



**IUCN**  
**World**  
**Conservation**  
**Congress**  
*Abu Dhabi 2025*

**Delivering Impact Through Sustainability:**  
**IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025**  
**Sustainability Report**

# FOREWORD

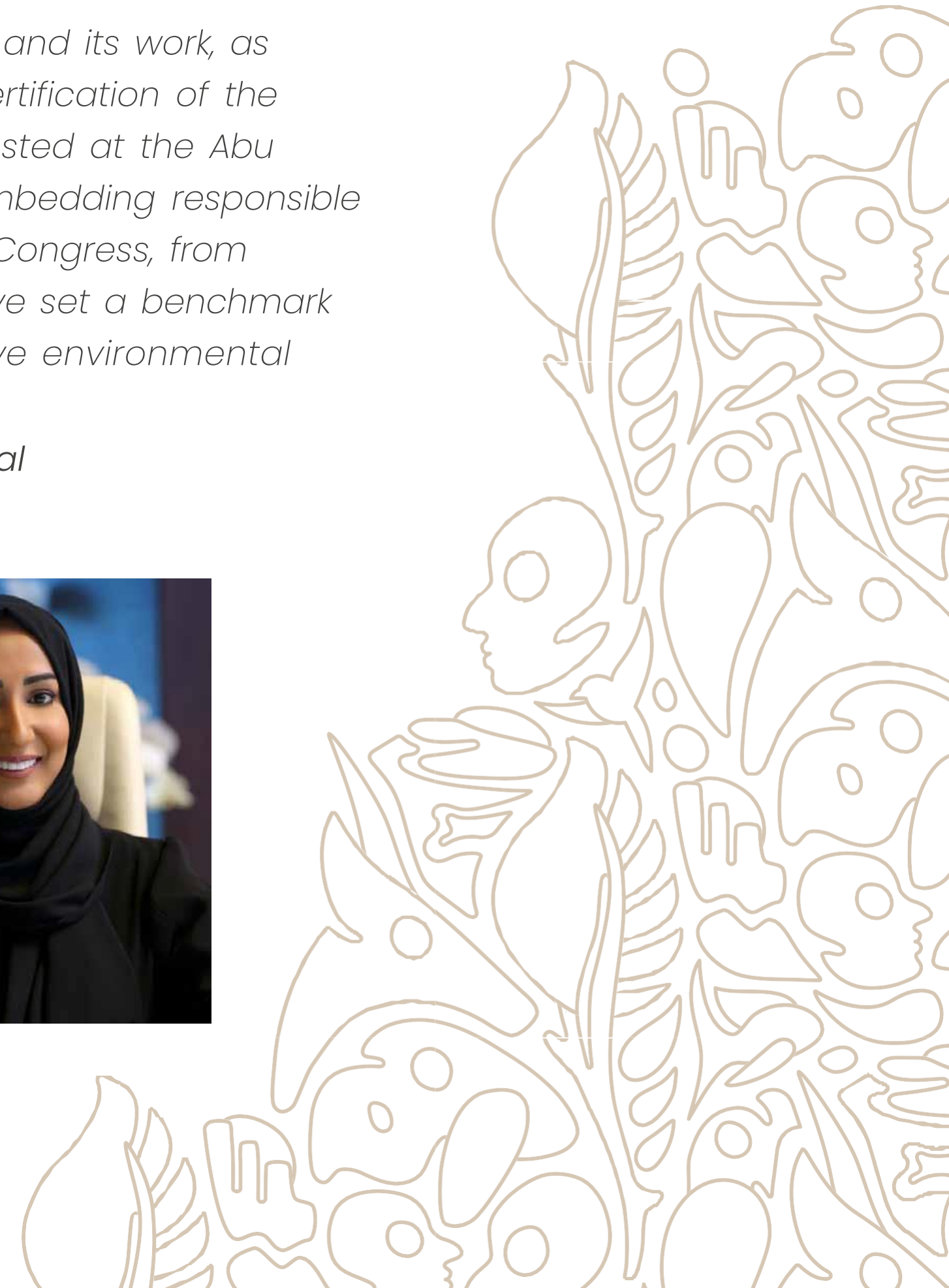


*“Sustainability lies at the heart of IUCN and its work, as demonstrated by the ISO 20121:2024 certification of the World Conservation Congress 2025, hosted at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre. By embedding responsible practices across every aspect of the Congress, from energy use to waste reduction, we have set a benchmark for how global events can drive positive environmental and social impact.”*

*Dr Grethel Aguilar, IUCN Director General*

*“Achieving ISO 20121:2024 certification is a testament of our partnership – demonstrating how sustainability can be embedded across every aspect of event planning and delivery. In line with IUCN’s four strategic pathways, the UAE is proud to support a Congress that strengthens environmental stewardship, drives inclusive social and economic opportunities, and promotes transparent, responsible governance. Together, we are showing that global convenings can leave a lasting legacy for nature and for people – one that advances both local action and global transformation.”*

*Her Excellency Dr Shaikha Salem Al Dhaheri,  
Secretary General of Environment Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)*



# AGENDA



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# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Overview of the Congress

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 convened over 10,000 participants from more than 189 countries, both onsite at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC) and online. The event brought together decision and policy makers from government, civil society, Indigenous Peoples' organisations, academia, and the private sector. In a historic first, the Congress hosted the World Summit of Indigenous Peoples and Nature, creating a global platform for Indigenous leadership and knowledge. With more than 1,000 sessions and events, the Congress helped shape the future of global conservation and sustainable development.

The Congress was organised by IUCN in close partnership with the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) and Abu Dhabi Convention and Exhibition Bureau, with the support of multiple national and international stakeholders.

The event concluded with the adoption of a [20-year Strategic Vision](#) and a four-year programme to guide IUCN's work globally, alongside the [Abu Dhabi Call to Action](#), which reaffirmed nature's role in human wellbeing and called for greater inclusion, innovation, and cooperation in conservation efforts.



# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## A Policy-Driven Approach to Sustainable Delivery

Sustainability was embedded from the outset, guided by a dedicated [Sustainability Policy](#) that outlined IUCN's commitment for the Congress 2025 to:

- Reduce environmental impact
- Maximise positive social and economic outcomes
- Ensure full transparency and accountability

This policy provided the foundation for all decisions – from planning and procurement to operations and reporting – ensuring sustainability was not an add-on, but a core operating principle.

## Four Strategic Pathways, One Integrated Vision

The Congress's sustainability strategy was structured around four strategic pathways:

- Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact
- Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress
- Social: Organise a unifying event
- Governance: Strengthening organisation resilience and governance

Each pathway was supported by a tailored Sustainability Action Plan, underpinned by specific key performance indicators to track progress across areas including low-carbon mobility, sustainable catering, waste reduction, accessibility, and youth engagement.

# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## Certified To Global Standards

In a significant milestone, the Congress was certified to the ISO 20121:2024 standard for sustainable event management – a globally recognised framework that ensures sustainability is embedded throughout the event lifecycle:

Plan → Implement → Check → Act → Improve.

Implementation was delivered in partnership with [GDS-Movement](#) and [Green Evénements](#), who provided expert guidance, capacity building, and performance monitoring aligned with the ISO framework.

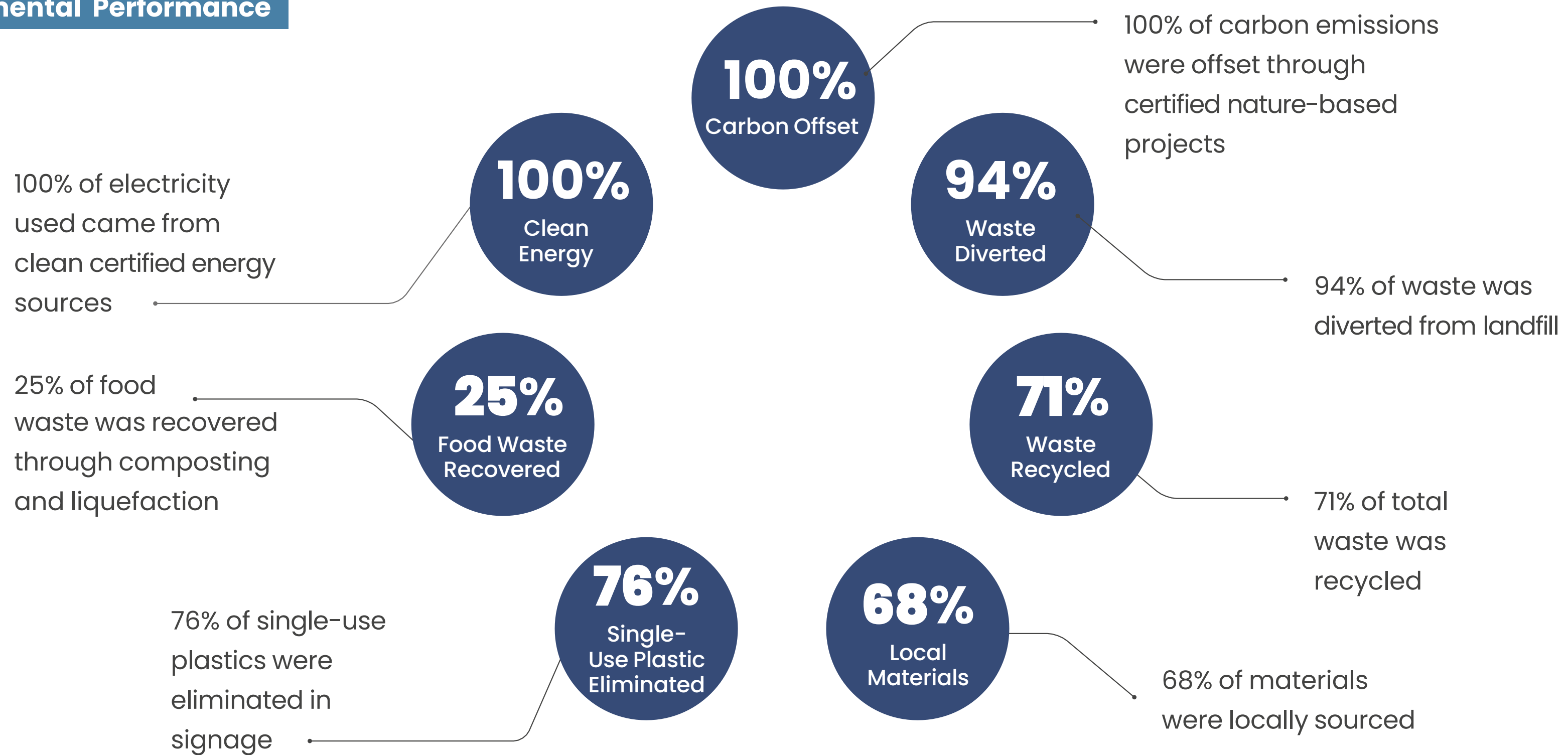
## Delivering Results, Building Legacy

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 proved that major international events can be sustainable, inclusive, and impactful. It delivered clear results across environmental performance, social inclusion, and long-term legacy. By embedding sustainability holistically into planning and delivery, the Congress has set a lasting model for future global convenings, demonstrating that bold climate action, equitable participation, and operational excellence can go hand in hand.



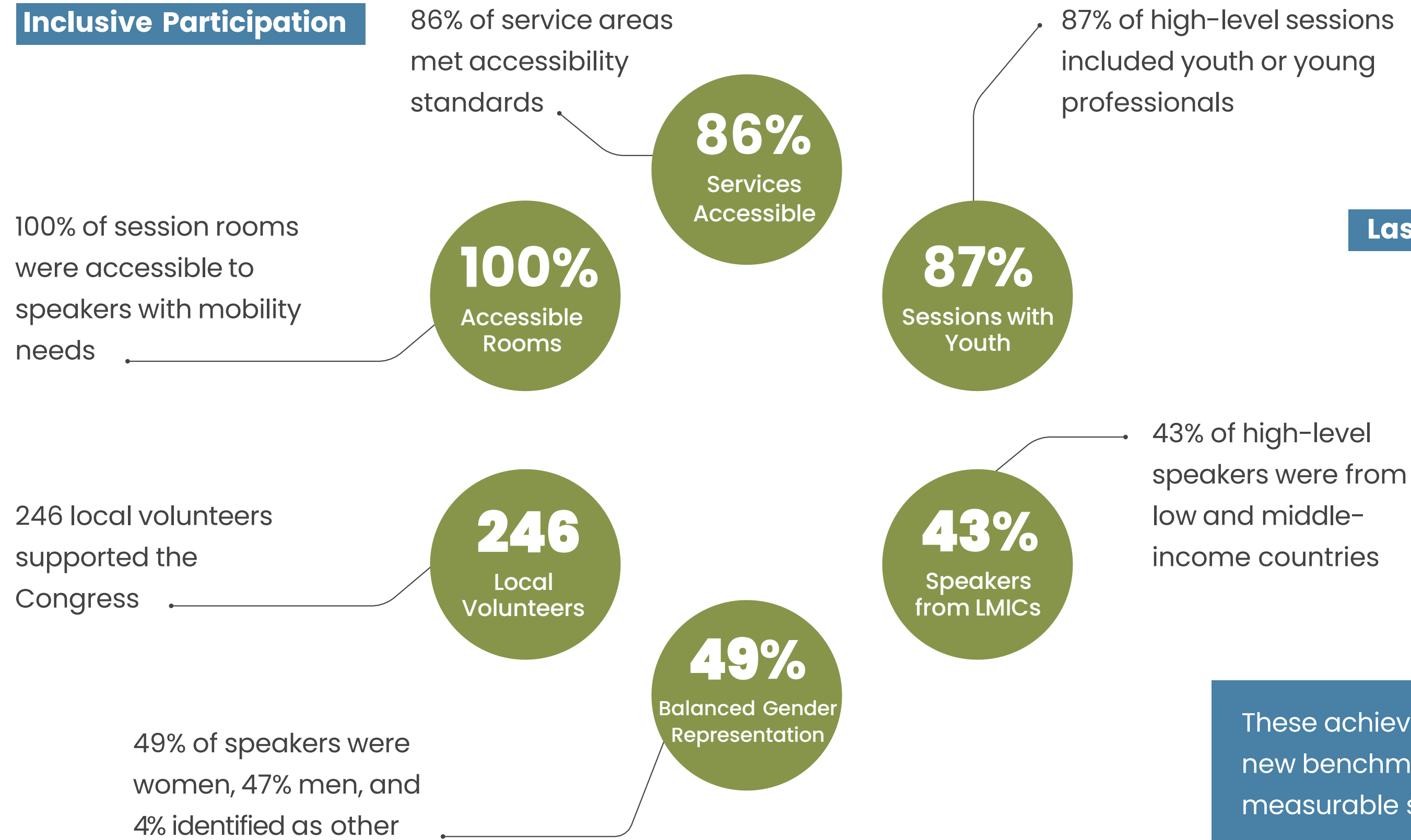
# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Environmental Performance



# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Inclusive Participation



## Lasting Impact and Systems Change



These achievements position the Congress as a new benchmark for how global events can deliver measurable sustainability and social impact.

