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The Salzburg Statement for Transboundary Cooperation for Biodiversity and Peace

A CALL TO ACTION

Our planet's natural environment is free of borders. For millennia people benefited from free access to nature and its seemingly unlimited resources. Today, such resources are divided by lines on a map and increasingly scarce.

Threats to natural systems also know no borders. Failure to tackle degradation and plan for risks – including biodiversity loss, climate change, water-food-energy insecurity, droughts, floods, and epidemics – puts strain on communities, the environment, and economies. Ultimately this leads aggravates poverty, conflict, displacement, and migration.

Transboundary cooperation is essential to forge new solutions. Evidence indicates that joint democracy over a shared resource facilitates cooperation and peace, particularly when underpinned by economic and political linkages. Countries, institutions and citizens need to work more closely across borders to enhance human security and safeguard our environment. Multilateral agreements point the way but more needs to be done on the ground.

The **Parks for the Planet Forum**, inspired by *The Promise of Sydney* and the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress, is a collaborative platform for transformative leadership and action, launched by Salzburg Global Seminar and IUCN in 2015. Its second session addressed *Transboundary Cooperation for Biodiversity and Peace* (November 9 to 13, 2016) and was supported by the MAVA Foundation, Arcus Foundation, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), the Aga Khan Development Network and the Huffington Foundation.

Many transboundary areas around the world share major ecosystems, high levels of biodiversity, and a rich cultural, spiritual and historical heritage. Well-designed conservation initiatives have unique value as a mechanism to restore ecosystem function and integrity, increase economic opportunities, unite divided communities, and rebuild trust between nations and peoples.

In November 2016, leading experts from different sectors and regions gathered in Salzburg to assess the evidence and identify ways to expand strategic cross-border cooperation for transformative results. This is our challenge – to ourselves and to all who value the future of life on this planet.

Our vision is of a world where transboundary cooperation fosters trust among sovereign nations to overcome ideological, political, cultural and historical barriers, tackle conflict over natural resources, reduce migration pressures, and promote human wellbeing. We seek to build a global network of outstanding transboundary initiatives that demonstrate the power of shared approaches to advance conservation and development, strengthen resilience and combat climate change.

As participants and partners of the *Parks for the Planet Forum*, we commit to sustain momentum for transboundary cooperation for biodiversity, peace and sustainable livelihoods.

We have identified **15 Catalytic Actions** to elevate the role and impact of transboundary conservation at greater scale. We now seek to engage change-makers across society to take leadership on these Catalytic Actions, to build awareness of problems, solutions and actions, and to foster transparency and collaboration.

We believe that imaginative leadership and collaborative action across borders can make a powerful contribution to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

A full list of recommendations is included overleaf.

Catalytic Actions

Transboundary conservation areas are incubators for regional economic integration and political cooperation. The following practices and policies, consistent with the rule of law, can positively influence regional contexts and expand collaboration.

SHARE AND COMMUNICATE

- Compile and disseminate evidence demonstrating the multiple benefits of transboundary conservation and governance: to conserve biodiversity; promote sustainable livelihoods; transform conflict and mitigate crime; combat environmental degradation and climate change; and reduce negative impacts of human displacement.
- Communicate these benefits across sectors to decision-makers and the general public, using diverse communication channels and innovative educational approaches.
- Enhance learning networks to better understand when, how and why transboundary conservation works best; capture solutions accessible to decision makers and practitioners e.g. through www.panorama.solutions and other communities of practice.

TRANSCEND BARRIERS, FEARS AND DOUBTS

- Address fears and mistrust linked to asymmetries in power and other factors of division, using transboundary landscape approaches to build social justice, broad-based economic development, and ecological stewardship and to incubate an ethic of engagement across sovereign borders.
- Listen and learn from communities to understand shared cultural values and address problems in mutually beneficial ways.
- Confront and help solve hard issues of cross-border illegal trade and insecurity: constructive engagement can achieve more than building fences.
- Streamline and harmonize regulations and bureaucratic processes that block cooperation.
- Link transboundary initiatives on a regional and global level to enhance spatial and sectoral connectivity.

SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE AT SCALE

- Recognize that transboundary linkages need to go hand-in-hand with better collaboration between ministries within countries.
- Incorporate transboundary conservation into existing regional economic integration and development programs.
- Promote private sector investments and social enterprise in transboundary conservation areas to create jobs in the green economy and tourism.
- Create new and expand existing transboundary conservation areas in accordance with global environment and development priorities.
- Expand incentives up- and downstream to sustain landscape/ecosystem services and support species conservation and ecological restoration.
- Engage humanitarian and security stakeholders in transboundary conservation strategies to prevent or resolve conflict, control crimes related to biological resource degradation, and alleviate migration pressures.
- Connect transboundary conservation initiatives to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 as viable mechanisms to achieve key targets.

Taking The Lead For Catalytic Action

Leadership can come from across society and at different scales. We call on the following groups to help accelerate the Catalytic Actions:

CHAMPIONS

- Identify ‘superconnectors’ as champions to make a compelling case to decision-makers and the public for transboundary conservation that addresses deep issues across borders.
- Support champions to link transboundary conservation to organizations and regional networks that promote peace and conflict resolution, combat illegal trade, reduce human displacement and enhance sustainable livelihoods.

WOMEN & YOUTH

- Unleash the power of women to become transboundary champions, in recognition of their leadership skills, convening power, and stewardship of cultural legacies that respect nature.
- Encourage youth leaders to harness their energy and enthusiasm to engage new audiences in transboundary conservation.
- Enable women and young people in border areas to take their own steps towards full participation in public discourse, research and civic action, and to mobilize support and involvement of the communities in which they live.
- Open up socio-economic choices to make it possible for young people to remain in their home landscapes and contribute to regional conservation, development and innovation.

GOVERNMENTS

- Urge far-sighted government leaders to link transboundary conservation to political priorities such as economic development, job creation, and human security.
- Call for regional and global trade instruments and negotiations to create enabling policy frameworks for transboundary economic cooperation and sustainable value chains.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS

- Help regional institutions to embed transboundary conservation in their development priorities, implement and develop regional action plans, and catalyze investment in key activity areas.
- Promote the adoption and implementation of transboundary cooperation protocols to regional agreements to encourage bilateral and multilateral programs in preference to unilateral efforts.
- Work with national and local government representatives to achieve transboundary cooperation objectives.
- Link regional and global resources for data collection and analysis, learning, and knowledge sharing.

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Create and expand projects to stimulate socially and ecologically sustainable investment and entrepreneurship in transboundary conservation areas.
- Promote fair and equitable partnerships between the public sector, private sector and communities to develop and implement transboundary conservation and development programs.



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The **Parks for the Planet Forum** is a collaborative platform convened by Salzburg Global Seminar to position nature at the heart of human health and wellbeing, security and prosperity. Embedded in the IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme, the Forum advances action, investment and leadership to implement **The Promise of Sydney** and the Sustainable Development Goals. It combines high-level meetings on selected topics with an evolving multi-year work program that connects pioneering approaches across sectors and scales. Key topics addressed include:

- 2015: Nature, Health and a New Urban Generation (www.salzburgglobal.org/go/557)
- 2016: Transboundary Cooperation for Biodiversity and Peace (www.salzburgglobal.org/go/571)
- 2017: The Child in the City: Health, Parks and Play (www.salzburgglobal.org/go/574).

The Promise of Sydney is a ten-year road map adopted by 6000 participants from 160 countries at the IUCN World Parks Congress 2014. Affirming that “*nature is the ultimate foundation of life, our economy and our aspirations, and underpins our human existence, cultural identity, health and prosperity,*” it positions protected and conserved areas, including transboundary protected areas, as critical investments for planetary resilience and human well-being.

The **Promise** is implemented through twelve innovative approaches to transformative change, supported by open-access Solutions and Promises from different stakeholders (http://worldparkscongress.org/about/promise_of_sydney.html). The 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress strengthened international commitment to priority actions, including *Resolution 36 on Transboundary Cooperation and Protected Areas*.

Salzburg Global Seminar is an independent non-profit organization founded in 1947 to challenge present and future leaders to solve issues of global concern. Our vision is to shape a better world by forging breakthrough collaborations to bridge divides. We design multi-year programs to accelerate human, urban and conflict transformation, helping organizations, investors, philanthropists and change-makers achieve results at scale: www.SalzburgGlobal.org

IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature, founded in 1948, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges: www.iucn.org

The Salzburg Statement on Transboundary Cooperation

for Biodiversity and Peace will be accompanied by a full report from this session covering all discussions and key recommendations. More information is available online: www.SalzburgGlobal.org/go/571

The views expressed in this statement reflect consensus among participants and should not be taken to represent those of all participants or of any organization with which they are affiliated.

FOR MORE *info*.

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