as well as dialogue with the management at HQ. The Danish core support will have special attention on the quality of results reporting, including from decentralized regional and country offices and affiliated project activities. To this, Denmark will contribute to - and engage in - regular reviews and evaluation of IUCN's performance. It will be considered if a Danish secondment should be put in place, preferable to work with IUCN on regional level.

Risk and challenges: In general, environmental, political, financial and operational risks threaten the effectiveness of conservation efforts. Habitat loss, climate change, political instability, and funding instability can undermine progress. Challenges include project practical difficulties & insufficient stakeholder engagement. A key organizational challenge relates to the need for ensuring greater impacts in the regions and below.

File No.	24/07111				
Responsible Unit	KLIMA				
Support 2025 + 2026-29	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
Commitment Mill.	50	50			
Budget and Ann. Disb.	20	20	20	20	20
Duration of strategy	2025-2029				
Previous grants	Yes. Support IUCN 2020-2024				
Finance Act code.	06.34.01.75				
Desk officer	Eva Marie Wüst Vestergaard, Henning Nøhr				
Head of unit	Karin Poulsen				
Reviewed by CFO	Jacob Strange-Thomsen				

SDGs relevant for Programme



Budget

Total (core support): DKK 100 million

Danish involvement in governance structure. Denmark is engaged with the IUCN Governance Council through the Ministry of Environment and Gender Equality being the Danish national member of the IUCN Council. Denmark will participate in the World Conservation Congress, taking place every four year and where the Work Plans and Strategies for IUCN is approved. Next WCC will be in October 2026 where the Work Programme 2026-2029 is expected to be approved. Denmark will engage with the other framework and core funding donors to IUCN within the Framework donor coordination group who meets bi-annually to have strategic discussions with the IUCN cooperate management on progress and strategic challenges. As IUCN is accredited to a number of global environment and climate funds such as GEF, GCF, AF and is pillar assessed by EU, Denmark will follow the performance of IUCN in these fora.

Strat. objective

To support IUCN's mission to influence, encourage, and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. And to support IUCN's vision of a just world that values and conserves nature.

Priority results

Strengthening IUCN's work on inclusion, equity, IPs across the organisation.

Continue development of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS), with an emphasis on application.

IUCN enhances monitoring and reporting at overall programme level. And IUCN further develop regional/national implementation and impacts.

Core information

Established	1948
HQ	Gland, Switzerland
Human resources	1,000 staff in 50 countries
Partner countries	160 countries with 1,400 members
Funding amount by target	100% nature conservation and climate
IUCN portfolio 2021-2024	1271 programmes
Results 2021-24	Portfolio 2021-2024 directly benefitting 7.2 million people, 14.6 million ha nature with improved management, 4.0 million ha nature restored and 750 regulative frame work created or improved.

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

DRAFT
Organisation Strategy for IUCN 2025-2029

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List of Abbreviations

BBNJ	Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdictions
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CHF	Swiss Franc
COP	Conference of the Parties
CREATES	Climate Resilient Eastern African Transboundary Water - Management for Environmental Sustainability
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DKK	Danish Krone
ERM	Enterprise Risk Management
EU	European Union
FP	Framework Partner
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GESI	Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KLIMA	Denmark's Climate and Environment Department
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation and Learning
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Denmark)
MOPAN	Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
ODA	Official Development Assistance
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
TOC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. Objective

This Strategy for the cooperation between Denmark and IUCN¹ forms the basis for the Danish contributions to IUCN, and it is the central platform for Denmark's dialogue and partnership with IUCN for the period 2025-2029². It sets up Danish priorities for IUCN's performance within the overall framework established by IUCN's vision and strategy (see below). In addition, it outlines specific goals, results and priority themes vis-à-vis IUCN that Denmark will pursue in its cooperation with IUCN. Denmark will work closely with like-minded countries, especially other Framework Partners³ to IUCN, towards the achievement of results through its efforts to pursue specific goals and priorities.

The Organisational Strategy includes a proposed budget for Denmark's contribution of DKK 100 million for the years 2025-2029 (five years). This follows the programmatic cooperation between Denmark and IUCN for the period 2020-2024, which had a total value of DKK 80 million. The 2021-2024 work programme of IUCN will be extended for one year, through the end of 2025 (Danish contribution DKK 20 million), after which a new programme for 2026-2029 will take effect (Danish contribution DKK 80 million). While the 2026-2029 programme has been developed, it still remains in draft form. The contribution in 2025 will be guided by an addendum to the existing Danish agreement with IUCN.

The five-year timeframe of the Strategy will ensure continued Danish engagement, avoiding a gap in funding in 2025. It will align Denmark's funding cycle with IUCN's programme period (2026-2029). Annex 5 provides a Process Action Plan.

II. The organisation

2.1 Mission and Mandate

IUCN focuses on promoting nature conservation and sustainable human development. Its mission is to help societies conserve nature's integrity and diversity while ensuring equitable and ecologically sustainable use of natural resources. IUCN's vision is "a just world that values and conserves nature."

IUCN is a leading organization in sustainable development and conservation, playing a key role in partnerships, policy and standard development, and global authority on environmental matters. It implements projects for a greener, fairer future. IUCN's goals benefit both people and the planet. Key Mandates of IUCN are:

- *Conservation*: Protecting ecosystems and species.
- *Sustainable Development*: Balancing human needs with environmental health.
- *Knowledge*: Supporting research and policy development.
- *Partnerships*: Collaborating with governments, NGOs, and the private sector.
- *Global Leadership*: Recognised and leading in biodiversity conservation and climate change adaptation.

2.2 Strategic framework

The "Unite for Nature: On the Path to 2045" long-term strategic vision of IUCN, adopted at the World Conservation Congress in September 2021, outlines IUCN's goals for conservation over the next two decades. It focuses on the interconnected crises of biodiversity and climate change, calling for renewed commitment and innovative approaches to a world that values and conserves nature, and continuing IUCN's core conservation work while recognizing the deep interconnection between people and nature. It builds on a fundamental principle of ensuring equity and inclusion in conservation and climate work.

¹ IUCN is the International Union for Conservation of Nature

² The support is for five years and will end at the end of the IUCN programme period 2026-29

³ Framework Partners are donors providing core funding to IUCN and participate in specific IUCN-Framework Partner dialogues. They currently include Denmark, Finland, France, the Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the USA.

IUCN's vision identifies eight transformational changes: 1) Aligning financial and economic systems with nature. 2) Climate change adaptation and mitigation. 3) Food systems and sustainable agriculture. 4) One Health. 5) Green, just energy transition. 6) Sustainable cities. 7) Regenerative blue economy. 8) Water security and stewardship. Key processes include Scaling Up, Transforming Key Sectors, Mobilizing, Enabling, and Resourcing.

IUCN's work is guided by its Nature 2030 Strategy, with a 2026-29 Work Programme developed⁴. The Nature 2030 Strategy integrates biodiversity conservation into all aspects of development. The Danish Organisation Strategy for the support to IUCN is based on the Nature 2030 Strategy as well as on the 2026-29 Programme. However, the first year of support to IUCN from Denmark under the OS can be viewed as an extension of the current agreement and will be guided by an addendum to this agreement. Key Impact Areas of Nature 2030 Strategy are related to creating positive change for *People, Land, Water, Oceans and Climate*. They are reflected in the impacts and outcomes of 2026-29 Work Programme.

The 2026-2029 Work Programme is guided by a TOC describing how six key IUCN catalytical roles, within communication, convening, knowledge, policy/advocacy, capacity building and resource mobilisation, are likely to create outputs, outcomes and ultimately contribute to three overall impacts: 1) Conserving biodiversity, 2) Addressing the nature-climate nexus, 3) Advancing a just society. IUCN impacts are at local and global level and the TOC establish a linkage between local and global impacts, which is guided by the core principles of: Integration of Biodiversity and Human Well-being; Inclusive Decision-making; and Transformative Change. The TOC reflects the areas where IUCN is most likely to have influence and contribute towards impacts (TOC in Annex 1).

The 2026-2029 Work Programme includes 12 outcomes, focusing on Land, Water, Oceans, and People, and on the eight global transformations for nature and people. Outcomes of the 2026-2029 Programme:

1. *People*: Enhance equity and justice in environmental governance.
2. *Land*: Achieve conservation and restoration of terrestrial biodiversity.
3. *Water*: Achieve conservation of freshwater biodiversity areas.
4. *Ocean*: Achieve conservation of marine biodiversity areas.
5. *One Health*: Establish sustainable pathways to human and environmental health.
6. *Realign Financial and Economic Systems*: Refocus financial systems on nature.
7. *Sustainable Food Systems*: Promote nature-positive agriculture.
8. *Sustainable Cities*: Integrate biodiversity into urban planning.
9. *Water Stewardship*: Improve governance of water resources.
10. *Regenerative Blue Economy*: Promote sustainable marine resource use.
11. *Climate Change*: Optimize the role of Nature-based Solutions.
12. *Green, Just Energy*: Expand renewable energy within equitable frameworks.

The outcomes of the programme are broad and cover a wide range of subjects. It reflects what the global membership of IUCN prioritises. The outcomes are ambitious but are more narrowly defined by established indicators for each of the outcomes. The draft results framework includes 6 catalytic roles, 21 output measures, and preliminary indicators. The draft results framework for 2026-29 Programme is presented in Annex 2. Also, a draft TOC for the Work Programme is presented in the Annex 1. Guidance for the support in 2025 will be based on the IUCN workplan for 2025 (and reflected in an addendum to the existing agreement between IUCN and Denmark).