# II. IUCN CONGRESS AT A GLANCE



**IUCN**  
World  
Conservation  
Congress  
*Abu Dhabi 2025*

Location:  
Abu Dhabi, UAE

Powering Transformative Conservation  
*9-15 October 2025, Abu Dhabi*

**+1300**

Sessions

**+10000**

Members

**+140**

Exhibitors

**10,000**

In-person  
participants

**+180**

Countries

# INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS



وزارة الخارجية  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

abu dhabí  
Convention & Exhibition Bureau



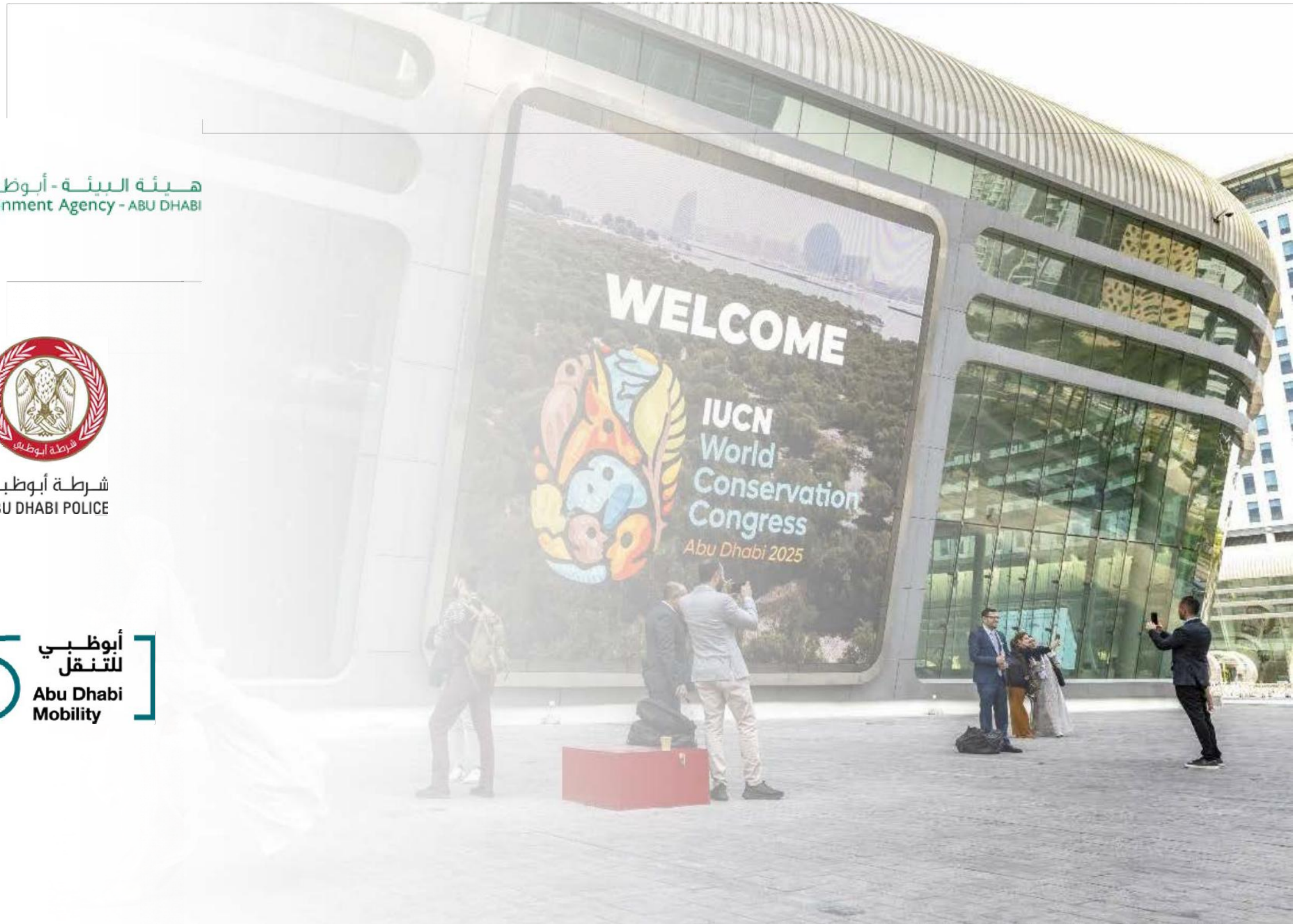
شرطة أبوظبي  
ABU DHABI POLICE



مطارات أبوظبي  
ABU DHABI AIRPORTS



أبوظبي  
للتنقل  
Abu Dhabi  
Mobility



## III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH



### Embedding Sustainability by Design

IUCN was committed to delivering the World Conservation Congress 2025 as a global benchmark in sustainable event management. Guided by a comprehensive [Sustainability Policy](#) and the internationally recognised ISO 20121:2024 standard, sustainability was embedded across every phase of planning and delivery, from concept to planning to legacy.

Building on the success of prior ISO-certified Congresses in Hawai'i (2016) and Marseille (2021), the Congress in Abu Dhabi (2025) aimed to not only meet but exceed global standards, delivering measurable impact while advancing IUCN's mission and values.

### Certified To Global Standards

The Congress was officially certified to the ISO 20121:2024 standard following an independent audit conducted by AFNOR, the French national standardisation body. This globally recognised certification confirmed that the event met rigorous sustainability requirements across its full lifecycle.

The ISO 20121:2024 framework follows a continuous improvement cycle – Plan, Implement, Check, Act – and was implemented in collaboration with technical partners [GDS-Movement](#) and [Green Événements](#), who provided guidance, capacity building, and performance monitoring. The process reflected IUCN's values, such as transparency, inclusiveness, and environmental responsibility and supported progress toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

### Scope and Boundaries

The sustainability management system covered both onsite and online components of the IUCN Congress, held at the ADNEC Centre Abu Dhabi from 9 to 15 October 2025. It included all official Congress activities under IUCN's direct coordination.

Excluded from the management system and reporting scope are:

- Side events or initiatives not managed by IUCN
- Activities outside the venue area
- Non-Congress-affiliated operations

# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH



## Governance and Implementation

The sustainability strategy for the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 was jointly led by IUCN and the Host Country, the United Arab Emirates, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities across internal teams, partners, and service providers. A dedicated Sustainability Focal Point was appointed to oversee ISO 20121:2024 compliance and coordinate cross-functional efforts throughout the event lifecycle.

At the core of delivery was an eight-person sustainability project team, responsible for leading the integration of sustainability principles across planning, operations, communications, legal, and procurement. This team ensured continuity, coordination, and adherence to the Sustainability Action Plan.

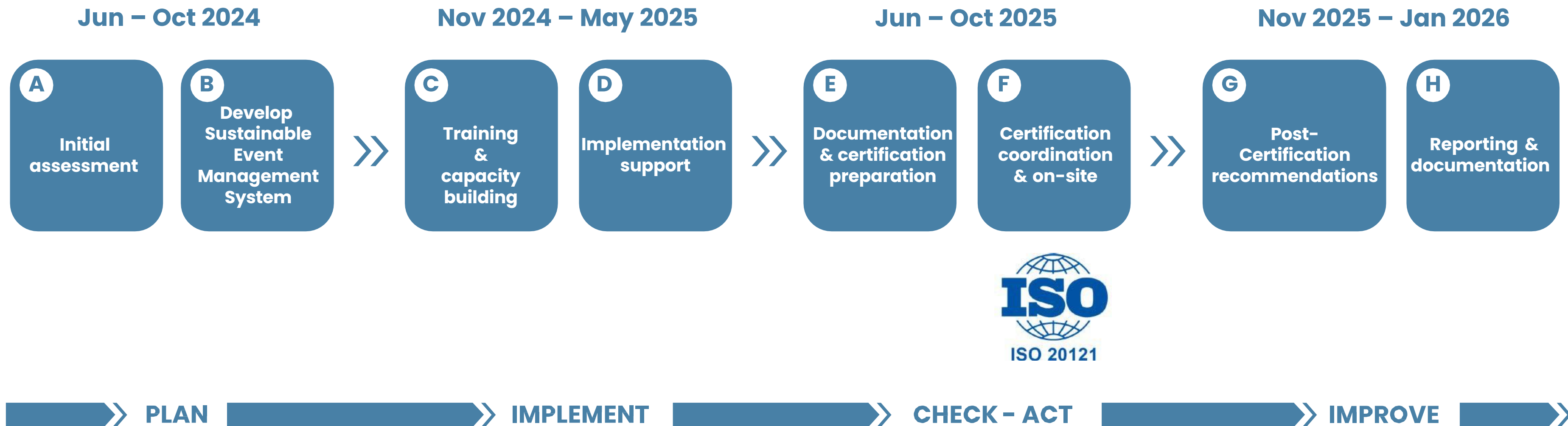
Senior leadership actively championed the strategy, while staff, suppliers, and volunteers received training to embed sustainability into daily operations. Formal expectations were set for all contractors, and collaboration was encouraged through structured engagement and shared objectives.

Implementation was guided by [GDS-Movement](#) and [Green Evénements](#), who provided expert guidance, capacity building, and performance monitoring aligned with the ISO framework.



# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

## High Level Project Plan – 20-Month Roadmap to Success



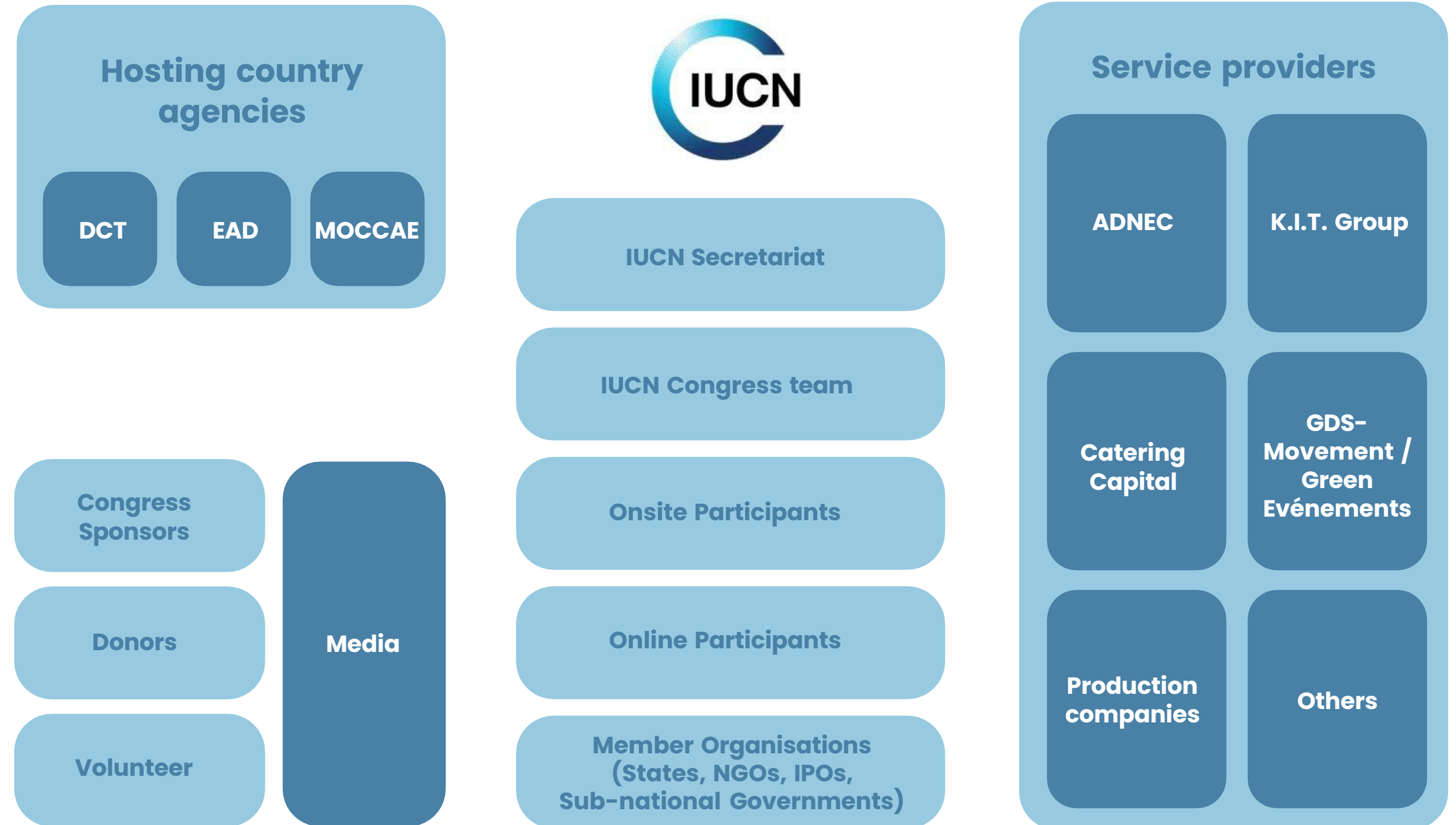
# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

## Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a core element of planning the Congress. During the strategy development phase, IUCN engaged core stakeholders and internal teams through structured workshops and consultations. The scope of the interviews was defined according to the level of implication of stakeholders in the organisation of the IUCN event.

