

THE IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS 2025

INTRODUCTION TO THE MOTIONS PROCESS

FIRST GUIDANCE NOTE

1) INTRODUCTION

This is the first of a series of Guidance Notes referring to the motions process for the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025. More detailed guidance will be provided for each step of the process in due course, including thorough step-by-step guidance on how to use the online system. Additional information and updates will be provided throughout the process through various channels including IUCN Engage, the Digest and the dedicated Congress website when it goes live.

Background

Motions, and the resulting Resolutions and Recommendations, are the most used mechanism by which Members guide the policy and Programme of IUCN, and influence third parties. The 1,466 Resolutions and Recommendations that have been adopted at previous Congresses and General Assemblies since 1948, are the basis of IUCN's general policy and have been the Members' most effective means of influencing conservation policy, at the species, site, national and global level. IUCN's decisions have contributed to setting the international conservation agenda, supported the development of international conservation law, and identified emerging issues that impact conservation. All the adopted IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations can be consulted [here](#).

In accordance with IUCN Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress, ***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. Resolutions are directed to IUCN itself. Recommendations are directed to third parties and may deal with any matter of importance to the objectives of IUCN (Rule 48).

In addition, consistent with Article 20 (a) and (b) of the Statutes, ***the purpose of the motions is to define the general policy of IUCN and to influence the policies or actions of third parties, or to address the governance of IUCN, within the parameters of IUCN's objectives as set forth in Articles 2 and 3 of the Statutes.*** (Rule 48bis).

The **IUCN motions process will be supported by a customized online system.** The system's design and functionalities will draw from the successful experience and lessons learned from the use of the online system developed for the previous IUCN Congresses.

Importantly, it is **noted that the overall motions workflow for the Abu Dhabi Congress in 2025 is based almost entirely on the workflow of previous Congresses.**

2) THE 2025 MOTIONS PROCESS

The motions process for the 2025 World Conservation Congress will begin on 4 November 2024 with the launch of the first step – the motion submission phase. Consequently, **Members will be able to propose motions for consideration from 4 November 2024 until 15 January 2025 (23:59 GMT/UTC). No motion shall be accepted after this deadline.** Members are encouraged to submit their motions early! Early submission will be acknowledged.

All motions will be discussed online prior to the World Conservation Congress with a significant number of motions to be voted on electronically before the Congress. Motions which have been the subject of such debate and divergent proposed amendments or that are so controversial that it is not possible to produce a consensus text for submission to a decision by electronic vote prior to Congress will be debated and submitted to vote at the Members’ Assembly. Regardless of whether the motions are voted on electronically prior to the Congress or during the Congress, all those that are adopted will become Resolutions or Recommendations and will enjoy the same value and status. The Members’ Assembly will formally 'record' the adoption of the motions adopted by electronic vote prior to the Congress without re-opening discussions.

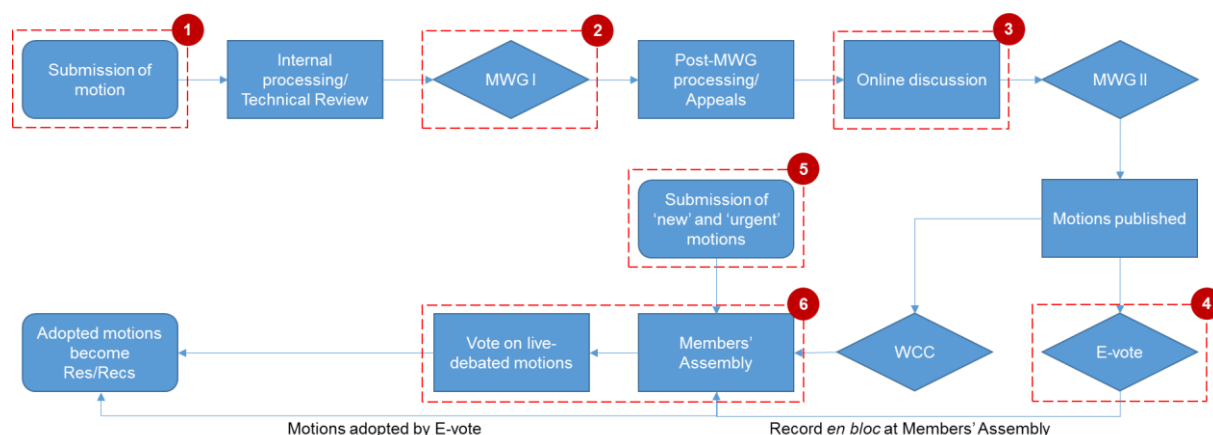


Figure 1. Schematic of the motions process

The 2025 motions process shall consist of various segments (see **Figure 1**); the primary ones being:

- 1 The **submission of motions** by IUCN Members
- 2 **Consideration by the Motions Working Group (MWG)**
- 3 An **online discussion**
- 4 An **electronic vote** by Members
- 5 The **submission of “new” and “urgent” motions** (before the opening of the IUCN Congress and on-site)
- 6 The **discussion and vote of a limited number of motions on-site** (during the Members’ Assembly at the World Conservation Congress (WCC))

This guidance note refers to a large extent to motions which are deemed to define IUCN’s general policy as well as to influence the policies or actions of third parties.

Motions pertaining to the governance of IUCN (including amendments to the Statutes and Rules of Procedure) **are managed slightly differently.**

Proposals to amend the Statutes will be governed by Articles 104 to 106 of the Statutes. Members may submit them until six months prior to Congress, i.e., 9 April 2025.

Proposals to amend the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress are governed by Rule 29 and may be submitted to Council anytime. If any such motion is submitted, it will be directed to Council.

However, **there may be motions about the governance of IUCN without proposing amendments to the Statutes** (e.g., requesting the Council to study a reform of governance). **Such motions must be submitted through the online motion submission system by 15 January 2025.** However, according to Rule 45bis (d), they will automatically be referred to the Members' Assembly for discussion and voting. If the Motions Working Group so decides, the discussion of such motions may start online together with all other motions, but they will not be concluded with a final draft for submission to an electronic vote prior to Congress.

Box 1: 2024-2025 motions process key dates

- **4 November 2024 - 15 January 2025: Submission of Motions**
- 22 January - 21 February 2025: Technical review
- 10 - 16 March 2025: Motions Working Group I (first meeting)
- 24 March 2025: Publication of motions in original language
- 24 March - 18 April 2025: Appeals process (includes CPC's revision and decision)
- 21 April 2025: Publication of all accepted motions online (in three languages)
- 21 April - 21 June 2025: Online discussion of motions
- 30 June - 2 July 2025: Motions Working Group II (second meeting)
- **9 July 2025: Final versions of motions published**
- 27 August - 10 September 2025: Electronic vote by Members
- 24 September 2025: Vote results published
- 2 - 9 October 2025: Submission of new and urgent motions
- **9 - 15 October 2025: World Conservation Congress 2025¹**

¹ The Forum and Exhibition are planned from 9-12 October 2025. The Members' Assembly is planned from 13-15 October 2025 with a first sitting in the afternoon of 9 October 2025.

3) SEGMENTS OF THE 2025 MOTIONS PROCESS

To improve the efficiency and transparency of the motions process, the IUCN Council (on the recommendation of its Governance and Constituency Committee following consultation with Motions Working Group) requested the implementation of a series of actions that can be found [here](#). Highlights about each of the main steps of the process are provided below.

- **Submission of Motions (4 November 2024 – 15 January 2025)**

The submission of motions will take place via an electronic system specifically designed for this purpose, to be launched **on 4 November 2024**. Members must use the **online submission form** for the submission of their motions.

Besides the **title**, **preambular paragraphs** (limit of 2,000 characters) and **operative paragraphs** (limit of 1,500 characters), the proponent of the motion will have to answer a **series of preliminary questions** concerning the rationale for proposing the motion and provide **information required for the implementation of the motion** (in line with Rule 54 (b) viii.). In submitting the motion online, the proponent also needs to identify the IUCN Members eligible to vote who co-sponsor the motion (Rule 49) and those who have been consulted or have collaborated in the development of the motion. The proponent needs to identify the contributions intended to be made by its institution and those of the co-sponsors to the implementation of the motion.

As per IUCN Statutes, **a proponent of a motion needs to find a minimum of five co-sponsors eligible to vote, from at least two Regions** (in the sense of Articles 16 and 17 of the Statutes) in order to submit a motion. **Only IUCN Members in categories A, B and C who have paid their 2024 dues by October 2024 are eligible to propose or co-sponsor a motion.**

The electronic system will enable Members to **‘save’ their motion as a draft** while further discussing it with other Members, ensuring that all necessary information is provided, adjusting the content of the draft motion if needed, and adding new or additional co-sponsors. This will enable Members to revise their motion prior to submission and build support for their motion.

