



# Conservation Highlights

November 2014

Recent achievements and challenges in  
WWF's work to protect biodiversity and reduce humanity's footprint in  
priority areas of the global conservation programme

The World Parks Congress is a once-a-decade meeting on the role of protected areas in protecting biodiversity and securing the safety of fragile habitats and ecosystems – many of crucial importance to people.

WWF's Protected area experts joined with 5,000 other experts to review the effectiveness of protected area networks, and the many threats facing them such as oil and gas exploitation, mining, infrastructure, and agriculture.

The world's protected areas represent a crucially important conservation action at a global scale that plays a key role in securing a viable natural world.

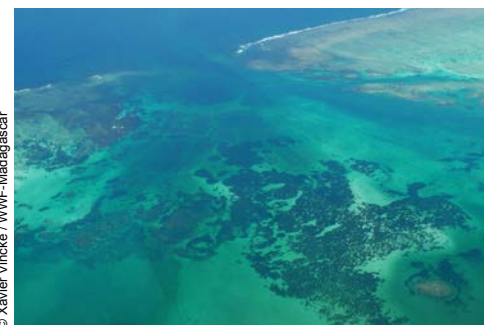
## WWF mobilises major new protected areas

A high level WWF event at the World Parks Congress in Sydney, Australia, profiled significant conservation achievement with the announcement of protected areas (PAs) achieved and committed, totaling over 140 million ha. The mobilization of more than US\$500 million for PA management was also announced. The event, held in Sydney's Aquarium, was attended by over 100 guests representing international organizations, foundations and donors plus conservation leaders from a dozen countries. WWF International Director General Marco Lambertini took the guests on a journey from the 2003 World Parks Congress in Durban South Africa, through to Sydney, reporting on protected area and funding pledges achieved over the past decade and new commitments.



## Madagascar takes up marine conservation leadership

Madagascar President Hery Rajaonarimampianina announced at the WWF event that the Durban Vision to triple Madagascar's protected area coverage has been more than achieved, and a US\$50 million conservation fund created. "We are placing biodiversity and natural resources at the heart of our new national development plan," he said during the WWF event, adding a commitment to effectively tackle poverty while preserving and sustainably using the country's natural capital. The President also committed to greatly increase the country's marine protected area cover, support the Northern Mozambique Channel initiative, and announced creation of the largest locally-managed marine area (LMMA) in the western Indian Ocean, the 500,000ha Barren Islands LMMA.



## Boost for locally-managed marine areas

The Fiji Government also announced major marine commitments, including forthcoming designation of the Great Sea Reef – the world's third longest barrier reef – as a Ramsar site. This will take the area of Fiji's seas under conservation management to 30 per cent. The locally-managed marine area (LMMA) concept originated in Fiji, and was taken to Madagascar and other western Indian Ocean islands, where it has become popular with fishing communities as it gives them greater control over local marine resources, enabling them to make decisions about how best to maximize the benefits provided by their natural resources. Marine protected areas can guard stocks from collapse by giving fish a safe place to spawn and grow, as well as prevent unsustainable take levels and habitat degradation.



## Coral Triangle to gain huge new protected area

The State Government of Sabah committed to gazette the new 1-million ha Tun Mustapha Park off the north coast of Borneo by 2015. Over 80,000 coastal and island residents of Sabah rely on fishing for their livelihoods. The proposed new protected area is a globally significant conservation priority area at the apex of the famed Coral Triangle – the 6-million km<sup>2</sup> ocean area shared by six countries, Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste, and supporting 130 million people. The area supports extensive coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangrove forests, that need protection from overfishing, destructive fishing practices, and pollution.



## Bhutan announces world's highest protected area cover

The Royal Government of Bhutan announced that in the decade since the 2003 World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa, the protected area cover had been doubled to over 50 per cent, the highest in the world. Director General Chencho Norbu of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests, also launched a US\$50 million conservation fund to support the effective management of the PA system. The fund is modelled on the ARPA for Life US\$215 million fund for the Brazilian Amazon. It was also noted that the country is currently running a census of populations of tigers and snow leopards, and is assembling a baseline forest inventory to assist with management.