2.3 Organisation and Management

IUCN has a global presence, with members in over 150 countries, including 1,400+ states, government agencies, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, and 16,000+ volunteer experts.

⁴ The 2026-29 Work Programme is still a draft, but the final version is expected to be close to the existing draft. The 2026-29 Programme, expected to be finally approved by IUCN Council at the WCC in October 2025.

This diversity gives IUCN a politically powerful position to lead collective action across international landscapes. Its structure facilitates collaboration and decision-making across its membership and programs. The key roles of IUCN include: Policy Influence; Research & Knowledge Sharing; Convening and Network; Capacity development and resource mobilization; Community Engagement; Protected Areas Management.

IUCN is governed by a multi-layered structure, with a quadrennial World Conservation Congress where members vote on resolutions and elect the Council, which oversees the organization between congresses. The Secretariat, based in Switzerland, implements the decisions and manages daily operations. It operates 5 Centres, 12 Regional Offices, and six Commissions of volunteer experts.

The Secretariat manages Global Thematic and Regional Programmes, the backbone of Nature 2030, and provides services such as strategic partnerships, communications, and human resources. It has 1,000 staff in 50+ countries and allocates funding from Framework Partners to the global and regional budgets. The Secretariat is responsible for implementing the policies and programs set by the IUCN members and governing bodies.

Regional and national offices of the IUCN operate within specific geographic areas, focusing on localized conservation issues. These offices are supported by and work closely with the Secretariat to ensure global strategies are adapted to regional and national contexts. They also facilitate the engagement of local stakeholders, governments, and organizations to implement IUCN's global goals at the grassroots level. National offices report to regional offices. IUCN is enhancing regional implementation, with a focus on empowering regions and tailoring global centre support to regional needs. The “*Principles of engagement for IUCN Regions*” emphasize regional decision-making in activities. In the 2026-29 Programme, the Secretariat will focus on four areas to strengthen regional presence: 1) Strategic alignment across regions and thematic centres. 2) Strengthening institutional work planning. 3) Enhancing operational efficiency. 4) Innovation for members and delivery. Core funding will support these efforts.

In recent years, IUCN has transformed, scaling up its projects and shifting towards being an “implementing agency,” providing grants and executing projects for multilateral institutions. Its revenues have shifted due to changes in donor priorities. The shift carries risks of being less mission-driven and more project-driven. IUCN has an established system for dialogue and input from Framework Partners including semi-annual partner meetings where, amongst others, key management issues are discussed.

A SWOT analysis made as part of the preparatory analyses for the OS concludes that IUCN as an organisation is strong in terms of global outreach, convening power, policy influence and knowledge generation, but has weaknesses in terms of its ability to strengthen and empower the regions and national offices and their implementation. A weakness that is also leading to IUCN's insufficient ability in terms of creating and monitoring local impacts and their linkages with global change. Further, the analysis showed that IUCN is strong overall in terms of ensuring funding to its activities but has weaknesses in terms of ensuring core or unrestricted funding to run its core business. The shift towards more project funding is a potential challenge for IUCN global role. The Danish priority areas and Danish support is targeted at addressing these organisational weaknesses. IUCN is undergoing regular external reviews of its performance as an organisation and of its delivery. They have not yet been subject to a MOPAN assessment. A partner assessment is found in Annex 3.

2.4 Financial management

Overall, IUCN has enhanced its financial resilience and is effectively continuing to address its financial resilience. In 2023, IUCN's income was CHF 164 million, with CHF 34 million unrestricted and CHF 130 million restricted. Of the unrestricted funds, CHF 13 million came from Framework Partners. Unrestricted funding is crucial for flexibility in responding to conservation needs and helps leverage projects funding. The 2024 budget is CHF 187 million, with unrestricted funding remaining the same. The expected budget for IUCN's 2026-2029 Programme is CHF 800 million. Trough actively seeking

funding and partnerships, IUCN is positioned to secure the necessary funding for this period. While project funding has increased, core funding is in decline.

A Pillar Assessment Report (EU) from September 2022 confirmed IUCN's financial systems are robust, including control, accounting, audit, and grant management systems. Similarly, GCF and GEF accreditation confirmed that IUCN's financial systems are robust. A recent Danish monitoring report (by TILSKUD) found that Danish funds are administered as required but noted the need for better reporting on core funding use. It recommended establishing a direct fraud reporting link and improving internal oversight, both of which has been addressed by IUCN in 2024. Regular yearly financial reporting will be provided by IUCN to Denmark.

2.5 Danish and Framework Partner collaboration with IUCN

Core funding from Framework Partners including Denmark are essential for IUCN to operate as an organisation and supports IUCN in three key areas: strategic investments, generative innovation, and ensuring operational quality and fiduciary compliance. Core funding allows IUCN flexibility and to invest in emerging priorities and to play its role in policy influence and union support. IUCN's Framework Partners provide critical multi-year core support.

Partners, including Denmark, Norway, Sweden and several others, contribute to IUCN's success and engage in strategic dialogue to exchange experiences. IUCN's Framework Partners provide important input to progress across the Union, enhancing performance and benefiting from IUCN's knowledge and science. Overall, the IUCN dialogue with Framework Partners has been satisfactory.

Denmark's reengagement with IUCN began in 2021, was based on IUCN key role in promoting people, nature and climate solutions, and was at the level of DKK 80 million through to 2024. Two annual meetings have been held between Denmark and IUCN, one on-site in regional locations. This arrangement will continue in the upcoming programme period. A Danish secondment to IUCN's HQ strategic partnership unit in 2022-2023 supported, despite challenges from Covid-19, dialogues and management changes.

During the 2021-2024 programme period, Denmark has had soft earmarking for some thematic areas (water, indigenous peoples, NbS, and monitoring/results frameworks) and has received some reporting on these thematic priorities. The budget allocations for the soft earmarking areas were in practice integrated in the overall programmatic budgetary process. Hence, core funding without earmarking, but with priority themes for dialogue, appears to be the most effective way of supporting IUCN.

III. Lessons learnt, key strategic challenges and opportunities

The analysis for the Organisation Strategy shows that IUCN has developed positively, with improved capabilities to deliver its mandate. It is fulfilling its mandate and performs well according to the DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. IUCN has a clear niche and strong comparative advantages. However, it also faces challenges, including the need for better programmatic guidance, improved impact reporting, and enhanced mainstreaming of gender equality and social inclusion across the organisation and its partners.

3.1 IUCN developments

IUCN has experienced significant growth in project implementation. Leadership changed with a new Director General in October 2023 and several top management shifts. IUCN also restructured to enhance collaboration, creating five thematic Centres focused on resource mobilization, governance, conservation, scientific data, and policy. While the restructuring caused disruption and personnel changes, it is seen as positive for fostering integrated work approaches. The new operational plan aims to better align the organization's structure with programmatic goals, and new thematic areas, responding to membership prioritization, were added (such as agriculture and urban issues).

3.2 Strength and lessons learned

Overall, IUCN's strengths and impacts relates to influencing conservation policies, setting standards and providing knowledge and capacity building, engagement of a wide group of stakeholders, as well as the actual promotion of ecosystem resilience, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. The box below provides some of the key IUCN strengths and impacts:

Impact on Global Conservation: IUCN has significantly influenced policies and practices at national and international levels such as the Global Biodiversity Framework

Setting Global Standards and Concepts: IUCN plays a key role in setting conservation standards, such as the Red List, Green List, and Nature-Based Solutions.

Strengthening Biodiversity and Ecosystem Resilience: IUCN promotes biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience, integrating ecosystem health into development planning. Management impact in multiple countries.

Improved Protected Area Management: IUCN supports the establishment and management of protected areas for ecosystem and wildlife preservation. Wide impact across most countries.

Collaboration, Partnerships, and Knowledge Sharing: IUCN fosters multi-stakeholder collaboration, enabling effective partnerships across sectors, promoting evidence-based decision-making and act as an important convener and gives its members a voice globally. Providing global and regional platforms for collaboration and for knowledge.

Community Engagement and Social Inclusion: IUCN promotes equity and participatory approaches, furthering the involvement of local communities, Indigenous Peoples, marginalised groups, and women.

Capacity Building: IUCN enhances the capacity of its members and local organisations to implement effective conservation strategies.

Recent evaluations and reviews of IUCN concern the programme implementation period 2021–2024⁵, a period that also covers the Danish support to IUCN. These reviews/evaluations concluded that, while IUCN has made progress under the Nature 2030 Programme, adjustments are needed in a number of areas, including monitoring and reporting, local/regional impacts, strategic planning. See also box below:

Relevance: The programme reflects IUCN's constituency priorities; it engages local stakeholders effectively but needs more emphasis on ensuring regional/local implementation and impacts.

Coherence: The programme aligns with global agendas but is too descriptive focusing on broad alignment rather than directive, requiring clearer strategic planning and clearer pathways for implementation to effectively guide project implementation.

Effectiveness: IUCN has successfully aligned with programme objectives, evidenced by effective conservation efforts and strong policy influence, though its use of emerging technologies is limited.

Efficiency: While improving resource management, better monitoring and reporting practices are needed.

Impact: IUCN has significant international influence and directly impacts local communities. However, it struggles to demonstrate clear links between its projects and the broader Impact Targets of Nature 2030 due to inadequate reporting mechanisms.

Sustainability: IUCN's conservation expertise is in high demand, though further systems for reporting and managing risks are necessary.

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI): While committed, IUCN's GESI efforts can be a challenge and needs better monitoring and targeted strategies.