All motions need to be ‘submitted’ by 15 January 2025 (23:59 GMT/UTC) at the latest, by following the instructions provided in the system. **No motion shall be accepted after this deadline.** Any motion saved as a ‘draft’ in the system at this point will not be considered as ‘submitted’ and therefore not considered by the Motions Working Group.

It is strongly recommended for Members to plan to submit their motions online with sufficient time in advance of the deadline to avoid possible system glitches or unexpected delays.

- **Motions Working Group – 1st meeting (March 2025)**

The Motions Working Group (MWG), established by the IUCN Council, will oversee the motions process. In addition to members of Council, three individuals from Members and Commissions have been appointed by Council as members of the MWG in their expert and/or personal capacity representing the common interests of Members and reflecting the diversity of IUCN’s Members and components. The members of the MWG are listed in **Annex 1**.

The MWG for the 2025 World Conservation Congress has been formally established and, during its first meeting in March 2024, elected its chair and Deputy Chair. The MWG will be supported by a Secretariat Motions Team throughout the process.

The MWG will review all motions submitted for technical issues and the requirements laid out in the Rules of Procedure of the World Conservation Congress (Part VII and in particular, Rule 54 – **see Box 2 below**). On these grounds, the MWG will decide whether a motion will be admissible, with or without modifications, or rejected. In accordance with its [Terms of Reference](#), the MWG will ensure that the statutory requirements are strictly applied to the submitted motions and that motions which meet the requirements are treated fairly and equitably, with adequate communication with proponents and co-sponsors related to rejecting, amending or merging motions, explaining the rationale.

Box 2: Rule 54

Motions shall be accepted only upon determination by the Motions Working Group or the Resolutions Committee that they are consistent with the purpose of motions as defined in Rule 48bis and meet the following requirements:

(a) related to content:

- i. Propose or modify IUCN's general policy and only to the extent necessary and subject to the full application of Rule 51, specify the activities required to implement the policy;
- ii. Contributions from Members and/or components of IUCN, if called for in the motion, are reasonable and achievable;
- iii. Contain technically sound and coherent arguments;
- iv. Be precise in what they aim to achieve;
- v. Propose aspirational goals that are reasonable;
- vi. Do not merely repeat the content of Resolutions and Recommendations previously adopted; and
- vii. When focusing on local, national or regional issues, state, with the proponent providing evidence at the moment of submission, that (1) the matter covered by the motion has been engaged at local, national and/or regional instances and that the desired result has not been achieved; and (2) the Members and relevant Commission members as well as other stakeholders in the geographic area in question have been consulted; and

(b) related to process and format:

- viii. Be submitted before the deadline established in Rule 49;
- ix. Be proposed and co-sponsored by Members eligible to vote, in accordance with Rules 49 or 49bis;
- x. The proponent specifies a) which of the Members and/or components of IUCN or third parties, which the motion calls upon to undertake action have been consulted or have collaborated in the development of the motion, b) which Members or components of IUCN have been consulted with a view to identify solutions that might address the underlying issues and c) the actions and resources required to implement the motion and the contributions which proponents and co-sponsors intend to make towards its implementation;
- xi. For motions concerning issues arising in a State or States outside the State or Region of the proponent, be co-sponsored by at least one IUCN Member from the Region with which the motion is concerned in accordance with Rule 49bis; and
- xii. Use the template to be approved by Council.

Proponents will be informed of MWG decisions on acceptability of motions submitted. **The list of titles of accepted motions, including motions which have been merged with others on similar issues, will be made available soon after the first meeting of the MWG** (scheduled for March 2025). In particular, Members whose motions have been rejected by the MWG will be formally notified of this decision by email as soon as possible after the MWG meeting.

All motions will be published in the language they were submitted by 24 March 2025. **Proponents and co-sponsors have the right to appeal decisions of the MWG** pertaining to their motions.