## Amazon gains greater protection

In a landmark terrestrial announcement, the Government of Peru joined WWF and donor partners in a new alliance to secure long-term funding totalling US\$150 million for the country's 76 Amazon protected areas, and ensure the inclusion of indigenous communities in natural area management. The agreement will mobilise funding for the PA network which currently totals 20-million hectares, covering 16 per cent of Peru.

Brazil announced that the Amazon Region Protected Area (ARPA) programme now aims to achieve 60 million ha – or 15 per cent of the Brazilian Amazon – under protected area cover, the mobilizing of a US\$215 million conservation fund for managing these areas, and a commitment to triple marine protected area cover.



WWF has run many campaigns over the course of its 53 years to focus attention on key issues and seek solutions. WWF has now launched a series of global campaigns to deal with critical and urgent environmental problems and threats. The first two campaigns targeted the illegal wildlife trade, and a campaign to shift investments away from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources. There is an emergency campaign to address the threat of oil drilling in Africa's prized Virunga National Park, and a new oceans campaign to focus on the value of marine protected areas for people.

## WWF campaign supports shift away from fossil fuels

WWF's campaign to promote clean, renewable energy – Seize Your Power – has contributed to major investment shifts away from fossil fuels such as coal oil and gas. Working with many other organizations and partners, the campaign set out to shift US\$40 billion in investments away from fossil fuels into the development of clean, renewable energy sources: Such a shift of investments is urgent and crucial to move the world towards climate-safe energy sources. The result is an unprecedented wave of commitments from international development finance organizations – ranging from multilateral banks, governments, pension funds and governments – to move away from coal-based energy projects, given their disastrous impacts on health and climate.



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## Major banks and governments back away from coal

Three of the world's largest multilateral development banks have announced plans to limit their investments in coal. The World Bank, European Investment Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development – all major investors in coal-based energy systems – have decided to phase out funding of coal-based power stations. WWF applauded these moves, but called on the banks to implement these decisions urgently and effectively, and to preferentially reinvest in clean, renewable energy.

Several governments including Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, UK and US also announced plans to shift investments away from coal-based energy. And a major Swedish pension fund has decided to decarbonise investments.



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## Opposition increasing to major fossil fuel projects

Three major fossil fuel projects were halted, and several others faced increasing public opposition, as the campaign to shift the world away from fossil fuels to renewable energy grows in strength. WWF's *Seize Your Power* campaign reported that a coal plant in Italy, a Norwegian company's tarsands project in Canada and offshore oil exploration in environmentally-sensitive coastal areas in Norway have all been halted. And there is growing public opposition to fossil projects elsewhere, including a proposed crude oil pipeline in Canada's iconic Great Bear Rainforest, oil exploration in Spain's Canary Islands, and two coal plant developments proposed in Palawan in the Philippines, and Greece.




© Jiri Rezak / WWF-UK



## UN body seeks end to oil, gas and mining in Virunga

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been urged by a top body to cancel all oil exploitation permits within the Virunga National Park. UNESCO, the UN body which recognises World Heritage Sites, agreed that “oil, gas and mineral exploration and exploitation are not compatible with World Heritage status.” Announced in June, this decision came days after Soco International PLC, the only oil company exploring in Virunga, pledged to conclude its commercial operations there and to remain out of all other World Heritage Sites. WWF is running an emergency campaign to save Virunga, Africa’s oldest national park, from oil drilling and possible de-gazettement.





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## Need for stronger protection of Great Barrier Reef

During the World Parks Congress in Sydney in November, the Australian Government announced a proposed ban on dumping of dredge spoil in the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. Welcoming this proposed ban, WWF cautions that the ban should cover the entire GBR World Heritage Area, as the dumped spoil can drift and smother sensitive coral and seagrass beds. Since 2010, more than 80 per cent of dumping has occurred outside the Marine Park but inside the World Heritage Area. WWF is calling for a ban on industrial dumping and minimal dredging in the Park, reduction of farm-based pollution, and protection of the catchment of the reef from further bush clearance, dam-building and degradation.