Overall, the most important lessons learned include the need for ensuring further regional impacts, the need for demonstrating clear links between activities/projects and broader impacts of IUCN including better monitoring and reporting, and the need for monitoring and addressing risks, including funding risks. These lessons are reflected in the development of the 2026-29 Programme.

⁵ External Review, IUCN Programme 2021-24, February 2024. Aleph Strategies Ltd, and Independent Evaluation of IUCN's Influence on Policy, June 2024, SOPHOI

While GESI work of IUCN can be further improved, it is relevant to stress, that IUCN over the last programme periods has developed its work related to equity and inclusion in conservation and climate action. Hence, important aspects of poverty reduction, inclusion and rights of communities, and gender issues are integrated in projects and programmes. The nexus of poverty, nature and climate is being addressed in much of the work of IUCN, and IUCN is actively, although not using the same words, addressing a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) through its strong focus on rights and the principle of Leave No One Behind (LNOB) through its insistence of inclusion. Looking at IUCN projects and programmes as a whole, target beneficiaries to a significant degree include poor and resource dependent communities in the Global South. Progress has been made in IUCN's work on Indigenous Peoples. A recent example is the Podong Indigenous Peoples Initiative, launched at COP28. IUCN works in line with UNDRIP, and specifically for Africa, it works in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its definitions of Indigenous Peoples.

IUCN has been able to deliver significant results in the 2021–2024 Work Programme as shown in the report "*IUCN in Numbers*"⁶. However, the report lacks a clear link to programme targets or global impacts, which IUCN plans to address in the next period. Selected key technical lessons learned from IUCN's 2021-24 Programme are, amongst others, related to the need for integrated approaches, the need for strong community engagement, and the need for strong global frameworks. They are detailed below:

Integration of Biodiversity and Climate Action: Strategies integrating biodiversity and climate action are more effective for sustainable outcomes and building resilience in ecosystems.

Global Cooperation and Frameworks: Global partnerships and international frameworks are crucial for addressing transboundary environmental issues and provide vital structures for coordinated conservation efforts.

Community Engagement and Indigenous Rights: Local communities and Indigenous rights must be central to conservation efforts. Further focus on mainstreaming of rights into IUCN projects and programmes would lead to added impacts.

Data, Monitoring, and Science: Robust data systems are critical for evaluating conservation effectiveness and guiding decisions.

Nature-Based Solutions: NbS are effective for tackling environmental challenges while benefiting biodiversity. IUCN's work on NbS has progressed well and will likely be further translated into actual implementation in the regions and below.

Adaptive Management: Flexible conservation strategies are needed to respond to changing conditions.

Financial Investment: Innovative financing and sustainable funding models are necessary for long-term conservation.

Policy Influence: IUCN should focus on integrated policy programmes with clear objectives and improve coordination of scientific knowledge for enhanced policy impact.

3.3 Niche and comparative advantages

IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it. IUCN plays a critical role in global environmental governance, with several niches and comparative advantages. As a leader in the global conservation community, it drives initiatives that protect biodiversity and promote sustainable development. Specifically, IUCN provides evidence and knowledge products as well as convening power and policy influence that is central in furthering the agenda on integration of equitable conservation, climate action and sustainable development for marginalised communities.

IUCN's global network includes government agencies, NGOs, scientists, and indigenous communities, enabling it to leverage diverse expertise and resources. It is recognized for its scientific research on biodiversity, conservation strategies, and ecosystem management. IUCN engages with international treaties and organizations to shape global conservation policies and advocates for effective environmental governance as an observer in the UN and other bodies. It also plays an important role in capacity building,

⁶ IUCN Programme 2021-2024 in numbers, IUCN 2024

providing training and tools to help countries and organizations develop conservation strategies. IUCN wide international membership gives it a strong global voice to promote policies and standards for conservation and ecosystem management, while IUCN members benefit from being able to contribute to the direction setting for the organisation and from being eligible for support from the global level.

IUCN's ecosystem approach recognizes the interconnectedness of species, habitats and people, promoting sustainable solutions. Its efforts in fostering cross-sector partnerships with governments, civil society, and the private sector further enhance conservation. IUCN tailors its strategies to local needs, ensuring relevance and effectiveness in different environments and cultures. These advantages, combined with IUCN's strong mandate in the Global South and established donor partnerships, make it a solid partner for Danish ODA collaboration in promoting integrated solutions for conservation, sustainable development, poverty reduction, and climate action in the Global South.

3.4 Key strategic challenges

IUCN faces several key strategic challenges. One of the most pressing is biodiversity loss, which requires effective conservation strategies that balance development needs. Climate change also presents a critical challenge, necessitating deeper integration of climate resilience into conservation strategies and cross-sector collaboration to enhance ecosystem-based approaches. Securing funding remains a concern. IUCN must diversify funding sources and demonstrate the impact of its efforts to attract investment. Specifically, the access to unrestricted funding is under pressure as fewer donors are willing to provide such funding. This can potentially result in IUCN being less able to be strategic, convening and policy oriented. This is a challenge that IUCN is seeking to address by differentiating the ways that core activities are being funded. The Global governance is also critical, and IUCN must maintain influence in international agreements and negotiations on biodiversity and sustainable development by constantly drawing on its wide membership including governments and civil society.

Stakeholder engagement is vital, requiring effective collaboration with governments, local communities, and the private sector. IUCN needs improved communication and negotiation strategies. Enhancing monitoring, reporting systems, and capacity building in local communities and organisations is essential for sustainable outcomes, which needs to be scaled up while ensuring that they are sufficiently implemented in the regions.

IUCN's management response to the External Review emphasizes strengthening the 2026–2029 Work Programme based on the review's recommendations. Key agreed actions include:

- *Action Plan Development:* Implementing recommendations to improve clarity, create a Theory of Change, and enhance accountability.
- *Prioritisation and Consultation:* Recalibrating Programme areas and streamlining the structure.
- *Monitoring and Reporting Enhancements:* Developing an aggregated reporting system for better alignment.
- *Strengthening GESI:* Integrating GESI into operations with systematic training and resource allocation.
- *Framework for Operationalisation:* Aligning budgetary support with Programme goals.

IUCN has improved monitoring and evaluation systems but needs to strengthen reporting at the Programme and global centres levels. Regional impact also needs improvement, and IUCN is working to enhance regional implementation. There remain some challenges in mainstreaming issues of inclusion and equity as well Indigenous Peoples' work across the organisation and its projects.

3.5 Opportunities for synergy

During the 2021-24 programme period, there has been some synergy between IUCN and Danish development assistance. Some embassies have worked with IUCN on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and ecosystem approaches, with IUCN participating in Danish processes to promote NbS in development assistance.

As IUCN act as important convener and is a key provider of key knowledge and related to conservation, sustainable development, and the interlinkage between nature, climate and people (equity/poverty), there are significant room for synergies created between the support to IUCN and the support Denmark is providing to various international funding mechanisms for climate and for nature (GCF, Adaptation Fund, GEF etc.).

Within the green agenda, there are also synergies with other Danish support to Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) civil society organisations, to the Strategic Sector Cooperation, to the Investment Fund for Developing Countries (IFU) and to other relevant organisations. The practical way of ensuring such synergies will vary but can include a process like the Annual Action Plan and Annual Stocktaking Review process and a more active informing (by KLIMA) of relevant stakeholders on opportunities for synergies. Inclusion of IUCN members in such strategic discussions should be assessed. Specifically, the synergy with IFU is relevant and should be developed so that IFU projects increasingly addresses biodiversity issues following a dialogue with IUCN. Further, the synergy with Climate Resilient Eastern African Transboundary Water - Management for Environmental Sustainability (CREATES) is of key importance and will include strategical and practical dialogue with IUCN.

Opportunities for synergies will continue through collaboration and a continuous dialogue between embassies/Danish-supported programmes and IUCN's regional/national offices. Further synergies can be developed by inviting IUCN's input into programming and capacity development within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) to strengthen biodiversity conservation and its integration with sustainable development and climate action. Additionally, opportunities to second staff to work with the IUCN Secretariat will be considered, particularly in key African regional offices.

The Danish Ministry of Environment is a formal member of IUCN and represents Denmark in the IUCN Council. Coordination synergies between the two ministries should be pursued under a whole-of-government agenda, focusing on biodiversity, protected areas management, and NbS.

Another option for synergy is involving IUCN in the planned multilateral Green Funds processes supported by KLIMA, which include embassies and national authorities and where the status and cross learning of the various Danish-supported green funding mechanisms is being discussed. The KLIMA-established Green Funds Contact Group should consider this, aligning with Denmark's new Africa Strategy.

Framework Partners to IUCN have several opportunities for synergy to enhance conservation efforts and maximize impact. These include aligning donor goals with IUCN's priorities, co-financing and co-designing projects, and leveraging IUCN's expertise for project monitoring and evaluation. Donors can also collaborate on capacity-building initiatives and engage in multi-stakeholder dialogues facilitated by IUCN, fostering public-private partnerships and scaling innovative solutions. Supporting joint advocacy and policy influence will amplify impact on global environmental policies. A partner assessment is provided in Annex 3.

IV. Justification, priority areas and results to be achieved

4.1 Justification for the support

IUCN is the world's leading multilateral, member-driven organisation supporting biodiversity conservation and its integration with sustainable development and climate action. It is relevant, effective, and creates tangible impacts. The global crisis, with interconnected challenges in nature, climate, and poverty, demands urgent and coordinated action. This underscores IUCN's central role in policy, knowledge, and implementation, forming the key rationale for Denmark's support to IUCN. Further, justification for funding IUCN as a Framework Partners (such as Denmark) includes:

- *Global Impact:* IUCN has broad reach and influence in biodiversity conservation, making it an effective partner for global environmental goals.

