

**Submission  
No 259**

## **INQUIRY INTO MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC LAND IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

**Organisation:** Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group, International  
Union for Conservation of Nature

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**Date received:** 3/08/2012

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Dear Sir/Madam,

**Submission to NSW Legislative Council's General Purpose Standing Committee No6: Public Land Management Inquiry**

I would like to make a submission to this inquiry in my capacity as Chair of the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group . IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) is the world's oldest and largest global environmental organisation, and is one of the world's most authoritative sources of technical advice and expertise on the environment ([www.iucn.org](http://www.iucn.org)). The Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi) is a joint Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission (SSC) and the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), and is comprised of over 600 experts from across the world (see [www.iucn.org/SULi](http://www.iucn.org/SULi)). Our aims are to further the IUCN vision of "A just world that values and conserves nature" by:

- increasing awareness of the benefits and value to humanity of its use of wild living resources;
- supporting the achievement of sustainability in use of biodiversity;
- enhancing the generation of incentives for conservation and restoration from use of wild resources;
- supporting the rights, interests and participation of local people in managing and using wild resources sustainably and equitably.

I address paragraph 3 of the Terms of Reference:

"Examination of models for the management of public land, including models that provide for conservation outcomes which utilise the principles of "sustainable use"."

Specifically, I would comment on the principles of sustainable use. IUCN adopted in 2000, after an extensive global consultation, its *Policy Statement on the Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources* (as Resolution 2.29 at the First World Conservation Congress in Amman, Jordan). I attach the entirety for your perusal (see online at [http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/sustainable\\_use\\_and\\_livelihoods\\_specialist\\_group/resources/res\\_supolstat/](http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/sustainable_use_and_livelihoods_specialist_group/resources/res_supolstat/)).

This policy lays out a general framework of principles for sustainable use. Some of its key points are that:

- Decisions of whether to use, or not to use, wild living resources should be consistent with conservation of biological diversity (para 1)
- Use, if sustainable, can meet human needs on an ongoing basis while contributing to the conservation of biological diversity (para 3)
- Use of wild living resources, if sustainable, is an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use provide incentives for people to conserve them (para 7(a)).

This last point summarises the reasoning of what is often called "conservation through sustainable use". When people benefit from use of wild species/habitats, the benefits they gain can offset the costs of living with a species, and/or motivate them to invest in sustainable management, enforcement against illegal use, and research. So, for instance, many landholders in the Northern Territory are willing to tolerate having saltwater crocodiles (which are dangerous predators) on their land because they can benefit from harvesting and selling a proportion of their eggs. There are many global examples to support the effectiveness of this approach under certain circumstances. As habitat loss is the most important factor causing species to become threatened globally, finding ways for people to value wild nature is a critical challenge, and sustainable use can be one solution.

Equally, however, not all use is sustainable use - under the wrong conditions (particularly where the resource is "open access") use can drive rapid overexploitation. More detailed articulation of the conditions that favour sustainability and the generation of incentives for conservation have been developed by the global community in the *Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity*, adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2004 (COP 7 Decision VII/12; <http://www.cbd.int/sustainable/addis.shtml>). These are attached and provide operational guidance for implementing sustainable use.

I hope this submission is of use in your deliberations and would be pleased to answer any queries or provide further information on any of the above.

Best regards  
Rosie Cooney

**The IUCN Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources**  
**adopted at the IUCN World Conservation Congress**  
**Amman, October 2000**

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RECALLING Resolution 1.39 'Sustainable Use Initiative' adopted by the 1st Session of the World Conservation Congress, requested the Species Survival Commission's (SSC) Sustainable Use Specialist Group (SUSG) to develop urgently a short policy paper on sustainable use for written comment from IUCN members, and for SSC to take these comments into account in preparing a final draft for presentation at the next World Conservation Congress;

ACKNOWLEDGING that, in accordance with Resolution 1.39, the Steering Committee of the SUSG prepared the draft 'Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources' that is attached herewith;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING that successive drafts of this statement were reviewed by members of 14 regional SUSGs, Chairs and members of the SSC Specialist Groups, the SSC Steering Committee, Chairs of other Commissions, heads of IUCN's Thematic and Regional Component Programmes, and IUCN's members;

RECOGNIZING that sustainable use is one of the three components of the objective of the Convention on Biological Diversity and that the Convention provides a definition of 'sustainable use';