This included 8 external stakeholders, notably the Host Country service provider and volunteer representatives, and 9 internal stakeholders across IUCN teams.

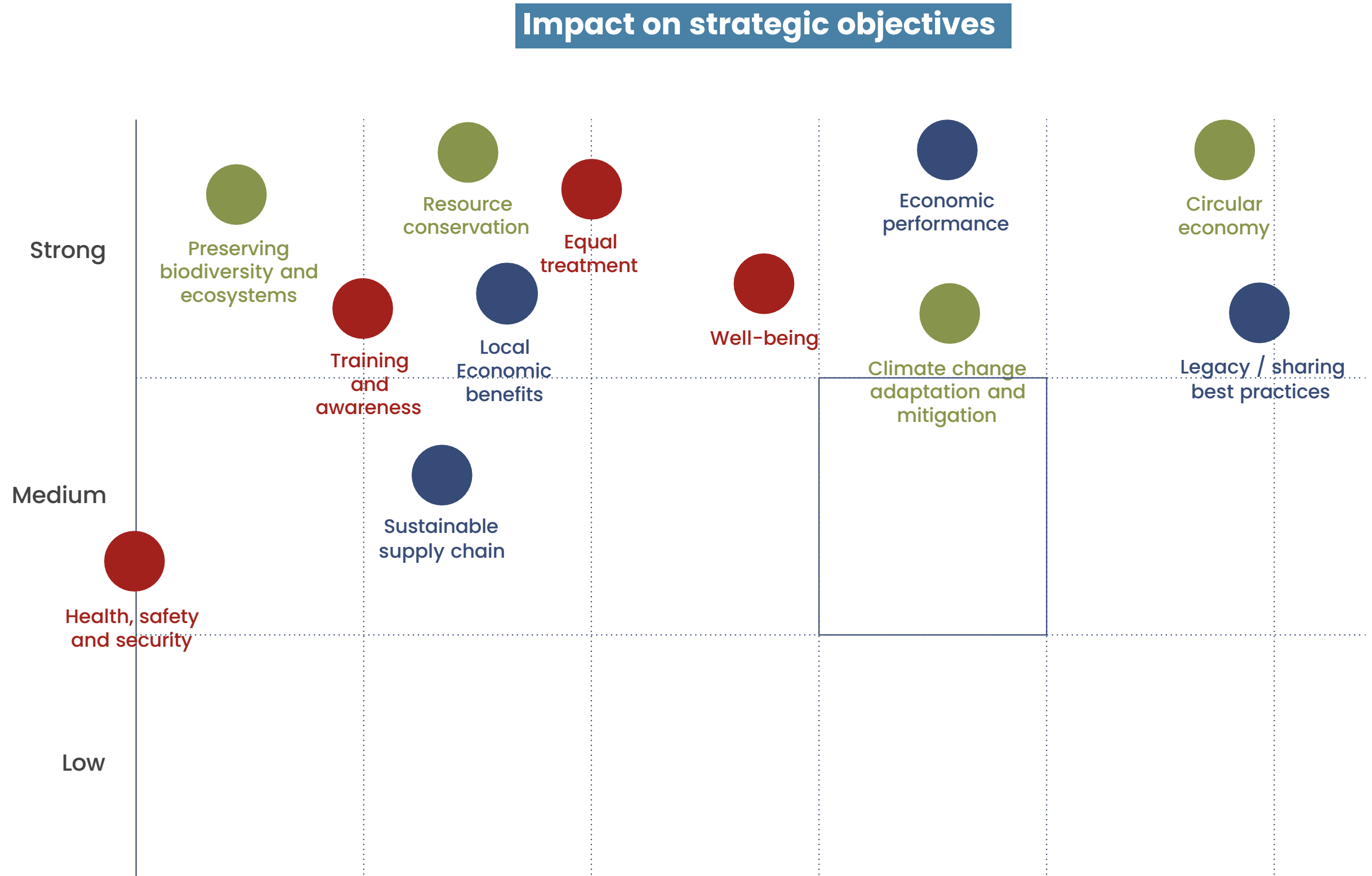
## Key Stakeholders



# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

## Materiality Analysis

These discussions helped identify the following material sustainability topics, risks, and opportunities, and informed the development of the sustainability strategy and action plan. This ensured alignment with Congress objectives and host country priorities.



# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH



## Strategic Pathways and Key Objectives

To implement the policy, IUCN with the Host Country and key suppliers worked collaboratively to define a Sustainability Action Plan with four strategic pathways, 11 main objectives and 24 work areas.

## Congress Sustainability and Legacy Framework

IUCN commits to designing and delivering a Congress in collaboration with interested parties that catalyses change for nature, creates value for local communities and nature, and minimises the ecological footprint.



# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

## A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

- Create a lasting positive impact on local communities and nature
- Broaden and strengthen IUCN's brand and influence



## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

- Reduce and offset the carbon emissions associated with the organisation of the Congress
- Optimise resource consumption and reuse in the event production
- Improve the environmental footprint associated with food and beverage offerings



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

- Promote respect for human rights throughout event planning and delivery
- Promote inclusive participation opportunities for all
- Enhance the wellbeing of participants throughout the event
- Prioritise social procurement and inclusive recruitment opportunities



## D. Governance: Strengthening organisation resilience and governance

- Ensure resilience through enhanced organisational & funding models of the Congress
- Promote equitable and transparent governance of the Congress



# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH

Progress was monitored using specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to each pathway. Performance is summarised in this report and structured by strategic theme. This report presents a selection of KPIs intended for public reporting. Additional internal indicators, developed for management and continuous improvement purposes, remain outside the scope of this report.

## Results Legend

Overachieved	● ● ●
Achieved	●
Partially achieved	● ●
Not achieved	●
Not sufficient data provided	●

## Reporting Methodology

This report covers the environmental and social impacts associated with the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, based on the scope defined under the ISO 20121:2024 standard. The assessment includes both onsite and virtual components and encompasses Scopes 1, 2, and 3 emissions. These impacts were analysed across the following operational domains:

- Delegate and staff travel
- Accommodation
- Catering and food waste
- Venue energy and utilities
- **Waste management and material flows**
- Freight and logistics
- Digital infrastructure and online participation

Where full data sets were unavailable, estimates were applied based on internationally recognised methodologies, such as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and the Bilan Carbone® method. Conservative assumptions and transparent boundaries were used to ensure consistency and accuracy.

# III. SUSTAINABILITY APPROACH



## Emissions Tracking Tools

Two advanced digital tools supported the emissions tracking and reporting process.

Together, these tools enabled data-driven decision-making and robust reporting, forming the technical foundation for sustainability claims and ISO certification compliance.

### KlimAPI



Integrated into the registration platform, KlimAPI was used to calculate travel-related emissions per delegate. It is aligned with the Greenhouse Gas Protocol and GLEC (Global Logistics Emission Council) Framework and uses a continuously updated emissions database (latest update: May 2025). These calculations informed the Congress's carbon mitigation strategy and participant-level engagement on climate impact.

### Climeet



Climeet was used for the comprehensive emissions assessment across Scopes 1, 2, and 3. It is based on the Bilan Carbone® methodology and validated through the Association Bilan Carbone (ABC). Emission factors were updated in June 2025, ensuring reliable insights across all key operational areas.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

### 1. Create a lasting positive impact on local communities and nature

#### 1.1 Local biodiversity projects

**KPI:** One local community project dedicated to sustainability/nature and or biodiversity implemented during the Congress

**Result:** Achieved ●

On 14 October 2025, the IUCN Biodiversity Expedition was held at Saadiyat Beach, Abu Dhabi, in collaboration with Emirates Nature–WWF and the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD). This field activity engaged youth participants of the IUCN Congress, including UAE Young Leaders and Changemakers, in a hands-on conservation initiative.

Around 40 participants took part, including young environmental leaders, EAD Youth members, and experts. Activities included:

- A nurdle hunt and beach patrol to collect and identify microplastics
- A citizen science exercise using calibrated equipment to measure and record pollution levels
- An awareness briefing delivered by a local expert on marine ecosystem protection and plastic pollution

The expedition created a meaningful legacy for both partners and participants. For local partners, it strengthened collaboration between IUCN, EAD, and Emirates Nature–WWF, showcasing the UAE’s leadership in youth engagement and marine conservation. For young participants, it offered an empowering conservation experience, deepening their understanding of local biodiversity challenges and inspiring further advocacy in their communities.



## IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



### A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

**KPI:** 50% of the excursions proposed during the Congress showcased local initiatives from the IUCN Members and/or Commissions

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

The Congress aimed to use the excursions programme as a platform to showcase locally grounded conservation initiatives led by IUCN Members and Commissions, strengthening links between global dialogue and on-the-ground action in the Host Country.

The excursions programme was developed in collaboration with the Host Country and the local delivery partner GD+. Of the 10 excursions proposed on the official Congress platform, 7 featured initiatives led by IUCN Members, representing 70% of the total offer and exceeding the 50% target.

Participant uptake further reinforced this outcome. A total of 38 excursions were booked, of which 20 were associated with IUCN Member initiatives. This indicates strong participant interest in learning directly from Member-led projects and engaging with locally implemented conservation solutions.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

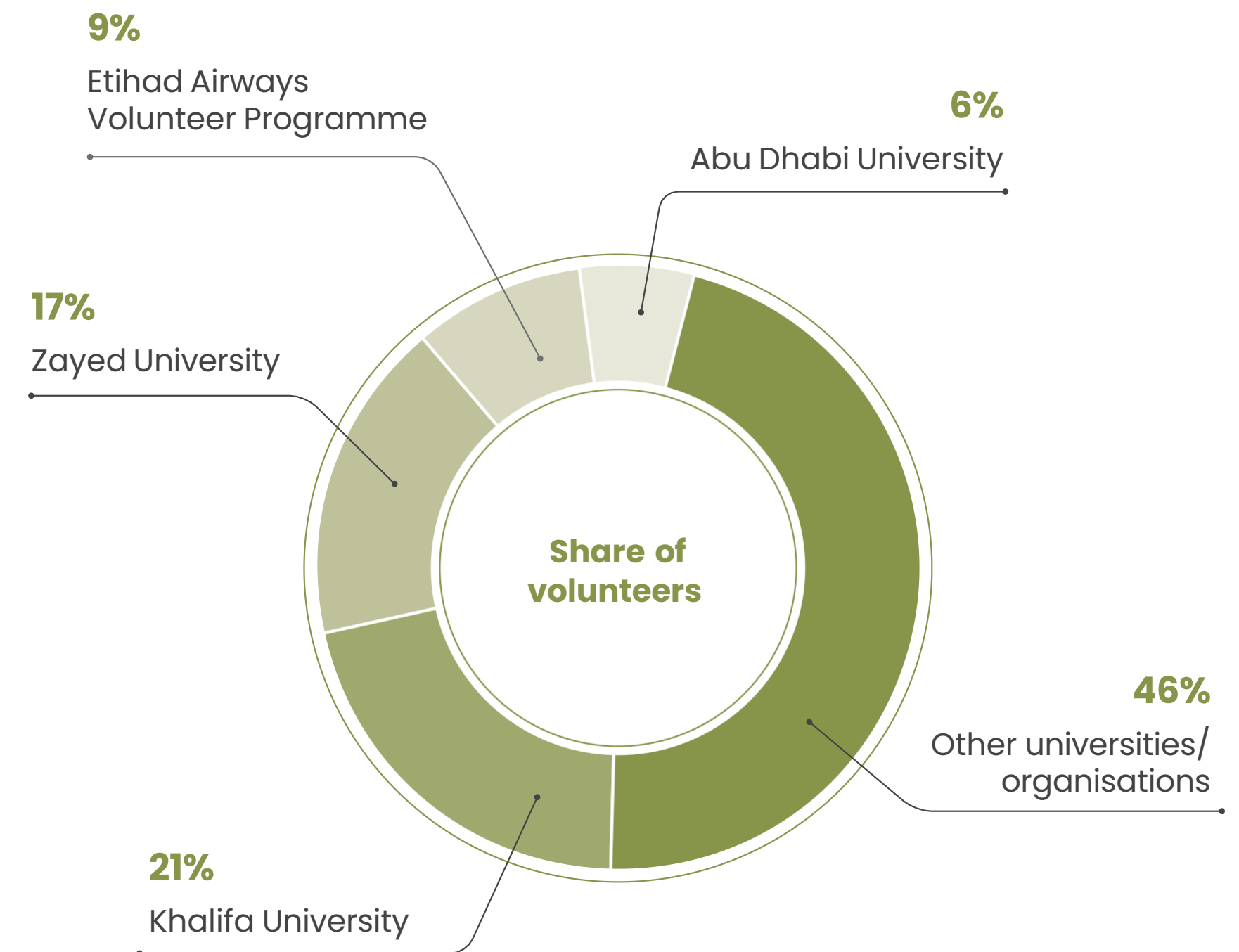
### 1.2 Local community projects

**KPI:** Two local community projects embedded within the Congress planning and delivery

**Result:** Achieved ●



- National Food Loss and Waste Initiative: Integrated into the Congress’s sustainability programme, Ne’ma enabled food waste tracking, redistribution of surplus meals to communities in need, and reinforced alignment with the UAE’s national target to halve food loss and waste by 2030.
- Volunteer Engagement Programme: Coordinated with EAD, this initiative recruited 246 local volunteers from 815 applicants, with strong representation from local universities and institutions.
- Volunteers supported event operations, participant engagement, and digital streaming services, building skills and reinforcing community inclusion.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

