Nature-based Solutions & PEACEBUILDING

1 NOVEMBER 2021 | 14.00 CET
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SPEAKERS

Hannah MOOSA
Forum Deputy Manager, IUCN
Moderator

Elaine HSIAO
Environment and Peace Theme Chair, IUCN
Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)

Carl BRUCH
Director International Programs, Environmental Law Institute

Alexis CAÑARI
Co-Founder of Hello World & Rapporteur for ENPax

Wim ZWIJNENBURG
Humanitarian Disarmament
Project Leader, PAX

Shanchita HAQUE
Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Geneva

Ulrika ÅKESSON
Lead Policy Specialist on Environment and Climate Change, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida)

Caroline SEAGLE
Deputy Chair, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) Theme on Business, Best Practice and Accountability (TBBPA)

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PEACEBUILDING

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• Setting the Scene | Hannah MOOSA, IUCN

Panel Discussion
• Environment and peace as cross-cutting themes for conservation, sustainable development and security | Elaine HSIAO, IUCN CEESP
• Adopting a conflict-sensitive approach to Nature-based Solutions | Carl BRUCH, Environmental Law Institute
• Youth Perspectives on Positive Peace: Outcomes of the IUCN Youth Summit | Alexis CAÑARI, Hello World & ENPax
• The Impact of Conflict on the Environment | Wim ZWIJNENBURG, PAX
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• A Donor Perspective on Environmental Peacebuilding: Challenges, Opportunities, Policy- and Decision-Making | Ulrika ÅKESSON, Sida
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Q&A

Concluding Remarks
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IUCN defines NbS as:

*Actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural and modified ecosystems in ways that address societal challenges (e.g. climate change, food and water security, natural disasters) effectively and adaptively, to provide both human well-being and biodiversity benefits.*
IUCN Global Standard for NbS™
Nature, biodiversity, peace and conflict

- Interconnections between nature, conflict and the environment

- Environmental peacebuilding

- What scope for nature-based solutions in peacebuilding efforts?
NATURE CONSERVATION / PEACE / CONFLICT AT IUCN

- IUCN Natural Resource Governance Framework
- Protected and conserved areas
- Gender-based violence and the environment
- Climate Diplomacy
- IUCN BRIDGE (Building River Dialogue and Governance) Project
- Eco-DRR
- Environmental Defenders
- Species
- Refugees and the environment
IUCN reports & collaborations on nature conservation, peace & conflict

- IUCN Flagship Report on *Conflict and Conservation* (April 2021)

- *Voices for Peace and Conservation* – Podcast (CI, PeaceNexus, WWF Germany, IUCN)

- Forthcoming Report on *Migration, Conflict and Environmental Change* (IUCN CEESP Theme on Environment and Peace)

- White Paper on the *Future of Environmental Peacebuilding* (GPP, PeaceNexus, EnPAX, IUCN collaborative project)

- IUCN – PAX collaboration on *NbS and Armed Conflict* (in the run up to UNEA 5.2)
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Elaine HSIAO

Environment and Peace Theme Chairs, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)
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Concluding Remarks
## GEF Project Innovations to Manage Risks Associated with Conflict and Fragility

### Risk Management

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### Acknowledgment

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Concluding Remarks
Outcomes from the IUCN Global Youth Summit

“Healing the human-nature relationship: Youth perspectives on positive peace”

Move from the anthropocentric approach towards a development with environmental ethics and ecocentrism. Recognition that humans and non-human beings are part of an interconnected ecosystem.

Clear understanding of the urgent need to restore meaningful relationship between human and non-human beings for reaching positive peace.

The human dominant relationship with nature has more than reached its limits: the resulting ecological and environmental damage is now the greatest threat to global security.

Negative Peace
Absence of direct violence

Positive Peace
Deconstructing structures, situations and relationships that cause harmful conflict

Presence of equity, justice and sustainability

Creation of resilience to face current and future challenges.
Key priorities

Transformative and Inclusive Education
- Mainstream education fails in incorporating environmental and ecological citizenship
- Digital and Linguistic barriers (English is not the language of conservation)

Green Jobs Opportunities
- Skills and professional time to support conservation.
- Multidisciplinary is key.
- Lack of mentorship and funding (IUCN Academy)
- Entrepreneurship & alternative business models.