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## US President supports Great Barrier Reef protection

While visiting Australia to attend the G20 summit of leaders of the world’s major economies, US President Barack Obama came out in favour of protecting the Great Barrier Reef in a speech at Australia’s University of Queensland: “A climate that increases in temperature will mean more extreme and frequent storms, more flooding, rising seas that submerge Pacific islands. Here in Australia, it means longer droughts, more wildfires. The incredible natural glory of the Great Barrier Reef is threatened. (...) I have not had (opportunity) to go to the Great Barrier Reef and I want to come back – and I want my daughters to be able to come back, and I want them to be able to bring their daughters or sons to visit. And I want that there 50 years from now.”



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WWF's biodiversity meta-goal is to ensure the integrity of the most outstanding natural places on Earth. This includes the protection of biodiversity in high conservation priority areas, and restoring populations of those species with the highest ecological, economic and cultural value.

## WWF calls for action to stop biodiversity loss

At a global biodiversity conference in October, the more than 170 governments present unanimously called for biodiversity to be integrated into the new sustainable development goals being discussed by the UN. WWF staff were closely involved during the 12th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Pyeongchang, South Korea. The Convention urged all Parties to review their national biodiversity strategies, recognise the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in managing conservation, and mobilize domestic finances to fund national action plans. WWF said nations must now move quickly to prevent further loss of biodiversity, with WWF's recent Living Planet Report confirming that species populations worldwide have declined 52 per cent since 1970.



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## Whales gain greater protection

An international meeting has agreed stricter measures to govern so-called 'scientific whaling' and to address other serious threats facing whales. The International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting in September in Croatia agreed to review whale hunts taking place in the name of scientific research using criteria recently set down by the International Court of Justice. Opposition came from whaling nations including Japan, which justifies whale hunts using the 'scientific research' loophole and has said it would continue whaling. WWF called on both Japan and Iceland to observe IWC rules and the commercial whaling moratorium. WWF also welcomed an expansion of IWC powers to seek increased protection of cetaceans from dangers of climate change, pollution, fishing gear and collision with ships.




© naturepl.com/Mark Brownlow/WWF



## Conservation listing protects shark and ray species

Seven species of shark and ray are now protected under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), a move that will reduce threats to their survival. As from September measures including trade regulation and prevention of unsustainable fishing came into effect to achieve the international cooperation and reduced consumption needed to safeguard these species. Sharks and rays are vital to healthy ocean ecosystems, yet populations are declining rapidly, with losses of 90 per cent in some areas. *Sharks: Restoring the Balance*, an initiative of WWF and wildlife trade monitoring network TRAFFIC, promotes responsible fishing and improved trade regulation, and campaigns to reduce demand for products such as shark fin.



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## WWF helps track Africa's longest wildlife migration

The longest known terrestrial migration of wildlife in Africa – where several thousand zebra make a yearly round-trip migration of 500 km – has been identified within a new protected area complex at the heart of southern Africa. A study by WWF with the Namibia and Botswana wildlife authorities, and Elephants Without Borders, tracked the event in the Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA). At a time when large-scale migrations are under threat, the discovery supports the need for transborder conservation areas that eliminate building of barriers, allowing wildlife to move freely. Created only recently, KAZA – the world's largest multi-country conservation area – spans across much of five countries: Botswana, Namibia, Angola, Zambia and Zimbabwe.



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## WWF seals Madagascar environmental protection deal

WWF has signed a three-year environmental protection deal with Madagascar National Parks (MNP) to protect more than 17 million hectares of land and marine areas by promoting better farming practices as well as combating deforestation. The partnership will enable WWF and MNP to jointly look for funding, and design programmes for conservation and biodiversity protection which will cover about 29 per cent of Madagascar's total surface area. The WWF Country Director and CEO of MNP each noted that the partnership will promote conservation of biodiversity and development of sustainable solutions that benefit local populations as well as preservation of the 250,000 plant and animal species in Madagascar – over 80 per cent of which are found only on this highly biodiverse island.