### 1.3 Worldwide projects

**KPI:** Three emblematic and transferrable local community initiatives included in the official programme

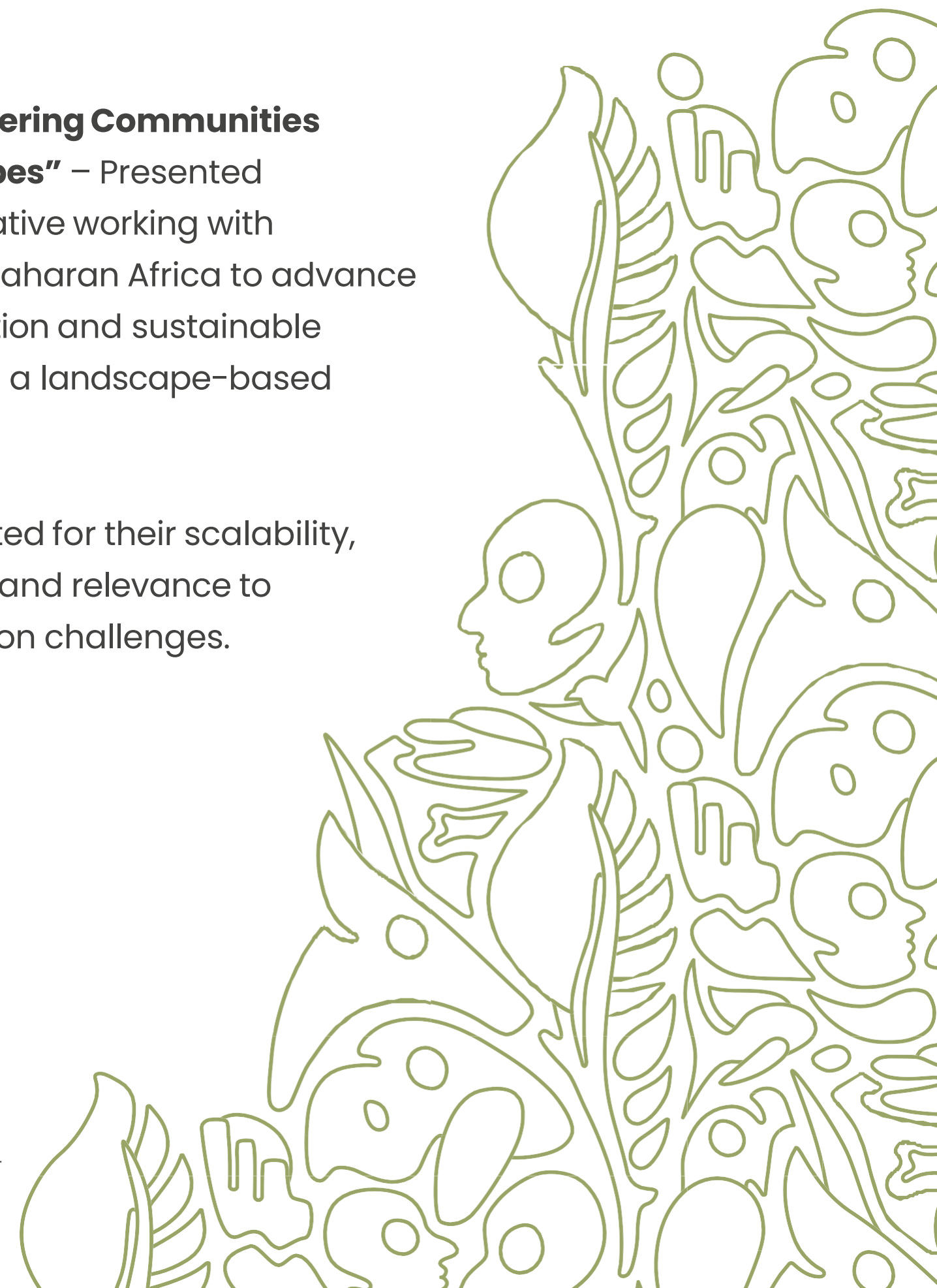
**Results:** Achieved ●

Three sessions integrated into the official Congress programme highlighted emblematic and transferrable local community initiatives from diverse global contexts:

- **“Enhancing Global Biodiversity through National-Scale Electrocutation Mitigation”** – Showcased a Mongolian conservation initiative that retrofitted 27,000 power poles to mitigate bird electrocutions.
- **“Species Monitoring for Conservation and Zoonotic Disease Prevention in Central Asia”** – Focused on region-specific monitoring approaches and technologies for biodiversity and public health resilience.

- **“NaturAfrica: Empowering Communities for Thriving Landscapes”** – Presented an EU-supported initiative working with communities in sub-Saharan Africa to advance biodiversity conservation and sustainable development through a landscape-based approach.

These cases were selected for their scalability, community integration, and relevance to international conservation challenges.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## A. Economic/societal: Maximise local and global impact

### 2. Broaden and strengthen IUCN's brand and influence

#### 2.1 Storytelling on sustainability and legacy initiatives and results

**KPI:** 50% of Congress newsletters included a sustainability section

**KPI:** One dedicated section to sustainability implemented in media kit

**KPI:** Dedicated sustainability sections published in the Congress staff handbook and the participants handbook

**Results:** All achieved ●●●

- Since May 2025, every Congress newsletter included a dedicated sustainability feature. Subscriber engagement increased by 118%, growing from 17,377 to 37,835, reflecting heightened interest in sustainability topics.

- Sustainability messaging was also embedded into the official media kit, participant guide, and staff handbook, covering the ISO 20121:2024 certification, sustainable catering, mobility, and climate mitigation contributions. These resources ensured consistent, accurate messaging across all stakeholder groups.
- To support proactive media engagement, the official Congress press kit was made available ahead of the event. It included a dedicated sustainability section outlining the Congress's ISO 20121 certification journey, key initiatives on low-impact mobility, sustainable catering, and climate mitigation strategies. The kit framed sustainability as a cross-cutting theme across operations, helping to inform accurate and consistent media coverage on these topics.
- The Congress generated a total of 32,600 press mentions – more than double the coverage recorded in the previous month and representing a 121% increase compared to October 2024. Of these, 8,410 mentions specifically referenced the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 3. Reduce and offset the carbon emissions associated with the organisation of the Congress

#### 3.1 Hybrid participation model

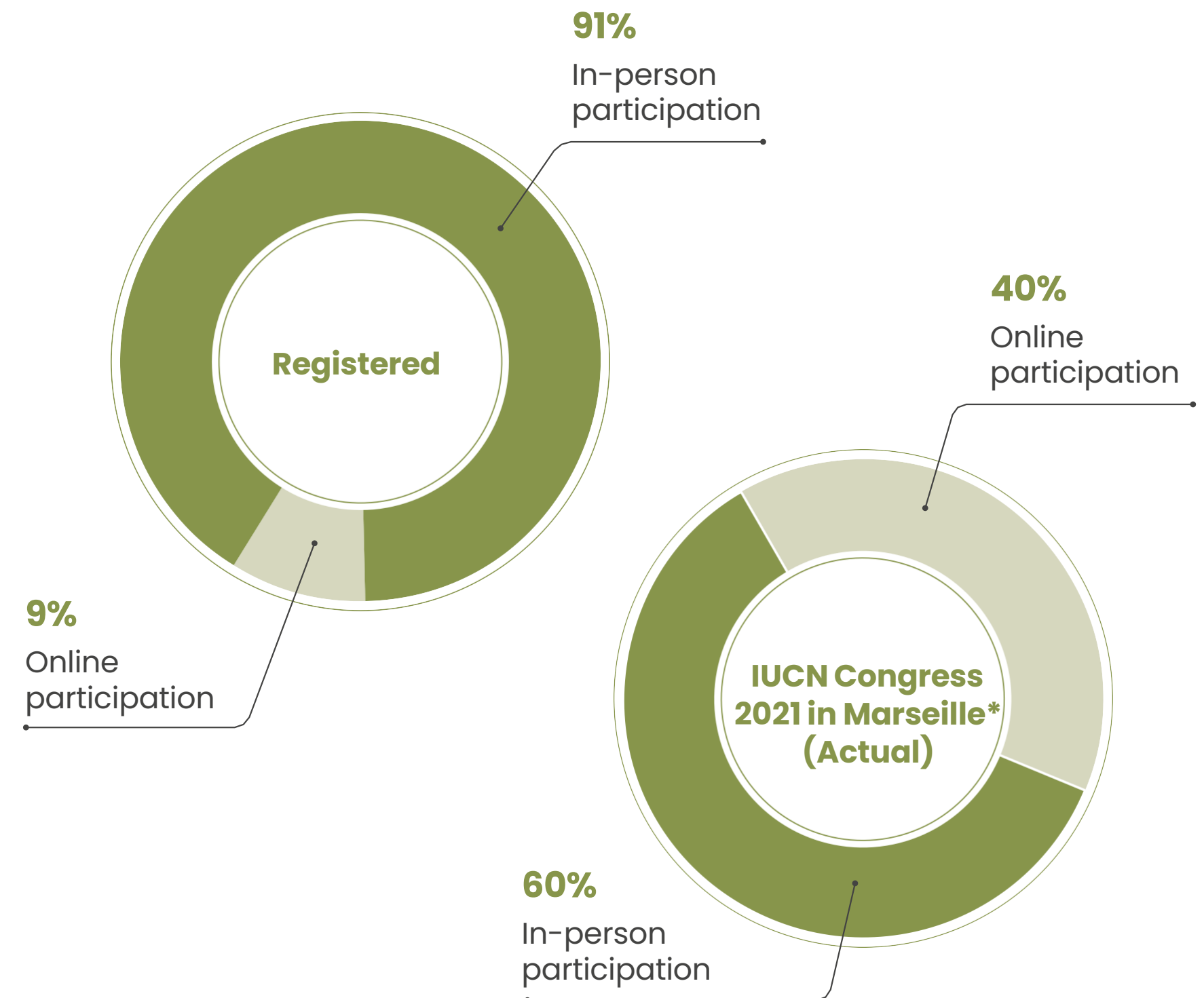
**KPI:** 5% of total participants registered as online participants

**Results:** Overachieved ●●●

The organisers have adopted a hybrid delivery model, offering both in-person and online participation to broaden accessibility and reduce the environmental impact associated with long-distance travel.

Participation was tracked to evaluate the uptake of the virtual option.

For comparison, the IUCN Congress 2021 in Marseille recorded 40% online participation, reflecting the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic. While virtual participation decreased in 2025, the hybrid model still provided a lower-carbon participation option and informed future planning on how to better incentivise digital attendance.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 3.2 Footprint measurement and carbon mitigation

**KPI:** Carbon footprint of the Congress measured

**Result:** Achieved ●

- The overall carbon footprint was calculated using Climeet, a specialised greenhouse gas accounting platform compliant with the Bilan Carbone® methodology and audited for conformity by the Association Bilan Carbone (ABC). Climeet applies up-to-date emissions factors (latest update June 2025) to activity data across Scopes 1, 2, and 3, converting inputs such as energy use, freight, venue operations, transport, accommodation, food and beverage, and digital participation into CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e). Where complete data could not be obtained, emissions were estimated using recognised international standards and established best practices, as documented in Climeet’s guidance and aligned with the ISO 20121:2024 reporting approach.