Acceptance of the rights of others
- Rights of nature: Recognizing that human and non-human beings equally deserve rights and freedom
- Rights of indigenous communities and ethnic minorities (few legal protection)
  A lack of respect for other cosmovision is part of this oppression.

Access to information
- Easily access and exchange information, free from restrictions, censorship or repercussion-reporting on climate crises and crimes against environment.

Equitable distribution of resources and opportunities
- Poor regulation of the extractives and industrial sectors leads to ecological abuses and a lack of equitable benefit-sharing with local communities.
- Smallholder farmers play a crucial role in food security but agricultural poverty arises (intergenerational renewal)
- Youth, indigenous people and other minority groups in decision making spaces
- Understand the meaning of local economies
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Concluding Remarks
How to address environmental damage in relation to armed conflicts and what are avenues for Action for Nature?

• Understanding the challenges through improving data collection and monitoring to improve environmental impact assessments.
• Conflicts have unique environmental features that need tailor made solutions
• Opportunities and limitations on the spectrum of actions for nature
• Finding solution in practice and in policies
Existing examples and ideas of actions for Nature

- In **Iraq**, UNEP is using naturally occurring soil bacteria to decontaminate land from oil spills caused by the conflict.
- In Bangladesh, the government in collaboration with UN agencies are setting up reforestation projects in areas with large refugee camps.
- In Colombia, NbS are used through collaborative tools and methods are implemented in periphery areas, empowering local communities demanding spatial justice.
- In Sudan, water management through NbS are used to improve access to water sources.
- Inclusion of nature-based thinking in green humanitarian response and recovery to deal with, e.g. camp settings, waste managements etc.
- There are opportunities to include Green Infrastructure in rebuilding back better and greener of urban areas affected by armed conflict.
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Ulrika ÅKESSON
Lead Policy Specialist on Environment and Climate Change,
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
Geneva Nature-based Solutions Dialogues - NbS and Peacebuilding

Ulrika Åkesson, Lead Policy Specialist Environment and Climate Change
Environmental peacebuilding (incl NbS) – Sida´s view

- **Perspectives** – environment, conflict sensitivity, the human rights-based approach, gender equality and the perspectives of people living in poverty

- **People living in poverty** - agents, rights holders

- **Environmental strategies and actions** need to take conflict sensitivity seriously

- **Peace processes and agreements** need to integrate environment concerns
Options for future action

- **Stockholm+50** – a possibility
- **Early warning** signals of climate change as risk multiplier
- **Locally led** conflict-sensitive action for environment and climate action
- **Broad involvement of women and men** who are most affected
- **Agroforestry** - NbS with potential
Example of Sida’s support: environment, resource management and conflict

Awareness of the rising conflict risks related to access and control over water resources and protection of water ecosystems globally.
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Caroline SEAGLE
Deputy Chair, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) Theme on Business, Best Practice and Accountability (TBBPA)
Nature-Based Solutions and Peace-Building: Voices and Stories of Environmental Defenders

Caroline Seagle, IUCN-CEESP – email: caroline.seagle@mail.mcgill.ca
Publication of Policy Matters 22 – three-volume special issue on environmental defenders

• 331 human rights and environmental defenders were killed in 2020, the vast majority of whom were dependent on land, forests and sustainable livelihoods (Front Line Defenders, 2020).

• The greatest threat comes from extractive industries (mining), logging, palm oil plantations, large-scale agricultural expansion, as well as conservation area enclosures and enforcement.

• The stories and voices of environmental defenders across the globe: Special issue of Policy Matters

• Links to publication (open-access): https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-environmental-economic-and-social-policy/resources/policy-matters
• **Volume I, Defenders and the Many Faces of Repression**

Providing an overview of the struggles, stories, threats, geographic contexts, and causes of violence against defenders worldwide, this volume provides the central context of why and how environmental defenders need protection. It begins with an introduction by Ameyali Ramos and Philippe Le Billon.