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## Gabon announces marine conservation commitment

Gabon announced at the World Parks Congress in Sydney in November a commitment to create a network of marine parks covering 23 per cent of Gabon's territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), within which no commercial fishing will be allowed. This will include a 2,7 million ha extension of Mayumba National Park, extending out to the limit of the EEZ. The remainder of the EEZ will be divided into community and commercial fishing zones, and oil exclusion zones. Gabon has already eliminated illegal fishing in its coastal waters. On land, Gabon has earlier established 13 national parks covering 11 per cent of the country, including protection for the world's largest leatherback turtle nesting colony. WWF has worked with governments and the NGO WCS on these achievements.





## Tiger range states agree full wild tiger count by 2016

Tiger range state governments have agreed to run comprehensive tiger censuses by 2016 to determine both accurate wild tiger numbers, and whether heightened conservation efforts are working. Meeting in Dhaka in September, tiger experts also agreed on better collaboration, anti-poaching and monitoring to help achieve the goal of doubling tiger numbers by 2022. India, Nepal and Russia run regular censuses, and numbers will soon be determined by Bangladesh, Bhutan and China, but Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam have no accurate tiger numbers. WWF was a driving force behind the Tiger Summit in St Petersburg, Russia in 2010 where range state governments committed to double tiger numbers from the estimated 3,200.

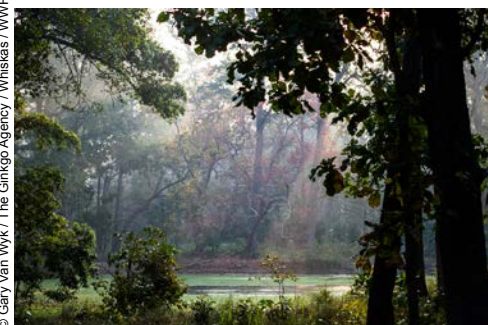


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## Tiger conservation successes in the Terai Arc

India and Nepal have declared a new 72,700 ha tiger reserve in the Pilibhit area in the Himalayan foothills in Uttar Pradesh, which will link forests in the two countries. Situated in the shared Terai Arc landscape, the new reserve is home to a rich variety of wildlife, including leopard and several deer species. WWF's education and capacity-building in the area have supported tiger conservation, resulting in increased tiger numbers.

And the two governments released first-ever figures for transboundary tiger populations in the shared Terai Arc landscape, counting 239 tigers, of which 145 were adult females.



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## Coral Triangle marine protected area plan launched

An action plan to guide marine protected area (MPA) development in the Coral Triangle was launched in May at the World Coral Reef Conference. Effectively managed MPAs can prevent overfishing, help rebuild fish stocks, and support livelihoods, and the new plan recognises a first set of MPAs, including the proposed Tun Mustapha Park, a global conservation priority area off the coast of Sabah in Borneo. And a ministerial meeting of the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) in June agreed to introduce ecosystem-based fisheries management and establish a permanent Secretariat for the CTI.



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## Saving the Pacific's marine and cultural heritage

Concerned by the sharp decline in shark and ray populations - almost a quarter of these iconic species are threatened with extinction - a new WWF initiative in the Pacific aims to help these species recover and continue to play a critical ecological, economic and cultural role. Across the Pacific, legends portray sharks and rays as gods and protectors. The joint programme with TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring organization, was launched in September at the UN Small Island Developing States meeting in Samoa. By promoting good fishing practices and shark-based eco-tourism the initiative aims to help protect fragile marine ecosystems, including sharks and rays, and the islands' unique cultural heritage.