- *Scientific Expertise*: IUCN is recognised for its scientific research and expertise in conservation, informing policy decisions and promoting evidence-based practices.
- *Network of Stakeholders*: IUCN's vast and diverse network of governments, NGOs, and indigenous groups amplifies impact through collaboration.
- *Sustainable Development*: IUCN aligns conservation efforts with sustainable development, helping donors achieve sustainability objectives.
- *Innovative Solutions*: IUCN works on innovative strategies addressing environmental challenges like climate change and habitat loss.
- *Monitoring and Reporting*: IUCN provides robust frameworks for monitoring and evaluation, ensuring accountability and transparency.

The aim of Danish support to IUCN is to contribute to three key impacts in the 2026–2029 Programme: (1) Conserving biodiversity effectively; (2) Addressing the nature-climate nexus; and (3) Advancing a more just and equitable society. This support aligns with the Danish strategy for development cooperation, *The World We Share*, which strengthens climate adaptation, nature, and resilience in vulnerable countries. The support also aligns with Denmark's *Global Climate Action Strategy*, particularly initiatives promoting climate, environment, and biodiversity considerations.

Denmark's core funding will directly or indirectly, by the very nature of how IUCN distributes core funding from ODA donors, support regional implementation in the Global South, including in Africa. This is in line with Denmark's Strategy for Strengthened Engagement with African Countries: *Africa's Century*, focusing on climate adaptation, agriculture, water, and biodiversity protection. The support will contribute to achieving SDGs 1, 13, 14, 15, and 17, and is aligned with Denmark's Priorities for Development Cooperation 2024, allocating 35% to the green transition, including sustainable nature and biodiversity conservation.

4.2 Overall results to be achieved by the Danish support

With core funding support, Denmark will contribute to IUCN's impacts in the 2026-2029 Programme, namely:

- *Conserving biodiversity effectively*: Biodiversity will be conserved, protected, and restored across land, freshwater, and maritime realms, and mainstreamed across sectors.
- *Addressing the nature-climate nexus*: Biodiversity and ecosystem services will help address the nature-climate nexus through nature-based solutions for ecosystem and societal resilience and mitigating climate risks to nature.
- *Advancing a more just and equitable society*: The equitable, legitimate, legal, and sustainable use of nature and natural resources will contribute to a just and sustainable society.

The 2026–2029 Draft Programme has not yet progressed to the stage of setting indicators, baselines, and targets for the impact areas. Denmark will also support the twelve outcomes of the 2026-2029 Draft Programme but has selected the following six outcomes for focusing attention on. They are also linked to the priority areas addressed in the next chapter:

- *People*: Enhancing equity and justice in scaling up conservation across land, freshwater, and oceans.
- *Land*: Conserving and restoring important terrestrial biodiversity areas will be achieved equitably and inclusively to meet global targets.
- *Water*: Conserving and restoring freshwater biodiversity areas in equitable ways meeting global targets.
- *Realign Financial and Economic Systems*: Realigning economic and financial systems to reflect nature's dependencies and impacts and ensure equitable stewardship of natural resources.
- *Water Stewardship and Security*: Improving governance of water resources through better policy frameworks and regulations.
- *Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation*: Optimising the role of nature-based solutions in climate strategies while avoiding adverse biodiversity impacts.

Indicators for these outcomes are still being developed. During 2025, one indicator per outcome will be selected as input for monitoring the Danish support to IUCN. Overall, the Danish support to IUCN will be targeted as significant (100%) for biodiversity conservation/nature and for climate adaptation. Targeting for climate mitigation will be principal (50%).

4.3 Priority areas for the Danish support

Based on core funding, Denmark fully supports the mandate of IUCN. In addition, it aims to enhance the overall performance and impact of IUCN through four priority areas. These priority areas will guide Denmark's partnership and be included in the HQ dialogues and embassy dialogues with IUCN, building on the synergies between Denmark's and IUCN's strategic priorities and achievements. They are focused on (1) *Inclusion, poverty and Indigenous Peoples* (2) *Nature-based Solutions*, (3) *Programme/global level impact and outcome monitoring* (4) *Regional/national level implementation and impact*. The priority areas are:

1) Strengthening IUCN's work on inclusion, poverty and Indigenous Peoples, with a focus on how the inclusion including gender, poverty reduction and aspects of Indigenous Peoples rights is being mainstreamed across the organisation and in regional and national implementation

IUCN recognizes equity and inclusion as a cornerstone in its work. The nexus of poverty, nature and climate is being addressed in much of the work of IUCN, and IUCN is actively addressing key aspects of HRBA and LNOB. That said, further work on integrating these aspects broadly and more firmly across IUCN programmes and projects will be needed. The learning loop from the local level to the global advocacy and policy level with regards to these specific issues will be included in the focus for the priority area. Specifically, IUCN promotes the rights of Indigenous Peoples, advocating for their involvement in conservation and ensuring their voices are heard in policymaking. However, more needs to be done, particularly in integrating their inclusion in projects at regional and field levels and how learning from field examples can be mainstreamed further in the organisation.

This priority area is an existing part of IUCN's Strategy and Programme. Progress will be assessed under the impact area: "Advancing a more just and equitable society", and the outcome: "People: Equity and justice for sound environmental governance". Indicators are being developed. The Danish priority will focus on how well inclusion, poverty reduction and IP issues are implemented across IUCN.

2) Continued development of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), with an emphasis on how they are being applied across various sectors and projects

IUCN's work with Nature-based Solutions (NbS) has made significant global progress. Moving forward, IUCN will establish regional NbS hubs, strengthen country- and sector-specific applications, and use NbS to integrate biodiversity, climate, and other sectors. Danish support prioritizes NbS due to its value in Danish development cooperation and due to the importance of following IUCN's practical implementation across sectors and projects. Continuing this focus aligns with previous Danish priorities.

This priority area is part of IUCN's Strategy and Programme. Progress in this priority area will be assessed according to the impact areas: "conserving biodiversity effectively and addressing the nature-climate nexus", and more specifically, in the outcome area: "Climate change adaptation and mitigation". Further, it will relate to the output: "Scaling up Nature-based Solutions". Several indicators are being developed including generation of guidance for application of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS, availability of NbS knowledge, and number of stakeholders using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS. The Danish priority area will focus on how well NbS is being applied in various sectors and projects at the regional level and below, and on how well experience from the field are looped back into IUCN global level and vice versa.

3) IUCN enhances monitoring and reporting on outcomes and impacts at the overall programme and global level

This is a priority area related to organisational effectiveness. IUCN has made significant strides towards improving its monitoring, results framework, and reporting at the project level (and it was part of the Danish funding to IUCN 2021-24), but there is still a need to ensure that the organisation is able to better monitor and report on outcomes and impacts at the aggregate global level, as well as for the activities undertaken by the global centres. This need, highlighted in the latest external review and management

response, is central for Framework Partners like Denmark to assess the impact of their support. Efforts are underway to develop a robust results framework for programme and global levels, with further improvements planned. While specific results for the 2026-29 programme are pending, IUCN management will focus on this, ensuring results are delivered by the Secretariat. Denmark will work to support IUCN's efforts to improve monitoring and reporting of outcomes and impacts at the programme and global levels. This process will be closely followed. It will also be reported as part of the Secretariat's reporting to the Framework Partners.

4) Strengthening regional implementation, with increased focus on creating impacts at the regional, national, and field levels and ensuring that local and global roles of IUCN is being further connected

This priority area is also related to organisational effectiveness. Although it has been raised before, IUCN still needs to improve how well it delivers at the regional levels and below on national/local levels. IUCN recognises this and is actively working to improve regional implementation and its impacts. The organisation has embarked on a process that will gradually ensure more emphasis is placed on empowering regions. This is also reflected in the 20-year Vision. The role of regional offices in coordinating work will be strengthened, and their capacity to do so will be enhanced, partly through staffing and partly by ensuring that IUCN global centres increasingly tailor their support to the needs of the regions. IUCN's work and strategies will increasingly ensure that different regional contexts are clearly reflected in how work is organised. This will also entail a continuation of IUCN's process of promoting better connections between local and global roles of IUCN in ways that improves aid effectiveness and equal partnerships within countries and in ways that ensure that local experiences are impacting global advocacy and policy work. The results to be achieved are not directly part of the draft results framework for the 2026-29 programme, but communications from the Secretariat emphasise it as a key area that IUCN management will address. Specific results related to this priority area should be included in a future plan for delivery by the IUCN Secretariat. The process of regional strengthening will be closely monitored and will also be included in the Secretariat's reporting to the Framework Partners.

V. Danish approach to engagement with the organisation

Denmark will continue to be part of the Framework Partner group and adhere to established principles and procedures for managing and engaging with IUCN. Denmark will participate in two annual meetings with Framework Partners and IUCN Secretariat, one typically held at an IUCN regional office. These meetings will discuss progress based on the Annual Report and thematic donor focus areas and offer opportunities for the donor group members to independently exchange views with each other. Denmark will through these meetings seek to ensure that the chosen Danish priority areas are being tabled for discussion and will at these meeting seek to promote that IUCN is working in accordance with the principles of coherence, alignment, and harmonization with partner country government policies, plans and systems. Denmark will, together with other Framework Partners, have a further focus on tracking the improved reporting and monitoring system and on how unrestricted funding is flowing between HQ and the regional offices.