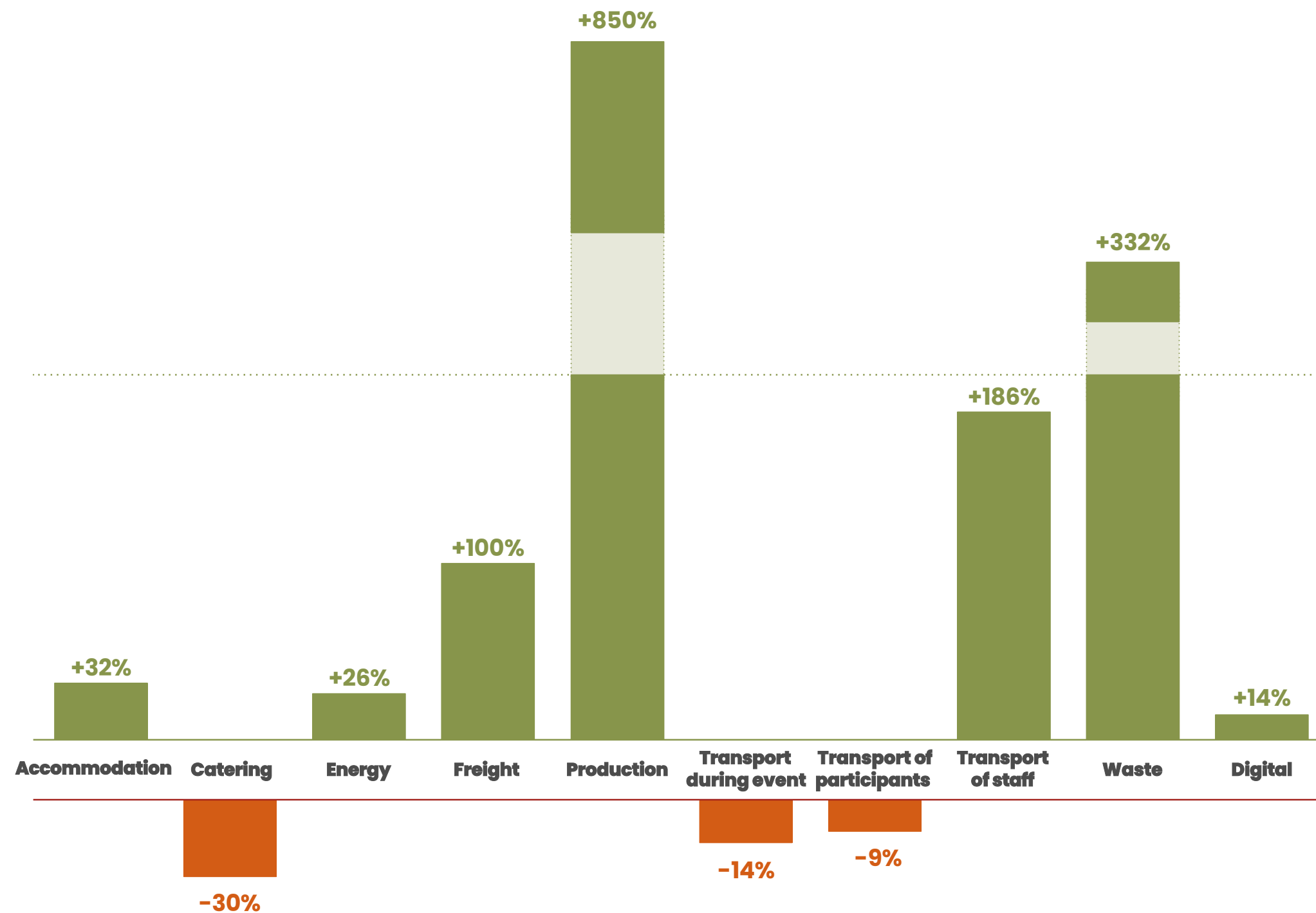


# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### Estimates vs Actual

Detailed per area



Insight area	Refined insight
Accommodation	Increase due to higher on-site attendance and/or longer average stay duration than forecasted.
Catering	Slight overestimation and estimates applied; actual catering emissions were lower than projected.
Energy	Remained within expected range considering the space used.
Freight	Not included in initial forecast; reflects a missing category that was later incorporated.
Production	Significant scope expansion in production and venue setup compared to early planning assumptions.
Transport during event	Well-aligned with projections, however estimates applied due to missing data.
Transport of participants	Likely reflects a higher share of regional participants and more efficient travel modes than originally assumed.
Transport of staff	Reflects expanded staffing needs and increased local and inter-site staff mobility.
Waste	Significant scope expansion in production and venue setup compared to early planning assumptions.
Digital	In the actual, the scope increased to the app, website, emails.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

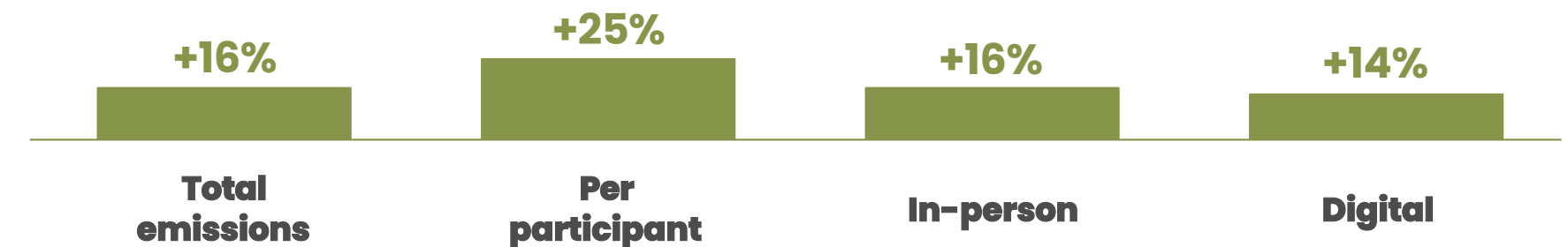
### Key insights from estimated versus actual emissions:

- Total emissions were 16% higher than forecast due primarily to higher-than-expected onsite attendance and expanded production scope.
- Participant transport remained the largest emissions source, accounting for more than half of total emissions.
- Production, staff transport, freight, and waste were underrepresented in early estimates, highlighting the importance of conservative forecasting and early scope definition for large-scale events.
- Catering emissions were lower than projected, reflecting effective menu design and operational efficiencies.

This analysis provided valuable learning for improving forecasting accuracy and emissions management in future Congress editions.

### Estimates vs Actual

#### Insight area



Insight Area	Refined Insight
Total Emissions	Estimates were based on 7,550 projected attendees (5,750 in-person, 1,800 virtual); actual onsite attendance was 10,321 (incl. suppliers & visitors) and the online attendance reached 927 participants.
Per participant	
In-person	
Digital	

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### Carbon mitigation solutions

**KPI:** 100% of all unavoidable carbon emissions associated with the Congress offset

**Result:** Overachieved ● ● ●

All unavoidable carbon emissions associated with the Congress were fully mitigated. Participants were invited to contribute through the registration process, with emissions calculated for travel and onsite participation.

A total of 23,608 tCO<sub>2</sub>e of participant-related carbon emissions were addressed through contributions to verified climate mitigation projects. This figure was generated using the KlimAPI tool, integrated into the Congress registration system, and based on estimated emissions linked to participant travel and onsite presence.

Following the event, a detailed carbon footprint assessment using the Climeet lifecycle tool determined that actual participant-related emissions totalled 17,382 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. As a result, the Congress achieved a surplus of 6,226 tCO<sub>2</sub>e in mitigation contributions — exceeding what

was required to fully address the scoped emissions and providing additional climate benefit.

Four nature-based offset projects were selected through a dedicated call for proposals restricted to IUCN Members and aligned with the [IUCN Carbon Offsetting Policy](#). Supported projects combined climate mitigation with biodiversity conservation and community benefits.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### REDD+ Project for Caribbean Guatemala: the Conservation Coast 4,740 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

This project in Guatemala's Izabal Department helps protect forests by preventing unplanned deforestation. Over 30 years, it aims to generate 24.4 million tCO<sub>2</sub>e of greenhouse gases (GHG) emissions reductions. Led by FUNDAECO, it supports local communities with better land management, alternative incomes, and stronger governance, ensuring long-term benefits for people, wildlife, and the environment.

[Click Here to read more about the project](#)



### Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project 9,869 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

The Chyulu Hills REDD+ Project conserves about 410,000 hectares of Kenya's Chyulu Hills, reducing deforestation and supporting local communities. It creates wildlife corridors, provides freshwater, and funds sustainable livelihoods, healthcare, and education. This collaboration mitigates climate change and enhances biodiversity through better land management and community engagement.

[Click Here to read more about the project](#)



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### Ejido Petcacab y Polinkín CAR 1514 4,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

Located in Mexico's Yucatán Peninsula, the Petcacab and Polinkin Ejido exemplifies community forest management. With 35+ years of experience, it integrates wood processing, handicrafts, and conservation. Protecting 47,458 hectares, it engages in carbon markets, reinvesting revenue into community projects, sustainability, and economic resilience while preserving biodiversity.

[Click Here to read more about the project](#)



### Ejido Xbonil Forest Carbon Capture Project CAR 1507 4,500 tCO<sub>2</sub>e

Located in Calakmul, Campeche, the Ejido Xbonil Project protects over 12,000 hectares of tropical forest. Home to diverse Indigenous and Afro-descendant communities, it safeguards biodiversity and iconic wildlife. Through forest carbon capture and natural regeneration, the community enhances carbon stocks while promoting sustainable resource use and long-term socio-environmental resilience.

[Click Here to read more about the project](#)



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 3.3 Low carbon mobility

**KPI:** Low environmental impact vehicles used across 70% of Congress local transportation plan including transportation for VIP/VVIPs

**Result:** Not sufficient data provided ●

While low-emission transport options were prioritised in planning, particularly for official transport services, insufficient data was available to verify performance against this KPI. This gap highlights the need for stronger data requirements and tracking mechanisms with transport providers in future events.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 4. Optimise resource consumption and reuse in event production

#### 4.1 Capacity building across supply chain

**KPI:** 75% of suppliers' contracts required compliance with the IUCN Congress Sustainability Policy

**Result:** Achieved ●

19 out of 24 supplier contracts (79%) included a sustainability clause requiring adherence to the IUCN Congress Sustainability Policy and related reporting obligations, surpassing the target and reinforcing sustainability alignment across procurement processes.



**KPI:** 70% of production made of sustainable materials

**Result:** Achieved ●

A total of **71%** of production materials used for the IUCN Congress 2025 met the sustainability criteria, surpassing the established 70% target.

This included items such as signage, exhibition structures, carpets, furnishings, and branding elements.

Materials were classified as sustainable if they met at least one of the following conditions:

- Comprised of 50% or more recycled content
- Reused or repurposed from prior use
- Rented, reducing the need for new production

Data was collected through supplier documentation and procurement records. In cases where complete data was not available, estimates were applied using recognised international standards and best practices, particularly in the calculation of the carbon footprint.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 4.2 Event design and material selection

**KPI:** 80% of build-up material sourced within the UAE

**Result:** Partially achieved ● ●

The origin of build-up materials was tracked for key categories including signage, production materials, and structural elements. Tracking was conducted to one degree of traceability, from the Congress organisers to the primary contracted suppliers, based on supplier declarations and procurement records.

68% of build-up materials were sourced within the UAE, below the 80% target. While procurement prioritised UAE-based suppliers, a proportion of materials supplied had origins outside the country. This reflects limited local manufacturing capacity for certain production and structural components, requiring suppliers to rely on imported materials to meet technical, quality, or volume requirements.

Although procurement supported UAE-based businesses and logistics chains, the country of origin of materials could not always be local, which is transparently reflected in the KPI result.

Potential benefits of increased local sourcing include:

- Reduced transport-related emissions, contributing to lower Scope 3 carbon impacts associated with freight and logistics.
- Strengthened local economic value creation, supporting UAE-based manufacturers, suppliers, and employment.
- Improved supply chain resilience, with shorter lead times, greater flexibility, and reduced exposure to international disruptions.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

**KPI:** 80% of single-use plastic, polystyrene and PVC eliminated

**Result:** Partly achieved. 76% elimination ● ●

The assessment of single-use plastic, polystyrene and PVC focused on two main impact areas: signage and catering, where the highest risks of plastic use were identified.

- **Signage:** a total of 1,617 kg of materials were used across different signage options. Of this total, 382 kg consisted of single-use plastic, PVC, or polystyrene, representing 76% elimination for this category. The elimination rate reflects deliberate material choices favouring recyclable and reusable materials.
- **Catering:** Beverages represented the primary source of potential single-use plastic. Targeted efforts were undertaken to eliminate plastic beverage containers, prioritising glass, reusable service ware, water stations and reusable water bottles provided. These measures significantly reduced plastic use associated with food and beverage services and contributed positively to the overall KPI outcome.



## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 4.3 Resource and waste management

#### Clean Energy

**KPI:** 90% of clean energy used at the venue

**Result:** Overachieved ● ● ●

All electricity consumed at ADNEC during the Congress was sourced from clean energy, including nuclear, solar, and wind, verified through Abu Dhabi's Clean Energy Certificate Scheme. Total consumption amounted to 1,153,317 kWh.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

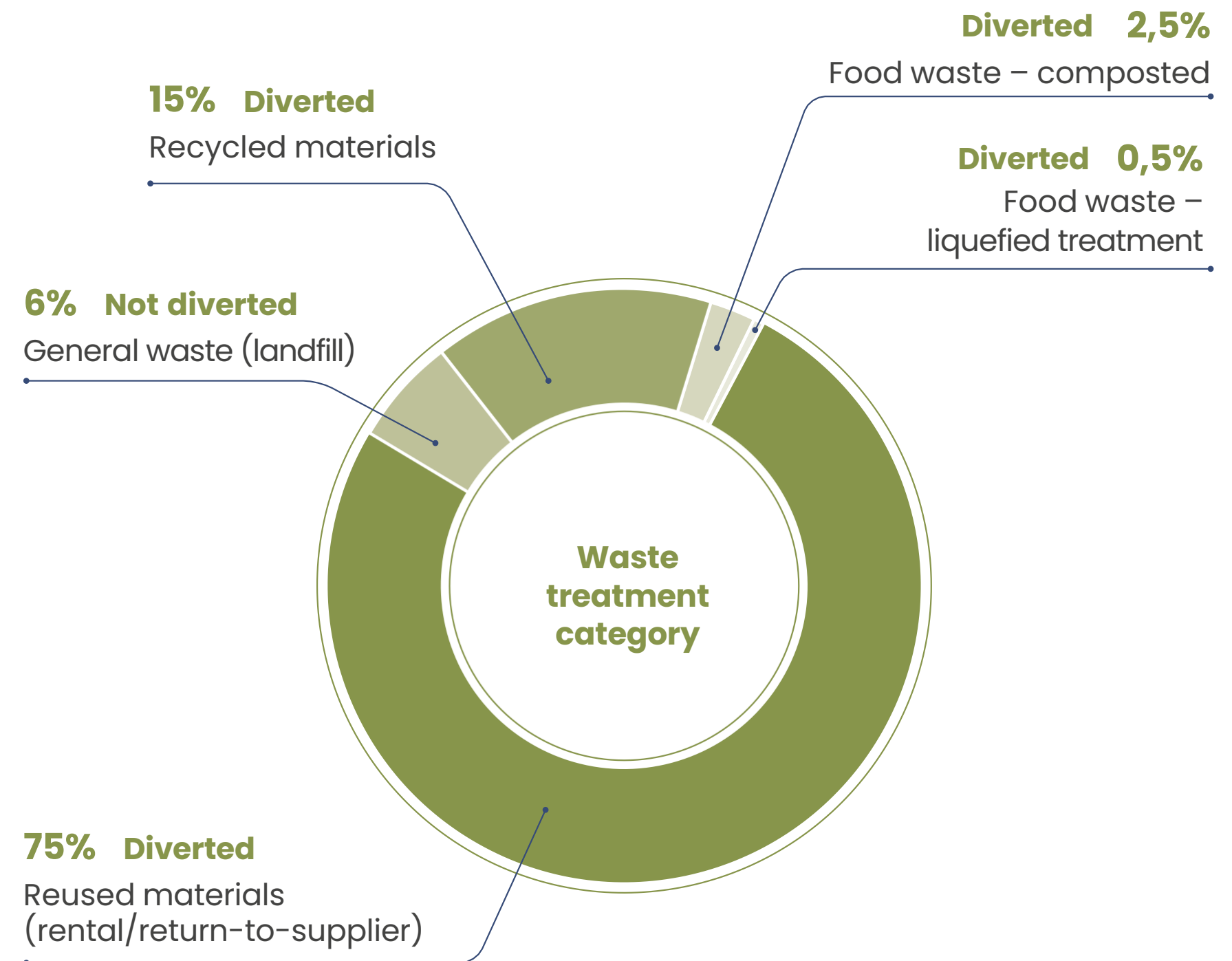
### Waste diversion

**KPI:** 82% waste diversion rate achieved

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

The waste diversion rate reflects the share of Congress materials and waste that were prevented from being sent to landfill through reuse, recycling, composting, or other recovery solutions. The Congress achieved a 94% waste diversion rate, significantly exceeding the 82% target. This strong performance was supported by early waste planning, clear separation systems onsite, and close collaboration with suppliers and service providers to maximise material recovery across build-up, event operations, and dismantling phases.

A key contributing factor was the extensive use of rented and reusable equipment, including large structural steel elements and modular event infrastructure designed for repeated use across multiple events. By prioritising rental and shell-scheme models, substantial volumes of materials were returned to suppliers rather than entering waste streams, reducing end-of-use disposal and reinforcing a circular approach to event delivery.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

**KPI:** 60% of the Congress waste recycled

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

The Congress prioritised responsible waste management across all event phases; build-up, operations, and dismantling by directing materials to appropriate recovery pathways. Waste was systematically segregated and treated through upcycling, recycling, composting, liquefaction, or, where no alternatives were feasible, landfill.

The KPI focused on the effective recycling of waste streams suitable for recycling. Organic waste, while not classified as recycled, was diverted through recognised recovery methods such as composting and liquefaction.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

The Congress achieved a 71% recycling and upcycling rate, significantly surpassing the 60% target. This outcome reflects strong supplier engagement, efficient onsite waste separation systems, and a production strategy that favoured recyclable materials – particularly plastics, wood, and paper.

### Waste streams and end-of-life treatment

Waste stream	Share of total waste (%)	End-of-life treatment
General waste	25.60%	Landfill
Plastics	29%	Recycling
Wood	21.80%	Recycling
Food waste (organic)	10.30%	Composting
Paper and cardboard	11%	Recycling
Food waste (liquefied)	2%	Liquefaction
Metals	0.30%	Recycling

*Reporting limitation: Glass used for beverage service is excluded from this KPI due to insufficient data on consumption volumes and recycling traceability at the venue.*

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 5. Improve the environmental footprint associated with food and beverage offerings

Food and beverage services play a critical role in shaping the environmental footprint and overall experience of the Congress 2025. In the context of the UAE and the Congress's global sustainability mandate, catering was approached as a key lever to reduce environmental impact while delivering a high-quality, inclusive, and culturally appropriate experience for participants.

- Menu design and food choices: In partnership with *Capital Catering*, menus were designed to accommodate diverse dietary needs and cultural preferences, with a strong focus on lower-impact food choices.
- Capacity building and implementation: Sustainability requirements were embedded early in planning through targeted training and operational guidance for catering teams, supporting consistent and effective delivery during the Congress.
- Materials and service ware: Measures were implemented to reduce plastics and non-recyclable materials, prioritising reusable, recyclable, or compostable service ware wherever feasible in catering operations.

In parallel with efforts to improve the environmental footprint of food and beverage services, the organisers placed strong emphasis on the responsible use of water, reflecting both the arid context of the UAE and the global imperative to conserve this vital resource.

Across the venue, more than 40 water stations were installed, combining standard water stations and **air-to-water systems\***. To further reduce single-use plastics, each delegate received a reusable water bottle for use throughout the Congress. Water bottles were procured in line with the Congress's sustainable procurement policy and supplied by **24Bottles**.

#### Operational insight:

\*An **air-to-water** station is a system that extracts moisture from the air and converts it into potable water through condensation, **filtration, and purification processes**.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 24Bottles

24Bottles is a certified B Corporation, meeting verified standards of social and environmental performance. The company reports that its products are designed to support the avoidance of single-use plastic bottles and that its reusable bottle range is carbon neutral through the measurement and climate mitigation of product-related emissions, alongside the use of plastic-free, FSC-certified packaging and initiatives that promote reuse and responsible consumption.

Together, these measures supported efficient water use at scale, reduced waste associated with bottled water, and demonstrated how infrastructure, procurement decisions, and participant engagement can contribute to meaningful sustainability outcomes at a large international event.

Air-to-water stations contributed to reducing reliance on bottled water; however, high demand during peak periods exceeded production capacity, resulting in waiting times for water generation. This experience highlights the importance of combining innovative water technologies with complementary refill infrastructure to ensure

adequate supply at large-scale events which was implemented by combining both – air-to-water and standard water stations.



#IUCNCONGRESS

WATER BOTTLES

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 5.1 Capacity building and collaboration throughout the local value chain

**KPI:** 70% of food and beverages sourced within the UAE

**Result:** Not sufficient data provided ●

The Congress aimed to source at least 70% of food and beverage products within the UAE, with sourcing defined as traceability to one degree from the primary catering supplier to their immediate supply chain. While indicative estimates suggested strong local sourcing, data on serving volumes and product origins could not be consistently verified across all catering operations.

Given the limited, partial, and unverified nature of the available data, no quantitative result is reported for this KPI, in line with the Congress's commitment to accurate and transparent sustainability reporting.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 5.2 Climate-conscious food and beverage offerings

**KPIs:** 70% of food served was vegetarian and/or vegan

20% of food served was poultry and fish

10% of food served was red meat

**Results (by quantity served, kg):** ●

- Not achieved: 47% vegetarian and/or vegan
- Not achieved: 36% poultry and fish
- Not achieved: 17% red meat

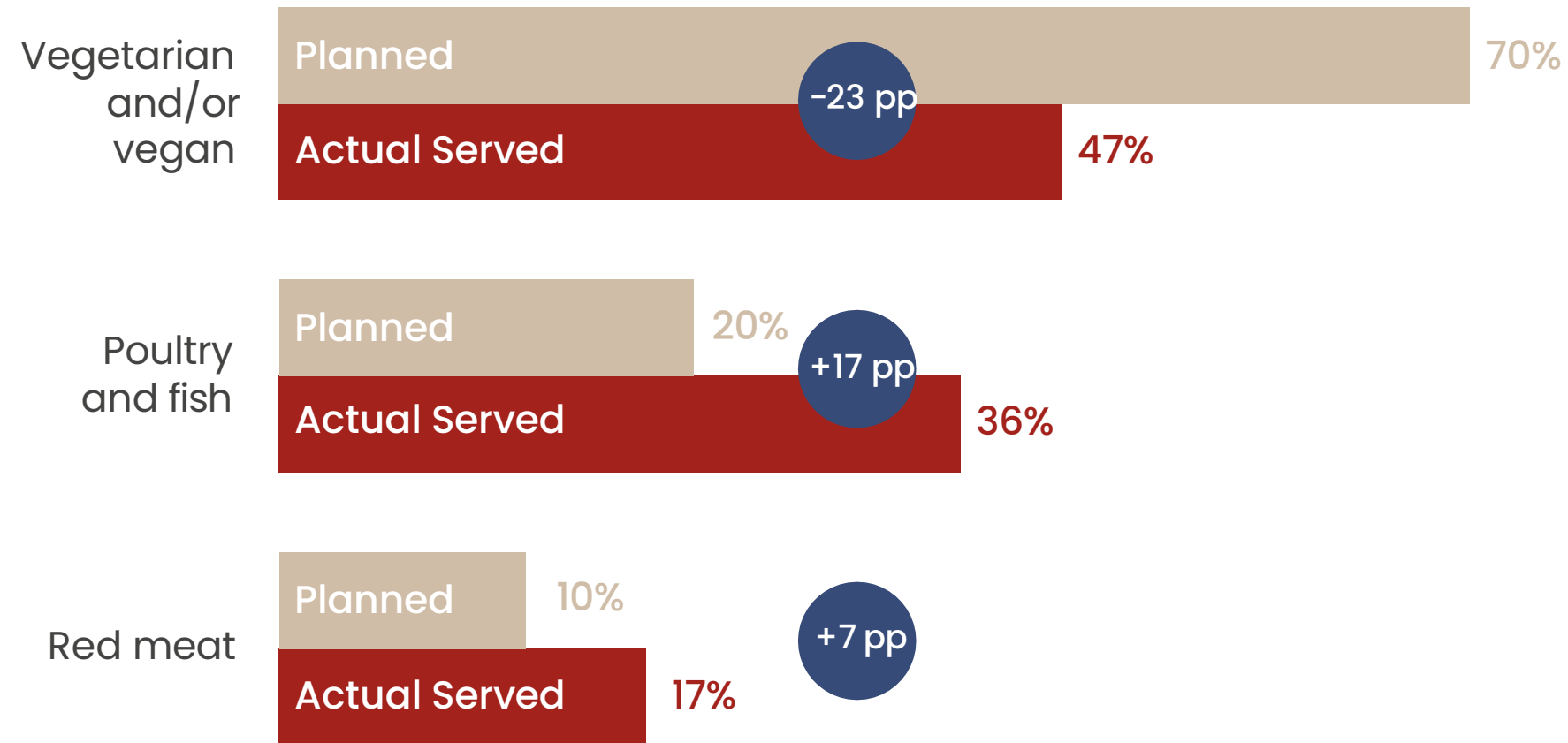
Menu composition was defined during planning through targeted proportions of vegetarian/vegan, poultry/fish and red meat options, providing a balanced and yet low-carbon menu options. Reported results are based on actual quantities served (kg), reflecting participant consumption behaviour in practice. The difference between planned composition and reported consumption provides insight into uptake of lower-impact food choices and informs future engagement strategies.

Variance is expressed in **percentage points (pp)**, representing the absolute difference between planned targets and actual shares served.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress



*Reporting limitation: Due to gaps in the availability and consistency of data from local catering suppliers, estimated figures were applied to complete the overall catering scope. This limitation is acknowledged to ensure transparency while providing a consolidated view of catering outcomes.*

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

### 5.3 Towards zero food waste to landfill

**KPI:** 10% of food surplus donated

**Result:** Not achieved. 4.3% of surplus food donated ●

Food waste management focused on three pillars: prevention, redistribution, and organic recovery.