Volume I's cover features Berta Cáceres, who was co-founder of the Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH) and winner of the 2015 Goldman Environmental Prize, led the Lenca movement to stop the construction of the Agua Zarca Dam on the Galcarque River. In 2016, the Indigenous leader and nature defender was assassinated in her home on orders of the dam company. In 2021, Roberto Castillo - the former head of the internationally funded dam company Desarrollos Energéticos, or Desa, was found guilty of being co-collaborator in ordering her murder. (Photo caption text by Manuela Picq; Photo ©UN Environment.)
Volume II - Grassroots in Action  

With guest contributor, Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim, environmental defender and Coordinator of the Association of Peul Indigenous Women and Peoples of Chad (AFPAT), this volume asks the global community to take a stand to recognize Indigenous wisdom and action across the globe. It asks the world to take into consideration local communities actions to protect the environment, describing initiatives taken by defenders to protect the environment and themselves from eviction, landlessness, mining, conservation, and other forms of oppression. It highlights how some conservation policies and practices are themselves a source of persecution of local and environmental land defenders.

Volume II's cover features Mama Fikile Ntshangase, who was an environmental activist and vice-chair of a subcommittee of the Mfolozi Community Environmental Justice Organization, a community-based organisation that has legally challenged a planned expansion of the Somkhele mine coal mine owned by Tendele Coal Mining Ltd. She was shot dead in her house on the evening of Thursday, October 22, in her home west of Mtubatuba in KwaZulu-Natal province in South Africa./© Rob Symons. Background photo: Tendele Mine coal washing facility/© Rob Symons.
Volume III - Conservation and the need for greater protection

With guest contributor Manuela L. Picq, rights defender and Professor of International Relations at Universidad San Francisco de Quito (Ecuador) and Amherst College (USA), this volume presents concrete and powerful calls to action for the conservation community itself, recognizing that conservation can cause more harm than good if it does not take a stand to protect the human rights of land defenders worldwide. Picq and authors in the volume call on the conservation community to embed and uphold human rights in all conservation endeavors to better support and integrate conciliatory solutions based on principles of equity, justice, and co-existence.

Volume III's cover features Porlajee “Billy” Rakchongcharoen, who was an Indigenous activist from Thailand, leading a lawsuit against the Kaengkrachan National Park due to the forcible eviction and burning of more than 100 houses belonging to Karen Indigenous peoples. These evictions resulted from the designation of the forest as a protected area by the Thai government in 1979, forcing the displacement of Indigenous villages that lived there for generations. Billy disappeared in 2014, after being arrested by park authorities, and his body was found in an oil barrel in 2019 (Human Rights Watch, 2019).
Voices of defenders: Calls to Action: (1) – Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim

• Excerpt from the special issue of the CEESP publication Policy Matters, focusing on the stories and voices of environmental defenders. Article by Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim *

• A call to action:

• 1. The criminalisation of environmental defenders must stop immediately. No one should be killed, assaulted, driven from the land of their ancestors, or simply marginalised for standing up for our most precious common good: life itself.

• 2. We need dedicated support, resources, intelligence and funding. Right now, for us, the defenders of the environment, resistance has but one name: action. To do this, we need to be given the means to act.

• 3. Finally, climate policies and actions need to be more participatory, from design to implementation, which means improving Indigenous participation in decision-making.
Voices of defenders - Calls to Action (2): Manuela Picq

• Manuela Picq: “Environmental defenders as first guardians of the world’s biodiversity”

• Available at: https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-environmental-economic-and-social-policy/resources/policy-matters

• A Call to Action: First, climate action must include human rights. In 2021, the representative of the International Indigenous Peoples Forum on Climate Change (IIPFCC) asked the United Nations to fully integrate the rights of Indigenous peoples in climate action, in preparation for the COP 26. Inclusion of human rights in climate change initiatives must be a top priority in climate negotiations and climate action, including REDD and REDD+ initiatives.

• Second, international laws must be enforced so as to require, at a minimum, the free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC) of local communities for any land project (extraction or conservation project) on Indigenous and local population’s territories, whether formal land title is held or not. Consent must be given, by Indigenous and local peoples, for mining and other mega-projects, as well as conservation projects.

• Third, we must learn to protect local communities’ ways of life and their situated relationships with the environments in which they live, learning from their example, so that they can continue to protect biodiversity through their own environmental management, knowledge transmission, and cultural values embedded in their languages and lifeways.

