

Foreword

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The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has had a proud history of global leadership in shaping conservation thinking and action, mobilising the expertise of government, non-government and academic member bodies and of the individual experts within its six Commissions.

In September 2012, IUCN held its fifth World Conservation Congress, building on the 64-year history in which it has convened 19 General Assemblies, four World Conservation Congresses, and five World Parks Congresses.

The theme of the 2012 Congress was *Nature+*. This simple slogan aims to capture the fact that nature is not only intrinsically of immense value but is the fundamentally important underpinning of every aspect of human life. This theme also runs through the 20 Aichi Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity, adopted by governments in October 2010. IUCN is fully committed to ensuring that the ambitious targets for halting the loss of biodiversity by 2020 are met. As we seek new nature-based solutions to global challenges in climate change, food security, and social and economic development, effective and equitable governance of nature's use and valuing and conserving nature, a profound need will be innovative and creative thinking. We shall not succeed in achieving these vitally important goals unless we build on successful models with new mechanisms and find both the social motivation and financial means to realise these new directions.

Such outcomes require leadership and constituency building. IUCN's component parts are working to achieve both outcomes in many global forums. IUCN's National Committee for Australia, ACIUCN, has undergone a revitalisation over the last two years and is steadily building a reputation for leadership in key strategic discussions.

ACIUCN's symposium on *Innovation for 21st Century Conservation*, organized in partnership with the South Australian Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy, is a timely and important contribution. The symposium, held in Adelaide, South Australia on 20 and 21 March 2012, examined excellent examples in conservation and aimed to encourage further creativity through partnerships.

The case studies from the symposium, presented in this publication, highlight how conservation has changed over the last few decades, becoming more inclusive and more socially conscious. The systematic expansion of the National Reserve System, guided by the scientific principles of comprehensiveness, adequacy and representativeness, has made Australia a world leader and the case studies in this book document new approaches to securing and managing conservation lands. The increasing emphasis on 'connectivity conservation' and 'landscape-scale conservation' is illustrated by the examples of multiple partners achieving outcomes on many land tenures under various governance and financing models.

The studies also reflect the impact of climate change on conservation thinking. We no longer try to protect healthy ecosystems simply for their biodiversity and sustainable use values, but also address the need to both retain these rich carbon sinks and add to the resilience of natural systems in the face of actual and anticipated threats posed by climate change. It is encouraging to see Australia reflecting this nature-based solutions approach.

I note that many studies illustrate initiatives to integrate the culture, rights and aspirations of Australia's Indigenous peoples into conservation, consistent with IUCN's deep commitment to equity in all our work. IUCN has admired the commitment of Australia to developing Indigenous Protected Areas and Indigenous land and sea management. It is excellent that this commitment is continuing to evolve through the engagement of private land trusts and philanthropic organisations.

IUCN will continue to strongly support innovative thinking and effective and equitable partnerships in the global effort to preserve the richness and diversity of life on our planet which sustains all species, including our own.



Temperate wet sclerophyll forest in Liffey Valley Reserves in Tasmania, owned by Bush Heritage Australia. ©Photo: Wayne Lawler