In accordance with Rule 62ter, *The **Congress Preparatory Committee established by Council in conformity with Article 46 (q) of the IUCN Statutes shall decide any appeal from a proponent and co-sponsors against the classification, exclusion or amendment by the Motions Working Group of a motion referred to the electronic discussion and vote prior to the World Congress. In the case of an appeal against the decision to refer a motion to the electronic vote prior to Congress, the only permissible ground for appeal is that an error was made in not classifying the motion as qualifying for consideration at the Members' Assembly. Any appeals under this Rule shall be received by the Congress Preparatory Committee by no later than two weeks following the date of the publication of the motions.***

Members can file their appeals (by sending an email to the Congress Preparatory Committee ("CPC"), acting as the appeals body) from **24 March to 7 April 2025**. From 8-14 April 2025, the CPC will take a decision on the appeals received and communicate its decision to Members.

Motions which are reinstated as a result of the appeals process will be processed and edited before the start of the online discussion.

- **Online Discussion (21 April 2025 - 21 June 2025)**

All motions will be discussed online, prior to the Congress, during a period of 2 months, enabling all IUCN Members to participate in the process democratically, effectively and transparently. **An electronic system for the online discussion will be available via the Congress website**. Members of all categories which are in good standing can voice their support for motions, express concerns, debate pros and cons and submit amendments using this system, just as they would during the Members' Assembly.

Commission members, representatives of recognised National and Regional Committees and members of the Secretariat may also take part in the online discussion of motions in a technical advisory and support capacity (Rule 62bis).

The **electronic discussion will be facilitated** by a number of qualified individuals identified by the MWG. They will help to ensure the transparent nature of the process and contribute to achieving a level of convergence on contentious issues sufficient for the motions to be considered ready for the MWG to submit them to an electronic vote, with or without amendments.

The online discussion of each motion will be **organised in two readings** (two periods of discussion). Details about the duration and modalities of the two readings will be provided in due course.

- **The Electronic Vote (27 August - 10 September 2025)**

Following the online discussion, **the MWG will put a substantial number of motions to an electronic vote by IUCN Members eligible to vote prior to the Congress** based on the characteristics outlined below. All motions voted electronically will carry the same importance as motions debated and voted at the Congress.

Importantly, the final texts of all motions and any amendments to be put to the electronic vote before Congress will be **published by 9 July 2025**, in all three languages. This is a statutory deadline.

The electronic vote of motions will take place over a period of two weeks, **from 27 August until 10 September 2025**.

Motions will be submitted to an electronic vote **to the exception of:**

- **Motions that warrant debate at the global level** during the Congress which will continue to be discussed and voted upon during the Members' Assembly; and
- **Motions which have been the subject of such discussion and divergent proposed amendments or that are so controversial** that it is, in the opinion of the MWG, **not possible to produce a consensus text** for submission to the electronic vote prior to Congress.

The MWG will forward motions that meet one of the two abovementioned characteristics to the World Conservation Congress for debate and voting.

- **Submission of “new” and “urgent” motions (2 - 9 October 2025)**

In accordance with the Rule 52, “**Motions may be submitted at the World Congress (a) either by the Council, or by (b) a Member eligible to vote with the co-sponsorship of at least ten other Members eligible to vote from at least two Regions; and (c) only if the Congress Resolutions Committee determines that the subject of the motions is new and urgent according to the following criteria...**

- “New” means that the issue which is the subject of the motion has arisen or has been subject to developments occurring after the closing of the deadline for the submission of motions and, at that time, could not have been foreseen; and*
- “Urgent” means that the issue is of such importance that it requires an immediate response from the Union in the form of a Resolution or Recommendation.”*

Rule 53 states that “**motions meeting the criteria of Rule 52 shall be submitted from one week prior to the opening of the Congress until the end of the plenary sittings on the first day of the Members' Assembly.**”

Submission of new and urgent motions for the 2025 World Conservation Congress will be possible **from 2 - 9 October 2025** when a first sitting of the Members' Assembly will take place. Members must use a **template** which will be provided in due course.

- **Discussion and vote of motions at the World Conservation Congress (9-15 October 2025)**

At the World Conservation Congress, the Members' Assembly (from Monday 13 October until the closing of the Congress on Wednesday 15 October 2025) will 'record' *en bloc* the motions adopted by the electronic vote prior to the Congress without re-opening discussion or vote on any of them.

Motions transmitted to the World Conservation Congress will be discussed in different sittings of the Members' Assembly depending on the topic, and voted upon throughout the Congress, following discussion in contact groups as needed.