Denmark expects one annual bilateral meeting with IUCN to discuss Danish support, with focus on programme implementation in East, South, West, and Central Africa. KLIMA will share information and coordinate with embassies and other MFA departments to enhance synergies with other Danish-funded programmes and promote collaboration with IUCN regional offices. Including IUCN in coordination and communication of Denmark's engagement across Green Funds should be considered. The Danish dialogue with IUCN will have a focus on the four priority areas chosen ensuring that these areas are addressed to the extent possible. Specifically, Denmark will ensure that connecting the local and global role of IUCN is being supported as part of the priority area four and that it has a prominent place in the Framework Partner group meetings with IUCN. To ensure that priority themes remain relevant under a scenario with decreased unrestricted funding, the Danish follow up on the priority areas will seek to engage all of IUCN implementation modalities, including the many projects.

KLIMA will actively ensure that the range of synergies with other Danish instruments are prioritized and actively pursued in a strategic manner, while seeking to include them on the agenda for the dialogues with IUCN as well as capturing them in the annual action plans as well as in the annual stocktaking reviews.

Further involvement of Danish civil society in providing input to IUCN support will also be pursued. Input may also be sought from the Danish IUCN Committee⁷ and the Ministry of Environment on WCC decisions and the IUCN Work Programme.

Monitoring will rely on IUCN’s reporting system, which is evolving, and external reviews where Denmark will provide specific input to the ToR and the review process. Denmark will rely on IUCN’s risk management system for anti-corruption measures, maintaining a zero-tolerance policy for fraud. Audited organisational accounts will be received annually by 30th June, reflecting the Danish contribution. Specifically for the 2025 support to IUCN, which will be guided by an addendum to the existing agreement, this will be closed as agreed and end-of programme-evaluated by Denmark.

Denmark’s IUCN engagement must be supported with sufficient KLIMA resources to utilise opportunities for influence and learning. Consultancy resources may be considered to review IUCN documentation and prepare staff. Denmark retains the right to monitor the organisation through specific missions.

VI. Budget

In 2023, the total income of IUCN was CHF 164 million, of which CHF 34 million was unrestricted and CHF 130 million was restricted funding. Of the CHF 34 million in unrestricted funding, CHF 13 million came from Framework Partners, with the remainder primarily from membership fees. The budget for the coming years (2025–2029) is expected to be CHF 190–200 million annually, with the amount of funding from Framework Partners remaining unchanged at CHF 13 million (or around DKK 103 million) per year.

The Danish contribution will be provided as core funding of DKK 100 million over five years. This funding will constitute approximately one-fifth of the annual unrestricted funding from the Framework Partners. The amount of DKK 100 million will be divided into DKK 20 million funding into the existing IUCN programme in 2025 in line with an addendum to the current agreement with IUCN, and DKK 80 million into the next 2026-29 IUCN programme. It will be divided and disbursed as follows:

DKK mil.	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	Total
Support to 2021-25 IUCN programme	20					20
Support to 2026-29 IUCN programme		20	20	20	20	80
Disbursement	20	20	20	20	20	100

The overall IUCN budget supports equally the overall IUCN impacts of conserving biodiversity, addressing the nature-climate nexus, and advancing a just society as well as the associated strategic priorities. The budget stemming from core support is likewise supporting these impacts, and in addition has an added focus on support that reaches and are relevant for the Global South.

VII. Analysis of major risks, risk responses, and assumptions

The overarching risk that IUCN is seeking to counteract is *Environmental Risks* that includes habitat loss, climate change, invasive species, and biodiversity decline which threaten conservation efforts and sustainable development. The overall risks that are faced by IUCN include:

- *Political and Social Risks*: Policy changes, instability, and conflicts can undermine conservation practices and momentum for a green transition.

⁷ The Danish IUCN National Committee is a collective of IUCN member organizations in Denmark, established to facilitate cooperation among members and enhance their participation in IUCN's programs and governance.

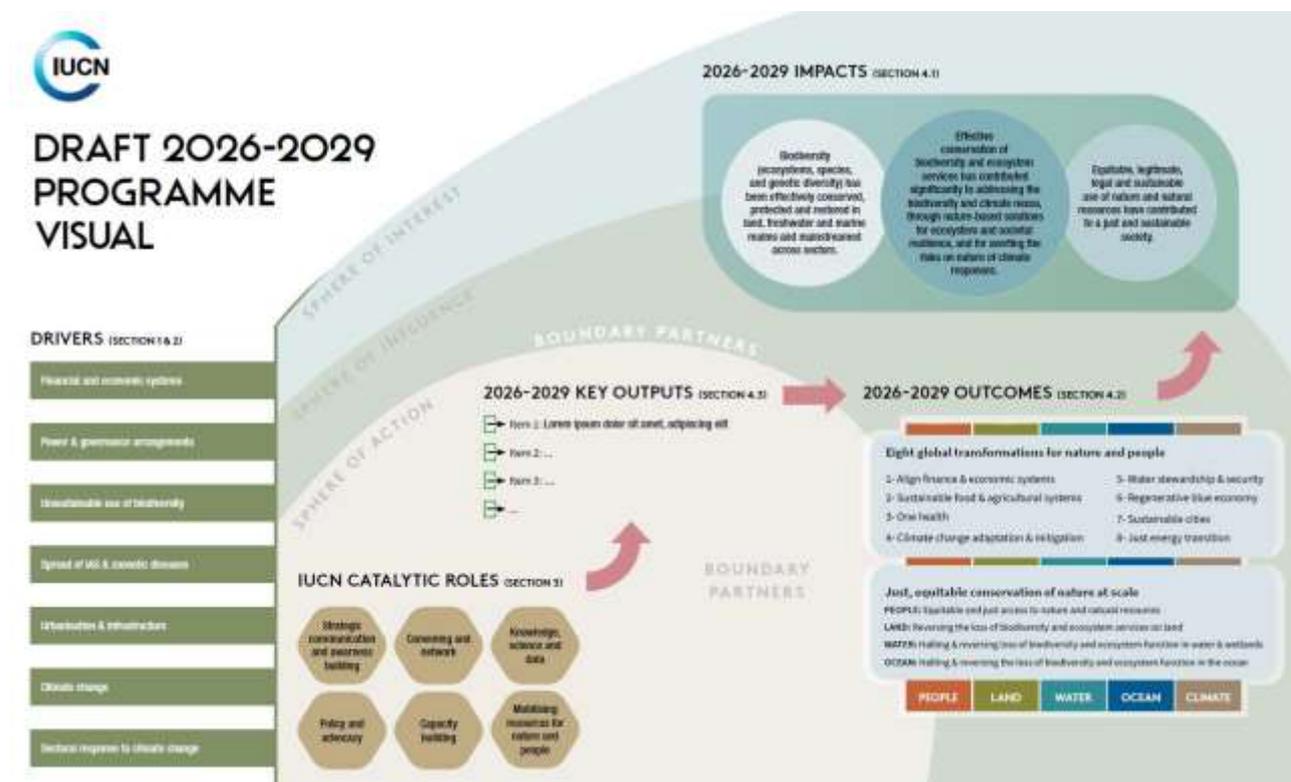
- *Financial Risks*: Unstable funding and reliance on donations jeopardise project sustainability. Including the risk of decreasing access to unrestricted funding, which jeopardise the policy and convening role.
- *Operational Risks*: Implementation challenges, stakeholder gaps, and unrealistic plans can derail initiatives.

To address risks, IUCN uses the following strategies: A) Stakeholder Engagement: Involving local communities and governments ensures cultural relevance and support. B) Adaptive Management: Flexible strategies adjusted through monitoring allow responses to challenges. C) Diversifying Funding Sources: Developing multiple streams mitigates financial risks. D) Capacity Building: Training personnel strengthens conservation resilience. E) Risk Assessment Frameworks: Clear frameworks enable proactive risk management.

IUCN's enterprise risk management system identifies and mitigates risks across strategic, operational, financial, and compliance areas. It involves risk assessment, prioritisation, and mitigation, integrating risk management into governance structures. The system fosters risk awareness, transparency, and staff engagement. Risk appetite and tolerance levels balance innovation with caution. Regular risk reporting, monitoring is undertaken. Ultimately, the system enhances IUCN's ability to respond to risks and seize opportunities while safeguarding its mission. Selected key risks in the IUCN enterprise risk register will be monitored as part of Danish support. Denmark will request specific feedback from IUCN on progress related to some selected risks. In Annex 4 a detailed risk register adapted for the Danish support to IUCN is presented.

VIII. Annexes

Annex 1: Visual representation of the TOC re. the IUCN 2026-2029 Programme



Core Principles of the IUCN TOC:

- **Integration of Biodiversity and Human Well-being:** A key part of IUCN’s TOC is that conservation is not just about protecting nature for nature's sake; it is closely tied to the well-being of human communities, especially those that rely on natural resources for their livelihoods.
- **Inclusive Decision-making:** The TOC highlights the importance of involving a broad range of stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples, local communities, governments, and the private sector, in the decision-making process.
- **Transformative Change:** The ultimate goal is to create **transformative change**, which involves shifts in policies, behaviours, and practices at global, national, and local levels.

Annex 2. IUCN's 2026-2029 Programme – Draft Results and Accountability Framework

1. Introduction

The external review of Vision2030, and the IUCN's Programme 2021-24 highlighted that while evidence of IUCN's work and impact on nature was strong, the measurement of results needed to improve. At the same time The Secretariat has been drafting a 20-year Vision for the Union, which includes a need to improve monitoring and results measurement across the Union's work. This includes Members, Commissions, as well as the work of the Secretariat. Initiatives such as 'Contributions to Nature' is capturing project by project evidence, so we can aggregate the change we create from a bottom-up approach, meanwhile we need a results framework with which to measure from a top-down perspective.