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## WWF calls for action against Thailand's ivory trade

WWF is calling for international action against countries such as Thailand that fail to act on their commitments to counter the illegal wildlife trade. WWF was responding to a report released in July by TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, which shows availability of ivory items for sale in Bangkok, Thailand, has tripled in the past 18 months. The report 'Polishing off the ivory: surveys of Thailand's ivory market' found an increase in both the number of locations selling ivory, and the quantity being sold, despite a pledge in 2013 by the government to end the domestic ivory trade.



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## Local communities involved in snow leopard protection

In Bhutan, WWF is helping convene traditional yak herders in support of snow leopard conservation. A 30-person Snow Leopard Conservation Community represents climate-smart leaders who will determine conservation based on their experience and climate change impacts, support eco-tourism and adapt management of their livestock to avoid human-wildlife conflict. This is part of the National Snow Leopard and Ecosystem Protection Programme, which works with local communities to reduce human-wildlife conflict, manage habitat and prey species, and strengthen the capacity of local institutions to manage this species and its environment.



## Europe sees return of large carnivores

In a major conservation success across the continent, European lynx, wolves and brown bears are increasing in numbers and returning to areas of western Europe from which they have long been absent. Now a new European Commission conservation initiative “Coexistence between People and Large Carnivores” has been launched with WWF and other partner organizations to help secure these species by promoting a dialogue among stakeholders to avoid human-wildlife conflict. WWF Director Tony Long said EU instruments such as the Habitats Directive have played a crucial part in this success, supported by WWF for over a decade. But such success brings new challenges: how to encourage coexistence between humans, livestock and large carnivores.

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## European wolves regain lost territory

The European wolf population is growing with at least 12,500 individuals now spread across 28 countries of Europe, according to figures released by the European Commission. The two largest populations, each numbering over 3,000 individuals, are in the Carpathian Mountains and the Balkan countries. The Scandinavian population has doubled to 300 in the last ten years. Germany and Poland have seen an important increase, from 19 wolves to 150 individuals in the last decade. Great efforts are made to encourage acceptance of the return of large predators to their former range as they play an important role in the environment. In many countries farmers losing livestock such as sheep to wolf attacks are compensated, and traditional methods reintroduced to deter wolves such as guard dogs.

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## Brown bears and wolverines also increasing

The European brown bear population has increased by 7 per cent in seven years, from 15,800 individuals in 2005 to 17,000 in 2012. The Scandinavian population increased from 2,600 to 3,400 individuals – in 1930 there were only 130 bears in Scandinavia. In the Cantabrian Mountains of Spain the population doubled in the last decade to 200 individuals.

The wolverine has doubled its population in the last seven years from 675 individuals in 2005 to 1,250 in 2012, with significant increases in Sweden and Finland.

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## European lynx healthy but Iberian lynx faces extinction

The population of Eurasian lynx has increased, but the Iberian lynx is critically endangered. The Eurasian lynx population in the EU has grown from 8,000 individuals in 2001 to over 9000 in 2012. The Karelian lynx population has tripled from 870 to 2,500 individuals and the Jura lynx population has grown from 80 to 100.

But the Iberian lynx – half the weight of the Eurasian species – is one of the world's most endangered cat species: as few as 250 individuals survive in two breeding groups in southern Spain, one being the WWF priority Coto Doñana wetland. Threats facing this species range from reduction of its rabbit prey and being caught in rabbit traps, to illegal hunting and being killed by cars while crossing the road.


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## Bison are back in Southern Romania

After 200 years wild bison have returned to Romania. A partnership between WWF and Rewilding Europe brought 20 bison to the Southern Carpathians, with more to come. The bison became extinct in the wild in the early 20th century due to hunting and habitat loss. Increasing the numbers of European bison is important for the survival of the species and biodiversity reasons: Bison are a keystone species in European ecosystems, with an important role for grazing and as prey for larger carnivores such as bears. They are also expected to be a regional tourism attraction, benefiting the local community. Working with local communities, forest services and tourism bodies, the aim is to build a herd of 500 bison in five populations in other areas across Europe by 2025.