Partnership with ne'ma, the UAE's National Food Loss and Waste Initiative, enabled redistribution of suitable surplus food. A total of 4,596 kg of food surplus and waste was tracked, of which 204.5 kg (4.3%) was donated—below the 10% target. Challenges included timing, food safety constraints, and operational limitations in redistribution logistics.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## B. Environmental: Minimise the ecological footprint of the Congress

**KPI:** 12% of food waste composted

**Result:** Achieved. 21% of food waste composted ●

Unavoidable waste was recovered through composting and liquefaction. A partnership with **Reloop** enabled the composting of 3,858 kg, or 21% of food waste, exceeding the 12% KPI. An additional 738 kg (4%) was treated through on-site liquefaction systems provided by ADNEC, ensuring that 25% of food waste was diverted from landfill.



These outcomes underscore the importance of early planning, supplier collaboration, and structured partnerships in pursuing circular food system goals. While the composting KPI was achieved, the results highlight organisational gaps in large-scale event catering – particularly the need for more precise demand planning and portion control to avoid generating surplus food that is unsuitable for donation and must instead be diverted to waste recovery.

Food waste treatment pathway	Quantity (kg)	Share of food waste (%)
Food waste – composted via Reloop	3,858 kg	21%
Food waste – liquefied via ADNEC	738 kg	4%
Total food waste recovered from landfill	4,596 kg	25%



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 6. Promote inclusive participation opportunities for all

#### 6.1 Speaker diversity

**KPI:** 25% of Congress high-level sessions included speakers from low- and middle-income countries

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

Ensuring diverse and representative voices in Congress programming was a core objective of the social pathway. Particular attention was given to the inclusion of speakers from low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) in high-level sessions, recognising their critical role in shaping global conservation discourse.

Based on speaker nationality data, 42.45% of speakers participating in Congress high-level sessions were from low- and middle-income countries, significantly exceeding the 25% target. This result reflects intentional programming choices and outreach efforts to promote geographic diversity and inclusive representation at the highest levels of Congress dialogue.

*Definition note: High-level sessions were flagship discussions designed to spotlight urgent environmental challenges and drive action. These were hybrid sessions, livestreamed, and featured global leaders, decision-makers, and influencers.*

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

**KPI:** 50% minimum of the Congress high-level sessions included youth/young professional representation

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

Promoting intergenerational dialogue and meaningful youth participation was a key objective of the Congress’s social pathway. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that youth and young professionals were represented within high-level sessions, recognising their role in shaping future conservation leadership and policy.

Across the Congress Forum high-level sessions delivered onsite, 86.67% included at least one youth or young professional representative as a speaker. In practice, 13 out of 15 high-level sessions featured one or more youth or young professional speakers, substantially exceeding the minimum target of 50%.

**Definition note:**

**Youth:** Born after 9 October 1997

**Young Professional:** Born between 9 October 1989 and 8 October 1997

**KPI:** Gender balance of speakers maintained across the Congress

**Result:** Achieved ●

Balanced gender representation was monitored across all Congress sessions. Analysis shows that 49% of speakers were female, 47% male, and 4% identified as “other,” reflecting a near-even gender balance. These results demonstrate effective integration of gender-inclusive practices in speaker selection and programme design.

### Gender balance of speakers across Congress



This outcome demonstrates that inclusive representation was effectively embedded into speaker selection and programme development processes, supporting geographic diversity, intergenerational participation, and gender balance across Congress discussions and decision-making spaces.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 6.2 Inclusive participation from low- and middle-income countries and underrepresented communities

**KPI:** 80% of session rooms with stages made accessible to speakers with mobility issues

**Result:** Overachieved ●●●

Ensuring accessibility for speakers with mobility issues was a core requirement in the design and configuration of Congress session spaces. Accessibility was assessed across all session rooms, with specific attention to stage access, recognising that inclusive participation requires not only audience access but also equitable access to speaking platforms.

In total, 19 session rooms were used for Congress programming, including central stages, Forum session rooms, the Members' Assembly Hall, and the Opening Ceremony Plenary. Of these, 11 session rooms were equipped with stage access via fixed or movable ramps, enabling speakers with mobility issues to access raised stages independently. The remaining 8 session rooms were designed without a raised podium, allowing level access to the stage area.

As a result, 100% of session rooms were accessible to speakers with mobility issues, exceeding the 80% target.

Session room category	Number of rooms	Accessibility approach
Rooms with ramp-accessible stage	11	Fixed or movable ramp
Rooms with no raised podium (level stage access)	8	Fixed or movable ramp

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

**KPI:** 100% of service areas made accessible to participants with mobility issues

**Result:** Partially achieved ●●

Accessibility of service areas was designed and assessed to ensure that participants with mobility issues could independently access essential services throughout the Congress venue.

In total, 67 service areas were assessed. Of these, 58 service areas were fully accessible, while 9 areas presented physical barriers related to step access or door width constraints. As a result, 86% of service areas were accessible, below the 100% target.

**KPI:** Number of sessions interpreted versus total number of sessions

**Result:** Achieved ●

Providing interpretation services through the Interprefy platform was a key measure to support inclusive participation and enable broad engagement across linguistic backgrounds. Interpretation coverage was assessed across Forum sessions, recognising their central role in Congress dialogue and knowledge exchange. Based on available data, 100% of Forum sessions were delivered with interpretation, reflecting a strong commitment to linguistic accessibility across the Congress programme.

- Onsite, 117 sessions were interpreted: 69 through human interpreters and 49 via AI, covering English, Spanish, and French, with additional sessions interpreted in Arabic (7), Brazilian Portuguese (1), and Korean (2).
- Online, 56 sessions were interpreted via AI into English, Spanish, and French, with one session also offered in Korean.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

**KPI:** Participation from low- and middle-income countries supported



**Result:** Achieved

Ensuring equitable access to the Congress was a key objective, including efforts to support participation from low- and middle-income countries. Based on registration data, 35% of participants fell into this category. This figure is calculated from the total pool of registered delegates, excluding general public attendees, staff, suppliers, and complimentary registrations – reflecting a targeted view of professional and mission-aligned participation.

This result offers a valuable baseline to inform future inclusion strategies and continued efforts to broaden geographic and socioeconomic representation.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 7. Enhance the wellbeing of participants throughout the event

#### 7.1 On-site wellbeing of participants KPI

**KPI:** 65% of delegates satisfied with event wellness activities and services

**Result:** Achieved ●

A total of 83% of respondents reported being either somewhat or extremely satisfied with the wellness activities and services provided onsite, exceeding the 65% KPI. This reflects a strong positive response to efforts supporting participant wellbeing during the Congress.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 7.2 Participant perception and satisfaction

**KPI:** 65% of participants satisfied with the event overall

**Result:** Achieved. 86% overall satisfaction ●

Participant satisfaction was assessed through post-event surveys conducted among both onsite and virtual attendees. Among onsite participants, 88% reported being overall satisfied with the event. Virtual participants reported a satisfaction rate of 66%.

When calculated proportionally across both groups, the weighted average satisfaction rate was 86%, significantly exceeding the 65% target. The higher proportion of onsite respondents influenced the overall result, reflecting strong satisfaction with the in-person Congress experience, while also highlighting comparatively lower satisfaction levels among virtual participants.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 8. Prioritise social procurement and inclusive recruitment opportunities

#### 8.1 Procurement from social enterprises and NGOs

**KPI:** One social enterprise partnership activated

**Result:** Achieved ●



As part of its social procurement approach, the Congress partnered with Nzatu Coffee, in collaboration with ArtCafe, as the Official Coffee Supporter. Nzatu Coffee is a social enterprise whose model is rooted in ethical sourcing, community empowerment, and biodiversity-friendly agricultural practices, aligning with the Congress's sustainability objectives.

Approximately 500 kg of Nzatu coffee was consumed onsite. Through two branded kiosks, Nzatu showcased its community-based and regenerative approach to coffee production, including an interactive component allowing participants to experience live biodiversity soundscapes from coffee plantations.

**KPI:** Two NGO/charity partnerships activated

**Result:** Achieved ●



As part of the Congress's approach to social value creation, a partnership was established with ne'ma, the UAE's National Food Loss and Waste Initiative. Through this collaboration, surplus food suitable for redistribution was identified and donated where feasible, supporting food security objectives while reducing avoidable food waste generated through catering operations.

In addition, all speaker gifts procured by IUCN were sourced through the Zayed Higher Organisation for People of Determination, a UAE-based public institution dedicated to empowering people of determination through inclusive employment, skills development, and social integration. This procurement decision supported meaningful economic inclusion by integrating products created through supported employment initiatives into official Congress operations.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

### 8.2 Recruitment to support diversity and inclusion

**KPI:** Percentage representation of different age groups, genders, and experience levels in the Congress organigramme assessed

**Result:** Not sufficient data provided ●

Demographic data relating to age, gender, and experience levels within the Congress organigramme was not available at the time of reporting; therefore, performance against this KPI could not be assessed.

**KPI:** Percentage representation of different age groups, genders, and experience levels in onsite hosts/hostesses, volunteers assessed

**Result:** Partially achieved ●●

Representation across onsite volunteers was monitored to assess diversity in gender and age distribution. (Detailed demographic data for onsite hosts/hostesses was not available and is therefore not included in this analysis.) Gender balance was uneven, with 79%

female and 21% male representation. While this reflects strong female participation, it indicates limited gender balance overall.

Age distribution demonstrates a very strong youth presence, with 77% of volunteers aged 18–25. This reflects the high level of engagement from university students, supported by close collaboration with local academic institutions, particularly Khalifa University, Zayed University, and other UAE-based universities. The strong participation of students and early-career individuals highlights effective outreach to younger generations and interest in conservation-related themes. However, representation of older age groups remained limited, indicating an opportunity to broaden age diversity in future Congress editions.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## C. Social: Organise a unifying event

This data will serve as a benchmark for future events to strengthen diversity targets across both gender and age groups.

### Gender distribution across volunteers



*Reporting limitation: Demographic data for onsite host/hostesses was not available at the time of reporting; the analysis therefore reflects volunteer data only.*

*Reporting note: Section 9 relates to internal governance and compliance monitoring indicators, which were tracked as part of the Congress management system but are not included within the scope of public reporting.*



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## D. Governance: Strengthening organisation resilience and governance

### 10. Ensure resilience through enhanced organisational and funding models of the Congress

#### 10.1 Strengthen organisation and finance management (scope of Congress)

**KPI:** 2 youth-specific events/sessions organised per day of the Forum

**Result:** Achieved ●

Youth engagement was embedded into the daily programme of the Congress Forum through a series of dedicated youth-specific sessions. Across the Forum days, the number of youth-focused events consistently exceeded the minimum target of two sessions per day, demonstrating a strong commitment to intergenerational dialogue and youth leadership.

In total, 38 youth-specific sessions were organised between 9 and 12 October, delivered through a combination of youth pavilion sessions, networking formats, and changemaker pitch events.

Days	Total youth-specific sessions	Session formats included
9-Oct	6	5 Youth Pavilion sessions; 1 Changemaker Pitch
10-Oct	11	9 Youth Pavilion sessions; 1 "Breakfast with..."; 1 Changemaker Pitch
11-Oct	11	9 Youth Pavilion sessions; 1 "Breakfast with..."; 1 Changemaker Pitch
12-Oct	10	8 Youth Pavilion sessions; 1 "Breakfast with..."; 1 Changemaker Pitch

#### Session format notes:

- "Breakfast with..." receptions were networking sessions organised primarily for youth, with participation from experienced professionals to support intergenerational exchange.
- Youth Pavilion sessions were organised by youth, for youth, or focused on youth-related themes.
- Changemaker Pitch events showcased innovative projects led by young changemakers.

# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE

## D. Governance: Strengthening organisation resilience and governance

### 10.2 Sponsorship

**KPI:** 100% of sponsors informed about the sustainability standards and requirements of the Congress

**Result:** Achieved ●

Strengthening organisational resilience and responsible financing was supported through the systematic integration of sustainability requirements into sponsor engagement and activation processes. All 9 sponsors were formally informed of the Congress's sustainability standards and directed to the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 Sustainability Policy as part of their onboarding and engagement. In practice, sponsor activations were fully embedded within the Congress delivery plan, including alignment on areas such as mobility, accommodation, and programme engagement.



# IV. STRATEGIC PATHWAYS AND PERFORMANCE



## D. Governance: Strengthening organisation resilience and governance

### 11. Promote equitable and transparent governance of the Congress

#### 11.1 Governance of the Congress

**KPI:** Number of motions published on the Congress website

**Result:** Achieved ●

Transparent and accountable governance of the Congress was supported through the systematic publication of all motions submitted for consideration. In total, 153 motions were made publicly available (148 motions published under the dedicated Motions section of the website. 5 motions published within the Documents section on the official Congress website, ensuring open access to governance processes and decision-making inputs).

**KPI:** A comparable level of resolutions voted upon, relative to the previous Congress

**Result:** Partially achieved ●●

In comparative terms, the scale of governance activity was broadly consistent with previous Congress editions. At the Marseille 2021 Congress, 161 items were voted (138 Resolutions and 23 Decisions).

All published materials are accessible via the official Congress platforms:

[Motions. Click Here](#)

[Documents. Click Here](#)

**Definition note:**

A **motion** means a draft in writing of any decision which the World Congress is requested to take. Such motion may take the form of a resolution, recommendation, expression of opinion or proposal.

# V. LEGACY, LESSONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



## Legacy: Advancing Sustainable Global Convenings

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 demonstrates that large-scale international events can deliver measurable environmental, social, and governance outcomes when sustainability is embedded from inception through implementation and reporting. The legacy of the Congress extends beyond the event itself and is reflected in five structural outcomes:

- **Institutional integration of ISO 20121:2024**

Sustainable event management practices were embedded into planning, procurement, operations, and reporting processes. This establishes a replicable model for future IUCN Congress editions and other global convenings.