This is work in progress and will be updated towards its finalisation in January 2025, as part of the Programme 2026-29 planning. It will also be nested in the 20-year Vision. IUCN is taking these first steps towards a unifying results framework, and we hope it is realised that this is work in progress. ***This is a draft document which will be updated fully in the next few months (autumn-winter 2024-25) as discussed below.***

2. Methodology

We look at our results framework in two ways. The first, is a theory of change approach where activities lead to outputs, which leads to outcomes, and eventually impact. We also look at the full list of outputs we could achieve and decide which areas we need to work in directly and which our members, partners and peers will focus on. The Programme 2026-29 has therefore defined the following framework for our results:

- **3 Impact** measures linking to our vision and mission
- **12 Outcome** measures; and
- **The 6 Catalytic roles** we play in making change happen, and **with 21 Output** measures
- **A results framework which sits throughout this.**

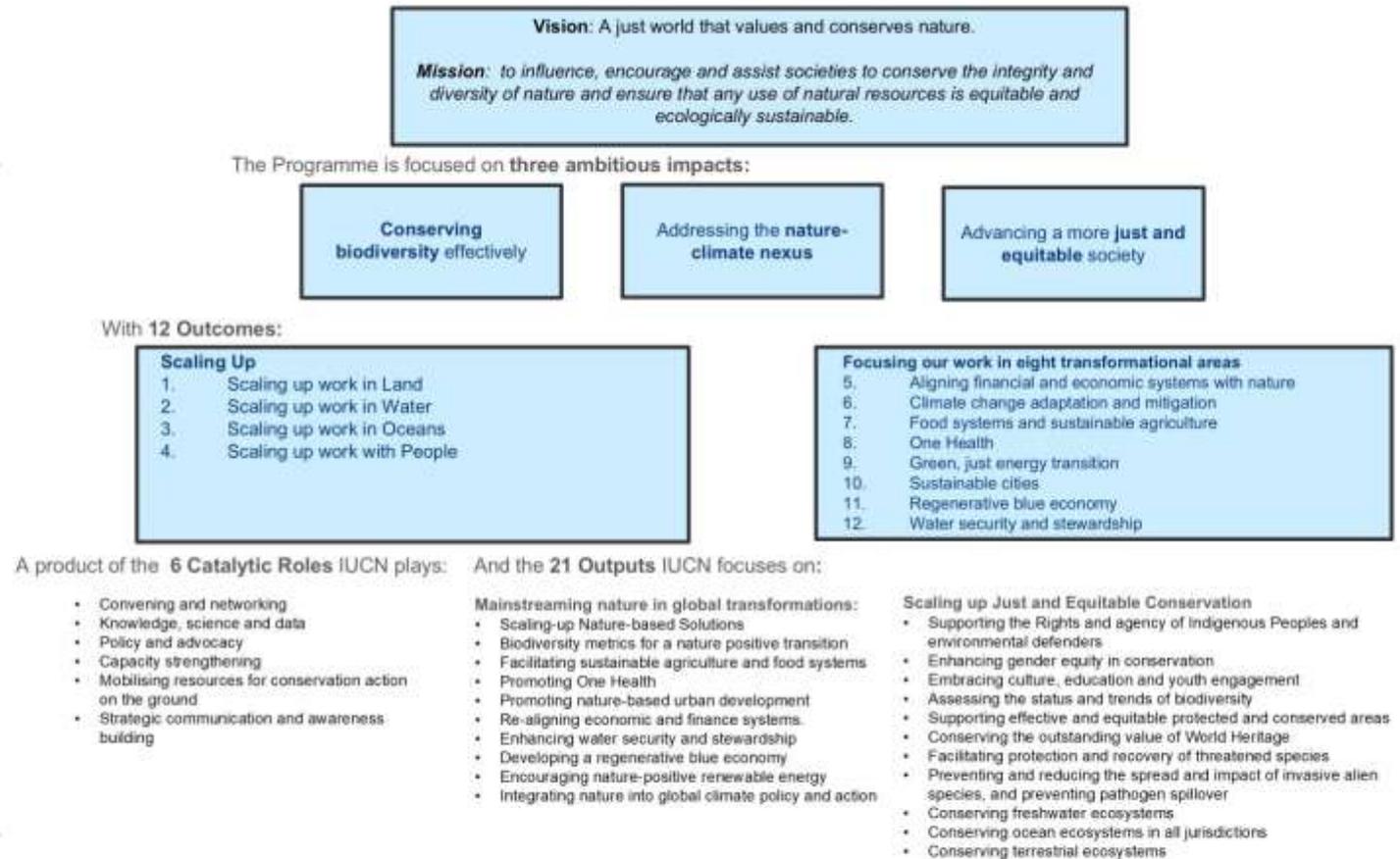
This is shown over the page in figure 1.

The second is the spheres of action, influence, and interest. Which is described later.

Figure 1: Results framework focused on a Theory of Change Approach



Our results sit throughout this



3. Results Framework

Outcomes

This is a draft and indicative framework. Will be adjusted as member feedback have been received. Outcomes will be monitored using two approaches:

1. Meta indicators⁸ (automatically aggregated through the portfolio atlas of indicators and the portal master data management) – [marked as blue](#)
2. Data collector manually through ‘owners’, such as individuals (‘institutional indicators’)

Outcome statements	Results Indicators
Just, equitable conservation of nature at scale⁹	
<p>4.2.2.1 PEOPLE Equity and justice for sound environmental governance has been enhanced in every aspect of scaling up conservation on land, freshwater and oceans</p> <p>4.2.2.2 LAND The effective conservation and restoration of areas of importance for terrestrial key biodiversity areas, other areas important for biodiversity, ecosystems and species has been achieved equitably and inclusively to reach global targets</p> <p>4.2.2.3 WATER The effective conservation and restoration of freshwater key biodiversity areas, other areas important for biodiversity, ecosystems and species has been achieved equitably and inclusively to reach global targets</p> <p>4.2.2.4 OCEAN The effective conservation and restoration of marine key</p>	<p>These sit across all of our scaling up efforts across People, Land, Water and Oceans (as applicable):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Total number of assessments delivered (meta indicator) *Total number of plans or strategies delivered (meta indicator) *Total number of hectares of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (qualitative assessment, non-certified) (meta indicator) *Total number of area of landscapes that meets national or international third-party certification and that incorporates biodiversity considerations (meta indicator) *Total number of hectares of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems (meta indicator) * Total number of hectares of degraded agricultural lands under restoration (meta indicator) * Total number of hectares of forest and forest land under restoration (meta indicator) * Total number of hectares of natural grass and shrublands under restoration (meta indicator) * Total number of hectares of wetlands (including estuaries and mangroves) under restoration (meta indicator) * Total number of livelihood interventions (meta indicator) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of direct beneficiaries (differentiated by men / women) • Number of indigenous communities engaged • Number of women and girls • Number of youth

⁸ Meta indicators are composite measurements that aggregate multiple individual indicators into a single, broader metric. They are used to provide a high-level summary or overview by combining data from various sources or intervention types. In this accountability framework, meta indicators are often used to track overall performance, trends, or progress.

⁹ The majority of indicators included under this section can be disaggregated by outcome (not valid for some knowledge products)

<p>biodiversity areas, other areas important for biodiversity, ecosystems and species has been achieved equitably and inclusively to reach global targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of policies, laws and regulations supported (engaged with/ influenced??) * Total number of people trained on equity and justice for sound governance * Total number of organisations that received technical assistance on equity and justice for sound governance * Total unique count of adults with protected natural resources access and use rights (meta indicator) * Total unique count of community members consulted (meta indicator) * Total unique count of direct beneficiaries (meta indicator) * Total unique count of people trained (meta indicator) * Total number of protected and conserved areas listed in the Green List * Total number of IUCN ISBN publications and translations (incl. Altmetric Attention Scores) * Total number of publications downloaded * Total number of species added to Red List * Total number of Green Status species added * Total number of invasive alien species accounted for in the GISD * Total number of EICAT assessments for invasive species submitted for approval AND number of these that are approved * Total number of km2 of the world's ecosystem re-assessed or * Total functional ecosystem types systematically addressed through RLE * Total number of KBA assessments * Total number of protected planet records (updated or verified) * Total number of Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions™ users * Total number of STAR reports downloaded * IUCN Restoration Barometer – Total number of countries with data submitted and validated
<p>The eight global transformations for nature and people</p>	
<p>4.2.1.1 ONE HEALTH Sustainable pathways to environmental and human health have been established</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of one health policies, targets and operational frameworks promoted (or promulgated) by government agencies * Number of new partnerships created (meta indicator) * Amount of CHF mobilized (meta indicator) Other indicators TBC
<p>4.2.1.2 REALIGN FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS Economic and financial systems have been refocussed to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Number of public and private sector actors that have initiated assessing, reported and/or set targets on the alignment of economic and financial systems with nature * Number of companies and regulators using biodiversity (species and ecosystems)