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## Polar bear DNA isolated

A team of French scientists has for the first time isolated polar bear DNA from a track left in the snow. Assisted by a WWF team, the scientists were able to find not only the bear's DNA but also that of a seal it had just killed and a seagull that visited the kill site. This achievement will help polar bear conservation by enabling researchers to identify individual animals more easily, without requiring invasive and expensive techniques such as dart guns, and can be used in the future to track polar bear movements, their prey and their health – especially important as the Arctic suffers rapid climate change impacts.



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WWF's second meta-goal is to reduce humankind's Ecological Footprint so that we live within the renewable resource limits of our planet. This builds on strong foundations and targets humanity's carbon, commodity and water footprints which have the greatest impact on biodiversity.

## Wildlife populations halved across the globe

Wildlife populations across the globe have declined by more than half in 40 years as measured in WWF's Living Planet Report 2014, which also showed how these trends can be reversed. The evidence of rapid declines in wildlife populations of fish, birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles highlights the need for sustainable solutions to heal the planet, according to the report. Released in September, this 10th edition of the report tracks over 10,000 vertebrate species populations from 1970 to 2010, and shows freshwater species have suffered the greatest decline, with a 76 per cent loss. The report showed effectively managed land-based protected areas can reduce the loss by more than half, and how communities are making better decisions to reduce footprint and biodiversity loss.



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## Madagascar can lead towards a sustainable future

Edited comments by *WWF-Madagascar Director, Nanie Ratsifandriamanana* – Wildlife and the planet's resources are rapidly declining; Madagascar is one of the most affected countries, but also one that could take the lead in reversing the trend. WWF's Living Planet Report, issued in September 2014, shows the poorest countries suffered the biggest losses in ecosystems and wildlife, with an average decline of 58 per cent of animal populations in the past 40 years. Since 2003 Madagascar has registered great achievements in the protection of its natural resources, increasing its national protected areas to 10 per cent of the country. With the government currently developing a National Development Plan, now it is time to scale up its commitment and lead the way towards a sustainable future.



© WWF-Madagascar


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## Immediate action needed on climate change

The latest report on climate change details dire effects of an unstable climate but also spells out a clear path to a clean, sustainable future. The report, released in November by the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), represents seven years of work by more than a thousand scientists and has been approved by all 195 member governments. WWF's Samantha Smith says the key findings are that the world can afford to fight climate change; it's not too late to stop catastrophic climate change; there is a limit to what we can emit – global emissions must go down quickly; adaptation is important but must be backed up with emission reductions; and that if we fail to act on climate change we jeopardise efforts to reduce poverty, and achieve food and water security.




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## China and US kick off ambitious climate targets

The world's two biggest carbon emitters – China and the US – have set a powerful challenge to the governments of the world by announcing important emission reduction targets. Taking the world by surprise, this bilateral commitment by the two countries with the largest carbon budgets may help end the stand-off that doomed efforts to agree a global climate deal in Copenhagen in 2009. WWF's Climate Director Samantha Smith said that with a year to go the major climate negotiations in Paris, this is a good start, but climate science and the threat to human equity demand much more.




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## More rigorous fisheries standard boosts sustainability

A newly-revised and more rigorous Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) fisheries standard is a major boost for sustainable fisheries. The standard will apply from April 2015 and requires fisheries to reduce unintentional bycatch of non-target species and prevent shark finning, and bars companies with convictions for employing forced labour from gaining certification. The MSC label is considered the only credible standard for sustainably wild-caught seafood which guarantees fish come from a well-managed fishery with minimal impacts on marine habitats and threatened species. About 90 per cent of the oceans are already fished to or beyond capacity, but WWF believes that measures such as MSC can ensure that up to half the global fish harvest can be sustainably sourced by 2020.