NOTING that Article 3 of the 'Ramsar' Convention on Wetlands obliges its Contracting Parties to implement wise use approaches and that, in particular, the Convention has recently produced a series of Wise Use Handbooks;

ALSO NOTING that the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) have endorsed the principle of sustainable use in Resolution Conf. 8.3;

RECOGNIZING that sustainability and sustainable use are concepts that are now being applied to sectors beyond the scope of this policy statement per se, e.g., water, agriculture, soils;

and NOTING that most Component Programmes of IUCN work on sustainable use and that there is a need for the principles of sustainable use to be mainstreamed in all pertinent IUCN technical, regional, national, project, and Commission activities;

The World Conservation Congress at its 2nd Session in Amman, Jordan, 4-11 October 2000:

1. ADOPTS the Policy Statement attached herewith and commends the policy to IUCN's members, Commissions, and Secretariat for implementation in the context of its Overall Programme, and in accordance with the objectives of IUCN; and
2. CALLS ON the Secretariat to report on the progress achieved in implementing the terms of the Policy Statement at the 3 rd World Conservation Congress.

This Resolution was adopted by a show of hands. The delegation of the State member United States indicated that it had abstained.

#### Policy Statement on Sustainable Use of Wild Living Resources

1. Conservation of biological diversity is central to the mission of IUCN, and accordingly IUCN recommends that decisions of whether to use, or not to use, wild living resources should be consistent with this aim.
2. Both consumptive and non-consumptive use of biological diversity are fundamental to the economies, cultures, and well-being of all nations and peoples.
3. Use, if sustainable, can serve human needs on an ongoing basis while contributing to the conservation of biological diversity.
4. At the 18th Session of the General Assembly (Perth, 1990) in Recommendation 18.24, IUCN - The World Conservation Union recognised that "the ethical, wise and sustainable use of some wildlife can provide an alternative or supplementary means of productive land-use, and can be consistent with and encourage conservation, where such use is in accordance with appropriate safeguards".
5. This position was re-affirmed in Recommendation 19.54 at the following session of the Union's General Assembly in 1994 and subsequently in Resolution 1.39 at the 1 st Session of the World Conservation Congress in 1996.
6. Analyses of uses of wild living resources in a number of different contexts demonstrate that there are many biological, social, cultural, and economic factors, which combine in a variety of configurations to affect the likelihood that a particular use may be sustainable.
7. On the basis of these analyses, IUCN concludes that: a) Use of wild living resources, if sustainable, is an important conservation tool because the social and economic benefits derived from such use provide incentives for people to conserve them; b) When using wild living resources, people should seek to minimize losses of biological diversity; c) Enhancing the sustainability of uses of wild living resources involves an ongoing process of improved management of those resources; and d) Such management should be adaptive, incorporating monitoring and the ability to modify management to take account of risk and uncertainty.
8. To increase the likelihood that any use of a wild living resource will be sustainable requires consideration of the following: a) The supply of biological products and ecological services available for use is limited by intrinsic biological characteristics of both species and ecosystems, including productivity, resilience, and stability, which

themselves are subject to extrinsic environmental change; b) Institutional structures of management and control require both positive incentives and negative sanctions, good governance, and implementation at an appropriate scale. Such structures should include participation of relevant stake-holders and take account of land tenure, access rights, regulatory systems, traditional knowledge, and customary law; c) Wild living resources have many cultural, ethical, ecological, and economic values, which can provide incentives for conservation. Where an economic value can be attached to a wild living resource, perverse incentives removed, and costs and benefits internalised, favourable conditions can be created for investment in the conservation and the sustainable use of the resource, thus reducing the risk of resource degradation, depletion, and habitat conversion; d) Levels and fluctuations of demand for wild living resources are affected by a complex array of social, demographic, and economic factors, and are likely to increase in coming years. Thus attention to both demand and supply is necessary to promote sustainability of uses.

9. IUCN is committed to ensuring any uses of wild living resources are equitable and ecologically sustainable, and to this end it has established the Sustainable Use Initiative which incorporates regionally-structured Specialist Groups of the Species Survival Commission to: a) Identify, evaluate, and promote the principles of management that contribute to sustainability and enhanced efficiency in the use of wild living resources; and b) Regularly communicate their findings to members and the broader community.