reflect dependencies and impacts on nature (including a focus on equitable stewardship of nature and natural resources)	metrics, data and tools to enable standardized, robust, and comprehensive measurement and disclosing of nature-related impacts, risks, and dependencies * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.3 SUSTAINABLE FOOD AND AGRICULTURE SYSTEMS Significant progress in establishing sustainable and nature-positive contribution of multifunctional agricultural landscapes has been achieved	* Number of solutions contributing to sustainable and nature-positive multifunctional agricultural landscapes implemented * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.4 SUSTAINABLE CITIES Sub-national planning processes integrate biodiversity, ecological footprints and nature into urban planning and infrastructure development, demonstrating improvements in citizen well-being and mitigation of urban challenges	* Total number of sub-national planning processes influenced * Number of sub-national planning processes incorporating nature-based solutions (meta indicator) * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.5 WATER STEWARDSHIP AND SECURITY Policy frameworks, regulations, spatial planning processes and water cooperation agreements improve the governance of water resources	* Total number of frameworks, regulations, spatial planning processes and/or water cooperation agreements improved (meta indicator) * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.6 REGENERATIVE BLUE ECONOMY A framework for developing a regenerative blue economy, focusing on sustainable and equitable marine resource utilisation is incorporated into national and regional development strategies	* Total number of national and regional development strategies influenced (meta indicator) * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.7 CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION AND MITIGATION National and international climate strategies, frameworks and actions optimise the role of Nature-based Solutions while avoiding adverse biodiversity impacts from novel climate technologies	* Total carbon sequestered (meta indicator) * Total Emissions avoided (meta indicator) * Total amount (CHF) mobilised (meta indicator) * Public and private finance catalysed by IUCN projects for climate action or biodiversity purposes (in CHF) (meta indicator) * Public and private finance mobilised by IUCN projects for climate action or biodiversity purposes (in CHF) (meta indicator) * Other indicators TBC
4.2.1.8 GREEN, JUST ENERGY TRANSITION Global installed renewable energy generation and distribution capacity is trebled within a socially equitable and nature positive framework	* Number of regulators and companies that have set targets and/or reported progress on nature-positive measures in the permitting and installation of renewable energy schemes and transmission grids. * Other indicators TBC

4.2 IUCN catalytic roles

Catalytic roles will be reported on automatically leveraging the IUCN indicator atlas (portfolio) AND the monitoring of key outputs in the following section.

IUCN catalytic role	Definition	Indicator
Convening and networking	Bringing together a wide range of actors for dialogue, discussion, and debate to identify, agree and address the necessary long-term transformational changes	* Total number of new partnerships created (both innovative and more standard interventions) (meta indicator) * Total number of convenings organised or * Total number of stakeholders brought together (meta indicator) * Total specialists groups brought together e.g. Private Sector
Knowledge, science and data	Guiding conservation with robust science, data and multi-disciplinary evidence	* Total number of assessments delivered (meta indicator) * Total number of methodologies delivered (meta indicator) * Number of knowledge, science or data material (incl. Guidance, methodologies and tools) developed or promoted (meta indicator)
Policy and advocacy	The ability to create change for nature from the local to the global level.	* Total number of policy influence products delivered (meta indicator)
Capacity strengthening	Empowering and helping others to change (deepening learning, and making this more relevant for Members)	* Number of people with strengthened capacities (meta indicator) * Number of Members/organisations/ institutions that received technical assistance (meta indicator) * Total number of trainings delivered (meta indicator)
Mobilising resources for conservation action on the ground	Brokering partnerships with, and through, Members and partners to support focused and innovative conservation action.	* Total amount of CHF mobilised (meta indicator) * Total number of conservation plans or strategies delivered (meta indicator) * Total number of livelihood support initiative delivered (meta indicator)
Strategic communication and awareness building	This also speaks to an ambition to grow IUCN work in education	* Total number of communication products delivered (meta indicator) * Total education indicators * Total Youth intervention measures

Outputs

The following outputs are in draft results framework for the 2026-2029 Work Programme. Indicators and targets have at this point been partially developed for the outputs. Adjustments of the outputs must also be expected:

- **Scaling up Nature-based Solutions:**

Adoption of high-integrity Nature-based Solutions by the public and private sector in the design, implementation and assessment of actions and initiatives to deliver the eight global transformations

- **Biodiversity metrics for a nature positive transition**

Adoption of Nature-Positive approaches and metrics by the private sector, government and civil society, to deliver the eight global transformations

- **Sustainable food and agricultural systems**

Conservation and food and agricultural systems actors (government, producers, companies, civil society) have co-designed and implemented solutions contributing to sustainable and nature-positive multifunctional agricultural landscapes

- **One Health**

Policymakers, public health experts, and conservation professionals set targets and integrate health and conservation aspects, reporting progress in combating zoonotic diseases and improving health outcomes

- **Nature-based urban development**

State and sub-national authorities effectively deploy biodiversity management and Nature-based Solutions to increase access to green and blue spaces in urban areas and manage ecological footprint

- **Re-aligning economic and financial systems**

Public and private sector actors, including countries and corporations, have initiated assessing, reporting and setting targets on the alignment of economic and financial systems with nature by measuring, monitoring and disclosing nature-related impacts, dependencies, risks and opportunities

- **Water security and stewardship**

States, corporations, and communities mobilise freshwater ecosystem restoration, governance and stewardship

- **A regenerative Blue Economy**

Regenerative Blue Economy models that incorporate State, private sector, and local community ownership and investment have been established

- **Nature-positive renewables and grids**

Regulators and companies have set targets and reported progress on nature-positive measures in the permitting and installation of renewable energy schemes and transmission grids

- **Integrating Nature into Global Climate Policy and Action**

Global and national climate policies, strategies and frameworks address, incorporate and safeguard the role of nature in adaptation and mitigation responses and investment

- **Respecting the rights and agency of Indigenous Peoples and environmental defenders**

Environmental initiatives prioritise and advance the agency and leadership of and Indigenous Peoples and environmental defenders towards their safety and protection and strengthening access to justice

- **Gender equality in conservation**

By closing gender gaps, women, girls and people of diverse genders have improved agency in environmental decision making and access to benefits/opportunities – while also becoming more freely, safely and meaningfully able to contribute to environmental actions which improve outcomes for people and nature

- **Assessing the status of biodiversity**

IUCN standards and tools on species, ecosystems and key biodiversity areas have informed and guided implementation and monitoring of the Global Biodiversity Framework

- **Effective and equitable protected and conserved areas**
National and sub-national governments, Indigenous Peoples and local communities have been supported to implement plans for fair and effective systems of protected and conserved areas, in line with the Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)
- **Conserving the outstanding universal value of natural World Heritage**
The world's most significant natural and cultural areas are protected and conserved through the maintenance of their outstanding universal value through equitable, effective and inclusive governance and management
- **Recovery of threatened species**
The human-induced extinction of targeted threatened species has been halted and reversed, contributing to enhanced ecosystem integrity and human livelihoods and well-being in land, freshwater and marine areas
- **Preventing and reducing the spread and impact of invasive alien species**
Countries, companies and civil society have taken measures to reduce the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive alien species (IAS), and implemented actions to eliminate, reduce or mitigate their impacts in priority sites
- **Conserving freshwater biodiversity**
Governments and the private sector have used data and tools mobilised through IUCN standards to incorporate freshwater biodiversity into decision-making processes for effective and equitable conservation, water governance and management
- **Conserving the ocean and areas beyond national jurisdiction**
The global ocean will have achieved 30% protection in protected and conserved areas, and other area-based management tools and threats and systematic approaches to address stressors to the integrity of marine biodiversity, including ecosystem functions and services have been identified and being implemented
- **Conserving and restoring terrestrial ecosystems**
Collaborative multi-stakeholder ecosystem conservation and restoration at landscape scale have engaged government, private sector, and non-government actors to advance conservation and restoration of priority forest and grassland ecosystems benefitting associated human well-being and livelihoods
- **Placeholder (Culture, education and youth)**
This output has to be developed

Partner Assessment of IUCN

IUCN is undergoing regular external reviews of the whole organisation. These reviews are commissioned by IUCN and supported by the Framework Partners. They take place at an interval of 4-5 years. Additionally, thematic reviews of specific aspects of the organisation are undertaken at an interval of 2-3 years, also commissioned by IUCN and supported by the Framework Partners. Specific reviews has also been undertaken at times by IUCN partners. Further, reviews have, at different points, been made by some of the IUCN collaborating organisations such as EU, GCF and other others. IUCN has not been through a Multilateral Organisation Performance Assessment Network Partner (MOPAN) assessment, and it is not known if that is going to happen.

Lessons Identified. Previous engagements with IUCN, including the 2020-2024 Danish support to IUCN, have demonstrated strong technical expertise and credibility in conservation and sustainable development. The extension of the 2021-2024 Work Programme into 2025, followed by a new 2026-2029 Work Programme, underscores Denmark's long-term strategic partnership with IUCN. Denmark has worked closely with other Framework Partners to support the enhancement of IUCN's performance. Reviews indicate that IUCN has made significant progress under its Nature 2030 Strategy but requires improved programmatic guidance, impact monitoring and reporting, and regional and local impacts.

Alignment. IUCN's mission and mandate demonstrate strong alignment with Denmark's development priorities, particularly in the areas of nature conservation, sustainable development, and climate change adaptation. The organization's 2026-2029 Work Programme, with its emphasis on biodiversity conservation, addressing the nature-climate nexus, and advancing a just society, shows significant relevance to Danida's objectives. Key points of alignment include:

- Focus on sustainable development and conservation
- Emphasis on climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Commitment to biodiversity protection and ecosystem restoration
- Integration of human well-being with environmental conservation
- Promotion of inclusive decision-making and transformative change

Relevance for Achieving Objectives. IUCN's core mandate—biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, and sustainable resource management—aligns well with Denmark's strategy "The World We Share" and Denmark's focus on green transitions and climate resilience. The 2026-2029 Work Programme includes 12 outcomes supporting key transformation areas such as sustainable food systems, regenerative blue economy, and climate adaptation. Denmark's core funding will support IUCN's global, regional, and local conservation efforts in the Global South, with an emphasis on Africa.