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## First MSC fishery certified in India

The recognition of India's first Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certified fishery marks a significant step forward for sustainable fisheries in the developing world. The Ashtamudi short neck clam fishery is the third fishery in Asia to receive MSC recognition, following introduction of mesh size restrictions for nets, minimum export size, and prohibition on mechanical clam fishing. The fishery supports the livelihoods of 3,000 fishers involved in collection, processing and trading the clams. The certification, which will help ensure this valuable resource is not overfished and the ecosystem protected, was achieved by the Indian and Kerala fisheries authorities and the activism of the fishing community, and is one of over 300 fisheries engaged with the MSC worldwide.



© WWF-India


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## Russian companies gain MSC certification

Two fishing companies responsible for 10 per cent of the Russian cod and haddock catch in the Barents Sea have been certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). The certifications of Atlantic cod and haddock – which are key components of the global white fish market – were achieved earlier this summer, a year after the two companies began assessing their fishery in accordance to MSC principles with assistance from WWF. Improvements proposed by WWF to reduce their fishing impact included innovative trawl doors that avoid touching the sea floor and damaging sensitive marine habitats. MSC certification helps to protect the world's oceans by promoting sustainable fishing practices, influencing consumer choices, and working with partners to improve the seafood market.



© Russian Arctic

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## Towards sustainability in Philippines tuna industry

A WWF sustainable tuna fishing programme in the Philippines – Asia's second largest tuna exporter – has engaged with over 5,000 fishers in 140 communities to spread best practise. Tuna is a critical resource feeding millions of people and sustaining national economies, but decades of intensive fishing have depleted fish stocks, threatening the future of the fishery and the livelihoods of local communities. WWF encourages artisanal fishing methods and handling practices that increase tuna quality and selling price, and reduce turtle deaths. By increasing the quality of tuna being sold, the fishers gain greater income for the fishing effort, without having to increase their catches. As a consumer, you can help too! Always buy responsibly caught tuna from well-managed sources.




© Greg Yan / WWF

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## International treaty to help protect water resources

A new international agreement supports the sustainable management of rivers crossing national borders. Vietnam became the 35th country to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses which came into effect in August. This agreement will help transform the way governments share fresh water and settle water-related disputes – especially important in the Greater Mekong region, where the Mekong River passes through six countries, including Vietnam, supporting 60 million people. The agreement will help manage water concerns within river basins to protect communities and wildlife when economic and population pressures are increasing demand for fresh water and climate change is impacting water quantity and quality.




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## Global support grows for a sustainable paper sector

WWF has joined with more than 120 civil society groups to promote a shared Global Paper Vision that offers practical solutions for paper buyers to source paper that is made sustainably and responsibly. Announced in June after a year of consultations by the Environmental Paper Network, this initiative stresses reduced consumption, recycling, and low-impact processes, responsible sourcing, emission reductions and measures to enhance the transparency and social responsibility of paper production and consumption. Policy makers, businesses, and consumers will be asked to endorse and adopt these actions. WWF works with industry to achieve sustainable solutions: for more examples related to paper, check the *Pulp and Paper programme*.





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## Mediterranean tuna recovery threatened

Early signs of a recovery in the overfished Mediterranean bluefin tuna fishery have encouraged fishing nations and the industry to push for large fishing quota increases, which WWF fears may imperil the hard fought for recovery. At the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) meeting in Genoa, Italy in November, fishing nations agreed a major increase of 20 per cent annually from 13,500 tonnes in 2014 to 19,296 tonnes in 2016. In addition, WWF says ICCAT has done little to regulate traceability to eliminate fish coming in from illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing which adds further pressure on the fragile recovery of this iconic fish.



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Perhaps WWF's greatest strength is its people – the staff and officers who together with our partners strive for a living planet. Similarly, there are many leaders and champions playing key roles outside WWF to achieve conservation success and sustainable development. By highlighting these champions for the environment, WWF recognises their contribution, while profiling conservation success and, above all, showing what can be achieved and inspiring others to take up the challenge to secure a living planet.