- **Strengthened local and international partnerships**

Collaboration with UAE institutions, social enterprises, NGOs, and academic partners reinforced local capacity while aligning global conservation dialogue with community-level action.

- **Operational proof of concept at scale**

The Congress demonstrated that high participation levels can coexist with strong environmental performance and full mitigation of unavoidable carbon emissions.

- **Inclusive participation embedded in programme design**

Speaker diversity targets were exceeded across gender, geography, and youth representation, setting a precedent for inclusive governance and intergenerational leadership in conservation dialogue.

- **Transparent and data-driven reporting**

Performance was monitored against defined KPIs and publicly reported, including acknowledgement of data limitations.

# V. LEGACY, LESSONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



## Lessons Learned

The delivery of the Congress generated important insights for future editions:

- **Early integration is critical**

Sustainability objectives must be embedded at the earliest stages of venue selection, supplier contracting, and programme design to maximise impact.

- **Data quality remains a structural challenge**

Limitations in supplier traceability (e.g., catering sourcing, transport data, demographics) highlight the need for clearer contractual reporting obligations and earlier data capture requirements.

- **Congress delivery models**

Hybrid delivery models can significantly reduce emissions but require stronger incentives and awareness to increase uptake.

- **Technology enhances performance but requires redundancy**

Innovative technologies, such as air-to-water systems and digital tools like Climeet and KlimAPI, can enhance impact but need redundancy planning for scale.

- **Participant behaviour influences sustainability outcomes**

Catering results show that menu design alone does not guarantee lower-impact consumption. Engagement strategies must more **actively influence behavioural uptake.**

## Areas for Improvement

Based on KPI performance and operational experience, the following areas require targeted strengthening:

- Improve traceability of food and material sourcing through mandatory supplier reporting frameworks.
- Enhance food surplus prevention planning to reduce reliance on downstream recovery solutions.
- Strengthen transport data collection mechanisms with service providers.
- Broaden demographic data collection within organisational structures to support diversity monitoring.
- Increase uptake of virtual participation through stronger incentives and communication strategies.

# V. LEGACY, LESSONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

## Recommendations for Future Congresses

### Looking ahead to the IUCN Congress 2029 and beyond:

- Maintain ISO 20121:2024 certification as a baseline, and assess the relevance of complementary certifications to further strengthen governance.
- Embed sustainability criteria into all contracts and RFPs from the outset, supported by clear compliance pathways, reporting requirements, and supplier engagement mechanism.
- Invest in structured participant experience tracking and feedback loops to better align operational improvements with stakeholder expectations and behavioural outcomes.
- Foster continuity through a permanent sustainability advisory function, ensuring knowledge transfer, benchmarking, and institutional memory between Congress editions.
- Scale the use of digital tools for real-time emissions and impact tracking, enabling adaptive management, stronger transparency, and measurable legacy outcomes.



# VI. APPENDICES



## ISO 20121:2024 Certification Assurance Statement

 **Certificat**  
Certificate

**N° 2025/115291.1**

AFNOR Certification certifie que le système de management mis en place par :  
*AFNOR Certification certifies that the management system implemented by:*

**UICN, UNION INTERNATIONALE POUR LA CONSERVATION DE LA NATURE  
ET DE SES RESSOURCES**

**IUCN, INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR CONSERVATION OF NATURE  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**UICN, UNIÓN INTERNACIONAL PARA LA CONSERVACIÓN DE LA NATURALEZA**

pour l'organisation de l'événement suivant :  
*for the planning of the following event :*

Organisation du Congrès mondial de la nature de l'IUCN, tant en ligne qu'en présentiel, coorganisé avec les Émirats Arabes Unis à Abu Dhabi, du 9 au 15 octobre 2025. Le contenu du Congrès ainsi que tout événement organisé en dehors du site de ce dernier ne relèvent pas la certification.

Online and onsite organisation of the IUCN World Conservation Congress hosted by the United Arab Emirates in Abu Dhabi, from 9 to 15 October 2025. The Congress content, and any events held outside of the venue area are not in the scope of the certification.

Organización del Congreso Mundial de la Naturaleza de la IUCN, tanto en línea como presencial, coorganizado con los Emiratos Árabes Unidos en Abu Dabi, del 9 al 15 de octubre de 2025. El contenido del Congreso, así como cualquier evento organizado fuera de la sede del mismo, no están sujetos a la certificación.

a été évalué et jugé conforme aux exigences requises par :  
*has been assessed and found to meet the requirements of:*

**ISO 20121 : 2024**

et est déployé sur les sites suivants :  
*and is developed on the following locations:*

**Siège : 28 RUE MAUVERNEY CH-CH-1196 GLAND**  
**Centre de conférence : ADNEC Centre Abu Dhabi, Khaleej Al Arabi Street - Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

Ce certificat est valable à compter du (année/mois/jour) **2025-10-15** Jusqu'au **2025-10-16**  
*This certificate is valid from (year/month/day) until*



Ce document est signé électroniquement. Il constitue un original électronique à valeur probante.  
This document is electronically signed. It stands for an electronic original with probatory value.

**Julien NIZRI**  
**Directeur Général d'AFNOR Certification**  
*Managing Director of AFNOR Certification*

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## Performance against KPIs

Progress was monitored using specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) linked to each pathway. Performance is summarised in this report and structured by strategic theme. This report presents a selection of KPIs intended for public reporting. Additional internal indicators, developed for management and continuous improvement purposes, remain outside the scope of this report.

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
One local community project dedicated to sustainability/nature and or biodiversity implemented during the Congress	Achieved	1 project	1 project delivered	Congress Activities	High	SDG 15
50% of the excursions proposed during the Congress showcased local initiatives from IUCN Members and/or Commissions	Overachieved	50%	70% of proposed excursions and 52% of booked excursions showcased IUCN Member initiatives	Congress Programme	High	SDG 17
Two local community projects embedded within the Congress planning and delivery	Achieved	2 projects	2 projects delivered	Congress Activities	High	SDG 17
3 emblematic and transferrable local community initiatives included in the official programme	Achieved	3 initiatives	3 initiatives delivered	Congress Programme	High	SDG 15
50% of Congress newsletters included a sustainability section	Achieved	50%	7 newsletters, representing 100%	Congress Communications	High	SDG 12

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
One dedicated section to sustainability implemented in media kit	Achieved	1 section	1 section delivered	Congress Communications	High	SDG 12
Dedicated sustainability sections published in the Congress staff handbook and the participants handbook	Achieved	1 section in each handbook	1 section in each handbook delivered	Congress Communications	High	SDG 12
5% of total participants registered as online participants	Overachieved	5%	9%	Congress Participation & Demographics	High	SDG 10
Carbon footprint of the Congress measured	Achieved	Measure the carbon footprint of Congress	17382 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Congress Environmental Impact	Medium	SDG 13
100% of all unavoidable carbon emissions associated with the Congress offset	Overachieved	100%	23608 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Congress Environmental Impact	High	SDG 13
Low environmental impact vehicles used across 70% of Congress local transportation plan including transportation for VIP/VVIPs	Not sufficient data provided	70%	n/a	Congress Operations	Low	SDG 11
75% of suppliers' contracts required compliance with the IUCN Congress Sustainability Policy	Achieved	75%	79%	Congress Procurement & Partnerships	High	SDG 12

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
70% of production made of sustainable materials	Achieved	70%	71%	Congress Venue & Operations	Low	SDG 12
80% of build up material sourced within the UAE	Partially achieved	80%	68%	Congress Procurement & Partnerships	Low	SDG 12
80% of single use plastic, polystyrene and PVC eliminated	Partially achieved	80%	76%	Congress Venue & Operations	Low	SDG 12
90% of clean energy used at the venue	Overachieved	90%	100%	Congress Environmental Impact	High	SDG 7
82% waste diversion rate achieved	Overachieved	82%	94%	Congress Environmental Impact	Medium	SDG 12
60% of Congress waste recycled	Overachieved	60%	71%	Congress Environmental Impact	Medium	SDG 12
70% of food and beverages sourced within the UAE	Not sufficient data provided	70%	n/a	Congress Catering	Low	SDG 12

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
70% of food served was vegetarian and/or vegan	Not achieved	70%	47%	Congress Catering	Medium	SDG 12
10% of food served was red meat	Not achieved	10%	17%	Congress Catering	Medium	SDG 12
<b>20% of food served was poultry and fish</b>	Not achieved	20%	36%	Congress Catering	Medium	SDG 12
10% of food surplus donated	Not achieved	10%	4.30%	Congress Catering	Medium	SDG 2
12% of food waste composted	Achieved	12%	21% composted, 4% liquified	Congress Environmental Impact	Medium	SDG 12
25% of Congress high-level sessions included speakers from low- and middle-income countries	Overachieved	25%	42%	Congress Programme	High	SDG 10
50% minimum of the Congress high-level sessions included youth/young professional representation	Overachieved	50%	87%	Congress Programme	High	SDG 10

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
Gender balance of speakers maintained across the Congress	Achieved	Gender balance maintained	48.64% female, 47.03% male, 4.3% 'other'	Congress Programme	High	SDG 5
80% of session rooms with stages made accessible to speakers with mobility issues	Overachieved	80%	100%	Congress Venue & Operations	High	SDG 10
100% of service areas made accessible to participants with mobility issues	Partially achieved	100%	86%	Congress Venue & Operations	High	SDG 10
Number of sessions interpreted versus total number of sessions	Achieved	Sessions interpreted measured	83%	Congress Programme	High	SDG 16
Participation from low- and middle-income countries supported	Achieved	Baseline measurement	35%	Congress Participation & Demographic	High	SDG 10
<b>65% of delegates who are satisfied with event wellness activities and services</b>	Achieved	65%	83%	Congress Participation & Demographics	High	SDG 3
<b>65% of participants satisfied with the event overall</b>	Achieved	65%	86%	Congress Participation & Demographics	High	SDG 16

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
One social enterprise partnership activated	Achieved	1 partnership	1 partnership delivered	Congress Procurement & Partnerships	High	SDG 8
Two NGO/charity partnerships activated	Achieved	80%	100%	Congress Procurement & Partnerships	High	SDG 17
Percentage representation of different age groups, genders, and experience levels in the Congress organigramme assessed	Not sufficient data provided.	Representation measurement	Not sufficient data provided	Congress Governance & Compliance	Low	SDG 10
Percentage representation of different age groups, genders, and experience levels in onsite hosts/hostesses, volunteers assessed	Partially achieved	Representation measurement	Gender distribution across volunteers: female 79%, male 21% Not sufficient data provided around host/hostesses	Congress Participation & Demographic	Medium	SDG 10
<b>2 youth-specific events at the Forum</b>	Achieved	6 events	6 events	Congress Programme	High	SDG 10
100% of the sponsors informed about the sustainability standards and requirements of Congress	Achieved	100%	100%	Congress Procurement & Partnerships	High	SDG 12

## Performance against KPIs (cont.)

KPI	Status	Target	Result	Scope boundary category	Data quality	SDG Alignment
Number of motions published on the Congress website	Achieved	Motions published	153	Congress Governance & Compliance	High	SDG 16
A comparable level of resolutions voted upon, relative to the previous Congress	Partially achieved	Comparative benchmark vs Marseille	Marseille 161 items vs Abu Dhabi 153 items	Congress Governance & Compliance	Congress Governance & Compliance	SDG 16

# VI. APPENDICES

## Communication

The table below summarises the communication channels used, grouped by timing and category:

Category	Channel	Number of deliverables
Pre-Congress	Congress newsletters	7
	Webpage updates	6
	Sustainability Policy publication	1
Internal	Staff & Participant Handbooks	2
	Exhibitor & Session Guides	1
	Staff briefing slide decks	1
	Volunteer, Staff & Exhibitor Briefings	3
Onsite	Holding slides in session rooms	1
	App notifications (Congress days)	3x daily
	Daily highlights (Congress days)	7
	Sustainability Hub	1
	Congress badges with messaging	1
	Thank You Wall	1
Post-Congress	Sustainability Report publication	1

# VI. APPENDICES

## Inclusive Participation

### Summary of service areas accessibility

Service area category	Total number	Accessible	Not accessible	Accessibility notes
Registration counters	2	2	0	Step-free access
Service counters	7	7	0	Fully accessible
Information desks	3	3	0	Fully accessible
Food courts	2	2	0	Fully accessible
First aid facilities	2	2	0	Fully accessible
Relaxation/multifaith room	1	1	0	Fully accessible
Staff relaxation room	1	1	0	Fully accessible
Networking areas	4	4	0	Fully accessible
Prayer rooms	2	2	0	Fully accessible
Oasis lounge	1	1	0	Fully accessible
Toilets	33	33	0	Accessible units
Nursing room	1	0	1	Door width limitation
Pods	4	0	4	Step access
Technical studios	4	0	4	Step access
<b>Total service areas assessed</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>9</b>	

## VI. APPENDICES



### Climate Mitigation Contributions

The carbon mitigation certificates supporting the Congress's offsetting and verified carbon unit retirements are maintained in a dedicated online repository. These materials provide additional evidence of the climate mitigation contributions associated with the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, in alignment with the event's carbon management approach and ISO 20121:2024 reporting commitments.

[Click Here to access the certificates](#)