“Communities are putting their lives on the line because they have no choice. For them, defending nature is not just about taking an ecological stand; it is a matter of survival. If local communities lose the ecosystems upon which they depend, they not only lose their land but also their entire way of life.” – Manuela Picq
Grant me permission
by Rosa Chávez

Grant me permission, spirit of the path, 
gift me permission
to walk 
through this cement path 
they opened in your navel, 
through this highway of wind 
that cuts through the silence 
permission to you too, 
birds who pierce the eardrums of steel 
permission, stones 
permission, plants 
permission, animals resisting in the fog. 
Let me through the path 
let this anger in my disoribted eyes 
come out as sweet words, 
fine words, shaken, blown up. 
le me through 
so that my will won’t get lost 
let me cross the ravine, the hollow 
let me please come home 
before the volcanoes sing 
before the mountains’ speech 
splits into our mouths.

The urgency of addressing gender-based violence against women environmental human rights defenders

Melissa Luna, Laura Sabater, Itzá Castañeda

Kichwa Kichwa communities traverse the Andean plateaus of Kimsakocha. Plateaus are home to endemic species and water sources nurturing rivers and 
lakes; yet, they are prey to extractive industries 
seeking precious metals for global markets. Indigenous 
and local communities have actively defended Kimsakocha for over two decades. Yet, the government 
of Ecuador has imposed national and international laws on 
consultations and consent to promote mining in fragile 
ecosystems, in alliance with global corporations.

Photos: MARGUEL L. PICO

Eldorado is a Brazilian street artist and activist whose work makes people stop and think about the issues swirling around them everyday. "I use these ads to get people to reflect on the corrupted political system. On all the false promises, and all the awful waste", he explains. This art piece was displayed in Art of Resistance Collective show in Amsterdam in 2019.
Additional thoughts – Nature-Based Solutions and environmental defenders

- Value and accountability in NBS (context of Natural Capital, offsets, green bonds) – must ensure that local and Indigenous communities’ values of nature and land are not sideswept.

- FPIC must not be misused; communities should have the right to say “no” within context of FPIC (encourage rights-based approaches/protectors in NBS).

- As we all work together as an IUCN community to promote conservation of nature and diverse valuations of biodiversity, and in order to further protect Indigenous and environmental defenders' rights, we must pay attention to power relationships within the conservation world.

- While different stakeholders (defenders, conservationists, researchers, practitioners, private sector) might use the same language of "Nature-Based Solutions," they might mean different things. Some Indigenous peoples might think of themselves as the “Nature-based Solution.” Meaningful and inclusive dialogues and partnerships with IPLCs must occur if the rights of environmental defenders are to be recognized. Inclusion of local and Indigenous peoples occurs within the context of vast political, social and economic power differentials.

“It’s a generation that I dreamed of as a child, when we – my Indigenous brothers and sisters – were still too often alone in saying that our Mother Earth was sick. This is a generation that should have dreams, but for which we are now on the verge of leaving a nightmare. Yet it is a generation of hope that is dawning everywhere in Europe, North and South America, Africa, the Pacific, and Asia. It is a generation that can finally put an end to this war on nature” – Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim
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• Setting the Scene | Hannah MOOSA, IUCN

Panel Discussion
• Environment and peace as cross-cutting themes for conservation, sustainable development and security | Elaine HSIAO, IUCN CEESP
• Adopting a conflict-sensitive approach to Nature-based Solutions | Carl BRUCH, Environmental Law Institute
• Youth Perspectives on Positive Peace: Outcomes of the IUCN Youth Summit | Alexis CAÑARI, Hello World & ENPax
• The Impact of Conflict on the Environment | Wim ZWIJNENBURG, PAX
• Experience and Efforts for Nature-based Solutions for the Purpose of Peacebuilding | Shanchita HAQUE, Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of Bangladesh in Geneva
• A Donor Perspective on Environmental Peacebuilding: Challenges, Opportunities, Policy- and Decision-Making | Ulrika ÅKESSON, Sida
• The stories and voices of environmental defenders across the globe | Caroline SEAGLE, IUCN CEESP

Q&A

Concluding Remarks
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Moderator

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Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)

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Nature-based Solutions  
PEACEBUILDING

1 NOVEMBER 2021 | 14.00 CET
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THANK YOU!

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