## Paraguayan conservation leader recognized

Carmen Maria Araceli Monges, a forest engineering student from Paraguay, received the WWF President's Award in recognition of her outstanding involvement with development of global youth conservation leadership. This Award which is WWF's top accolade to recognize outstanding leadership in young conservationists from around the world, was presented at WWF's Annual Conference in Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, in May. The award commends Carmen for her long-term volunteering and work with WWF and organizations such as UNEP Tunza, the Paraguayan Network for Sustainable Cities, and AIESEC. Yolanda Kakabadse, President of WWF International, described her work as "inspiring", and said "I salute her achievements and the impact she is having – especially at just 20 years old."



© WWF-Paraguay



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## TEDxWWF Speakers share ideas for sustainability

At an inspiring WWF event in Brussels in October, thought leaders discussed how to meet the challenge of ensuring a future for our planet and offered a wide range of solutions. Held at a time when the European Commission had been accused of downgrading its green policies, the event helped strengthen the public debate for a sustainable future. HRH Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands presented the conference, the fourth in the TEDxWWF series. The speakers included campaigner and writer Tony Juniper; award-winning lawyer Helen Slottje; and Climate Outreach Information Network co-founder George Marshall. Speeches will be published online soon.



© WWF-European office


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## WWF honours Tanzania's wildlife management areas

WWF's Leaders for a Living Planet awards were presented to representatives of Tanzania's Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) for helping mobilise communities to manage their local environment and resources to improve conservation of wildlife and habitats, forests and freshwater. At a colourful ceremony in Burunge WMA in July, WWF International President Yolanda Kakabadse praised the WMA scheme which also promotes rural development and training in governance. Since 2005, 19 WMAs have been established, serving 146 villages and 400,000 people, and covering 2,8 million ha – 3 per cent of Tanzania – mostly adjacent to high conservation value protected areas. The US\$1 million annual income from tourism mostly goes to the local communities running the WMAs. A further 20 WMAs are awaiting recognition.



© WWF-Tanzania

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## Crucial climate summit to be held in Peru

Peru will host the December 2014 high level session of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). WWF believes that as a developing country, and with significant forest areas, Peru is well placed to bridge the divide between developed and developing countries on how to combat climate change, including how to limit the carbon emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. The results from this summit will feed into the 2015 UNFCCC meeting in Paris, France, where the aim is to agree a fair and effective climate agreement that limits greenhouse gas emissions so that the average temperature does not exceed 2°C.



© WWF-Canon / Richard Stonehouse

## Earth Hour 2015 focuses on climate change

The campaign strategy for Earth Hour 2015 was released in November, with the key theme of combating climate change. Earth Hour 2015 will continue to leverage the power of the crowd through the phrase “use #yourpower at earthhour.org”



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## Uruguay to host next Ramsar Convention meeting

The Convention on Wetlands, known as the Ramsar Convention after the town in Iran where the convention was agreed in 1971 – will hold the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties 1-9 June in Punta del Este in Uruguay. The Ramsar Convention is an inter-government agreement that provides the framework and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. There are 168 contracting parties to the Ramsar Convention, which has registered 2,186 sites of international importance covering 208 million ha – more than half with the support of WWF in the last decade.



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# WWF highlights in numbers

## 140M HECTARES

More than 140 million hectares were announced at the World Parks Congress as either achieved or new commitments since the last congress in 2003

## 7

There are seven shark and ray species that are now protected from destructive trade

## US\$500 M

The funding committed in recent years and at the World Parks Congress to effectively manage protected areas in five countries amounts to US\$500 million

## 500 KM

The newly discovered longest wildlife migration in Africa – a yearly 500km round trip made annually by several thousand zebra



### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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Conservation highlights is produced bi-annually by Rob Soutter ([rsoutter@wwfint.org](mailto:rsoutter@wwfint.org)) and Stéphane Mauris ([smauris@wwfint.org](mailto:smauris@wwfint.org)) in WWF International's Communication and Marketing Division. Conservation Highlights can be found on One WWF and [panda.org](http://panda.org)

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