Effectiveness. IUCN has demonstrated effectiveness in several key areas including: Global impact on conservation policies and practices; Setting international standards (e.g., Red List, Green List, Nature-Based Solutions); Promoting biodiversity conservation and ecosystem resilience; Supporting protected area management; Facilitating collaboration and knowledge sharing.

The organization's effectiveness is evident in its ability to influence policies and practices at national and international levels. IUCN's role in setting global conservation standards, such as the Red List of Threatened Species and the Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas, has been particularly impactful. IUCN's work in strengthening biodiversity and ecosystem resilience has led to tangible results in integrating ecosystem health into development planning. The organization has also made significant strides in improving protected area management, supporting the establishment and effective management of protected areas for ecosystem and wildlife preservation.

However, there is a need for improved impact monitoring and reporting and better programmatic guidance. The organization should focus on enhancing its ability to demonstrate and communicate the concrete results of its interventions, particularly in relation to core funding use. Further, IUCN's decentralized structure allows for local-level engagement, while its thematic Centres and global convening role provide strategic leadership. However, challenges remain in regional implementation and in ensuring efficient project delivery. Denmark's engagement will emphasize monitoring and reporting improvements, regional implementation, and enhancing IUCN's policy impact.

Efficiency and value for money. IUCN has enhanced its financial resilience and operational efficiency in recent years. The organization's budget has grown significantly, with a projected CHF 800 million for the 2026-2029 programme period. This growth demonstrates IUCN's ability to attract funding and scale up its operations. Core funding, including Denmark's contribution, remains crucial for IUCN's flexibility and ability to respond to conservation needs. IUCN's efficiency is further evidenced by:

- Successful scaling up of projects
- Ability to leverage earmarked projects/programmes at the global level
- Embarking on a process of enhanced regional implementation and decision-making
- Improved operational efficiency through organizational restructuring

However, the imbalance between core and project funding remains a challenge that IUCN needs to address to ensure long-term sustainability and maintain its ability to respond flexibly to emerging conservation challenges.

Sustainability of Results. IUCN's global presence, with members in over 150 countries and a network of volunteer experts, contributes to the sustainability of its impact. The organization's ability to influence policies and practices at multiple levels enhances the long-term sustainability of its conservation efforts. IUCN integrates biodiversity conservation into broader sustainability efforts, ensuring long-term impact. Denmark's DKK 100 million contribution over 2025-2029 will, amongst others, help strengthen IUCN's financial sustainability and enable the organization to scale up NbS, conservation finance, and regional implementation. Strengthening IUCN's local-to-global learning mechanisms will further enhance sustainability. IUCN faces challenges in balancing core and project funding, which may affect long-term sustainability. The organization needs to continue diversifying its funding sources and strengthening its financial resilience to ensure the sustainability of its operations and impact.

Risk Management and Governance. IUCN has demonstrated robust financial systems, as confirmed by a Pillar Assessment Report and accreditations from the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and Global Environment Facility (GEF). These assessments validate IUCN's financial control, accounting, audit, and grant management systems. The organization is actively addressing recommendations for improved internal oversight and fraud reporting. IUCN's governance structure, including the World Conservation Congress and Council, provides a strong foundation for decision-making and accountability. IUCN's financial model is increasingly project-based, with core funding playing a crucial role in maintaining strategic flexibility. Denmark will continue to provide core funding to ensure financial resilience, with a strong focus on monitoring fund allocation and impact reporting. Key aspects of IUCN's risk management and governance include:

- Multi-layered governance structure with member involvement
- Quadrennial World Conservation Congress for member voting and Council election
- Secretariat implementation of decisions and daily operations management
- Established system for dialogue and input from framework partners
- Regular financial reporting and auditing processes

Change Readiness and Ownership. IUCN has demonstrated commitment to long-term reform through its strategic framework "Unite for Nature: On the Path to 2045." The organization actively engages in biodiversity governance and policy frameworks, influencing international agreements like the

UNFCCC, CBD, and SDGs. IUCN’s transformation into a stronger implementing agency has strengthened its readiness to lead conservation and climate adaptation efforts.

Innovation and Learning. IUCN demonstrates a commitment to innovation, particularly in developing new conservation concepts and standards. The organization's structure facilitates knowledge sharing and collaboration across its diverse membership, which includes 1,400+ states, government agencies, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples' organizations, and 16,000+ volunteer experts. Key areas of innovation and learning include: Development of new conservation standards and methodologies; Integration of emerging priorities into conservation strategies; Adaptation of approaches to address complex environmental challenges; Knowledge sharing through global networks and partnerships; Capacity building for members and partners

SWOT Analysis. A SWOT analysis of IUCN offers the following key findings:

<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global credibility and policy influence • Strong conservation finance and policy alignment • Established network of partners • Leadership in NbS and biodiversity science 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges in demonstrating programmatic impact • Bureaucratic processes affecting responsiveness • Need for improved gender and inclusion mainstreaming • Regional implementation gaps
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening regional implementation • Leveraging NbS for climate finance and adaptation • Expanding policy engagement and advocacy • Enhancing data-driven impact reporting 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreasing availability of unrestricted core funding • Rising competition in the conservation sector • Geopolitical instability affecting funding sustainability • Climate and biodiversity crises escalating beyond mitigation capacity

Conclusion. Overall, IUCN appears to be a strong and relevant partner for Denmark, with a proven track record in conservation and sustainable development. The organization's global reach, standard-setting capabilities, and commitment to addressing climate and biodiversity challenges align well with Danish development priorities. While there are areas for improvement, IUCN's ongoing efforts to enhance its effectiveness, efficiency, and impact make it a valuable partner in achieving shared conservation and sustainable development goals.

Annex 4. Risk Register adapted for the Organisation Strategy

Below are selected key risks, identified in the IUCN enterprise risk register and adapted for this Organisational Strategy. These are risks that should be monitored as part of the Danish support to IUCN. Please note that these risks are programmatic and institutional risks that are relevant for monitoring IUCN's performance. Hence, contextual risks will be monitored as part of individual IUCN projects and programmes. They are not possible to monitor at the global level or as part of the Danish support.

Risk factor	Risk response	Likelihood	Impact	Residual risk
Portfolio pipeline risk – <i>deviation from planned portfolio pipeline undermining programme implementation</i>	Throughout the organisation ensure a focus on ensuring the pipeline	Likely	Significant	Minor
Information and data risk – <i>ineffective data and information is provided to guide management of IUCN and insufficient monitoring of impact and outcomes is being made at the global/programme level</i>	Several actions to improve data management including data management group and data management governance	Almost certain	Significant	Minor -Major
Shift in funding risk- <i>impacting financial sustainability as donors may redefine their funding strategies towards IUCN – also includes the risk of relative decrease in unrestricted funding to operate IUCN</i>	Ensure a close contact to donors and adaptation to donor priorities, develop alternative funding modalities for core activities	Likely	Significant	Minor
Talent retention & attraction risk – <i>IUCN might become uncompetitive on the job market impacting its performance – this has process has already been noted in the organisation</i>	Ensure that all across the organisation there is a focus on ensuring an attractive work environment and competitive condition for staff	Likely	Major	Minor
Programme implementation (downstream partners) risk – <i>risk include poor capacity of partners implementing project, but it also includes that regional implementation has to be strengthened in order to improve regional outcomes and impacts</i>	Ensure an improved wetting process for downstream partners and ensure a process of improved regional implementation	Almost certain	Significant	Minor to Major
Financial mismanagement, corruption and fraud risk – <i>these include direct mismanagement, and it includes misstatements, it includes risk of corruption, fraud and informal money transactions and terror financing</i>	Continue rolling out IUCN policies and procedures re. financial mgt. Ensure oversight committee works effectively. Anti-corruption proced.	Unlikely	Major	Minor

Annex 5. Process Action Plan

Process Action Plan Organisation Strategy IUCN 2025-2029

Activity	Deadline 2024/2025 (and beyond)
	2024
Initial preparations on themes, focus, type of funding in dialogue with IUCN, colleagues in other MFA departments, MoE	June
Start of contract Consultant	Early August
Desk assessment and kick- off meetings	August
Formulation of Organisation Strategy	September
Submit draft Organisation Strategy to KLIMA and IUCN for review	September
Address comments from KLIMA and IUCN	End September-start October
Submit Organisation Strategy to Programme Committee	21 November
Programme Committee (PK)	3 December
LEARNING receives the appraisal version of the Organisation Strategy	16 December
	2025
LEARNING sends mission Preparation Note to KLIMA	13 January
Appraisal LEARNING field mission to Kenya and/or Uganda	20-28 January
	30 January
LEARNING presents MDN to KLIMA	
Draft Appraisal Report presented to KLIMA	28 February
KLIMA presents consolidated feedback to LÆRING	6 March
Final Appraisal Report submitted to KLIMA	12 March
KLIMA shares consolidated OS to LEARNING for submission to the Council for Development Cooperation	24 March
Meeting at the Council for Development Cooperation	10 April
Address comments from UPR	May
Submit Organisation Strategy for approval to Minister of Foreign Affairs	May
Yearly technical and financial reports from IUCN	2025-29 Mid-year
Annual stocktaking and annual action plans by KLIMA	2025-29 Mid-year