*The Second Guidance Note on the Submission of Motions will be released before the opening of submission of motions on **4 November 2024**.*

For any questions related to the motions process please contact motions@iucn.org.

Annex 1: The Motions Working Group



Jon Paul Rodríguez (Venezuela)

Jon Paul holds a degree in biology from Universidad Central de Venezuela and a doctorate on ecology and evolutionary biology from Princeton University. He is ecology Professor at the Instituto Venezolano de Investigaciones Científicas, co-founder and President of Provita, and Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. He defines himself as a biologist that is interested in generating information useful for informing conservation policies, without being a politician. Jon Paul is author in more than 260 publications, including books, chapters, and peer-reviewed articles in major international scientific journals.



Maud Lelièvre (France)

Maud is the president of the French committee of IUCN and a member of the IUCN International Council. She holds a degree in political science, a doctorate in law, and is a lawyer specialized in environmental law. She has been advocating for environmental cases since the beginning of her professional career, notably in Africa. During her 20-year career in environmental protection, she has participated in various COP Biodiversity conferences and international negotiations and develops public policies as the general delegate of an association of local authorities.



Ana di Pangracio (Argentina)

Ana is a lawyer, specialising in biodiversity law and policy with a human rights-based approach. She has over fifteen years of experience working in civil society organizations on socio-environmental matters. Since 2010 she has been in charge of the Biodiversity Area at Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN), based in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Since 2013 she is also its Deputy Director. She has extensive experience in biodiversity advocacy, including the follow-up of global negotiations under the Convention on Biological Diversity and related national processes and policies. She is a member of the CBD Women's Caucus and the CBD Alliance. She is an elected member of the UNCCD CSO Panel (2022-2024) and elected IUCN Councillor (2021-2025).



Brian Child (Zimbabwe)

Brian has over 35 years of experience working with communities, landholders, park managers and students in Africa and beyond, advocating for local rights in a global world that gives the people who actually live with and manage wildlife far too little credibility. He has been an active Member of IUCN since the mid-1980s, including the Species Survival Commission, the Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Initiative, and chairing the Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group for two terms. His policy experience includes serving as Biodiversity Member of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility.



Samad-John Smaranda (Romania)

John has worked in international biodiversity conservation for almost his entire professional career. He served as Focal Point for IPBES, CBD Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, World Heritage (nature component) and UNESCO MAB. He has also worked closely with delegates at multiple intergovernmental fora (IPBES, Bern, Ramsar, CITES, AEW, CBD, UNESCO World) and participates in several European Union's expert groups related to biodiversity policies. Since 2023 John is also member of UNESCO MAB ICC. He has been associated with IUCN for over 20 years and he is currently an IUCN Councillor for East Europe, North and Central Asia.

**Kathryn Gwiazdon** (United States of America)

Kathryn, based in Washington D.C., is the Executive Director of IUCN NGO member organization Center for Environmental Ethics and Law, Chair of the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN WCEL, Executive Committee member of the IUCN US National Committee, and Expert with the UN Harmony with Nature program. She teaches courses on international law, human security, human rights, humanitarian law, and climate law at Northern Illinois University College of Law. Her work focuses on the role of ethics and values in decision making and our systems of law and governance; the interdisciplinary and inter-sectoral approach required for just and sustainable forms of law and governance; and how our conservation crises cannot be separated from our governance crises.

**Jan Olov Westerberg** (Sweden)

Jan Olov is a former councillor of IUCN 2016-2021, during that time chair of the Councils programme and policy committee. Currently, he is the chair of the Swedish National Committee of IUCN. His background is as a senior leader in government services, 2008-2017 as a Director General of the Swedish Museum of Natural History, currently as Director of properties at the National board of Properties. He is a member of the CEC, CEESP, WCPA and WCCC.

**Jessika Woroniak** (Canada)

Jessika is a policy analyst within the International Oceans Policy Team at Fisheries and Oceans Canada with a background in marine sciences. Her expertise lies in international negotiations, ocean governance, and fisheries resources and biodiversity policy. She has experience working on biodiversity conservation through her participation on the Canadian Delegation in the negotiation for the Agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (a.k.a. BBNJ Agreement), her role as the Canadian focal point in the Sargasso Sea Commission and her involvement in the Convention on Biological Diversity.