

What is the IUCN ?

The IUCN or World Conservation Union was founded in 1948 and brings together 78 states, 112 government agencies, 735 NGOs, 35 affiliates, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a unique worldwide partnership. Its mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. Within the framework of global conventions IUCN has helped over 75 countries to prepare and implement national conservation and biodiversity strategies. A detailed elaboration of this mission can be found in the IUCN publications: the World Conservation Strategy (1980) and Caring for the Earth (1991). The IUCN vision is: A just world that respects and values nature.

The NC-IUCN is a co-operative agreement between the Dutch members of IUCN and the Dutch members of the six international IUCN commissions. The Dutch State, as an IUCN member, has an observer status with the Committee. NC-IUCN has developed a strategy, which is attuned to the work plan of IUCN, the Dutch government, and its NGO members. It aims to promote, in co-operation with the IUCN and its 24 Dutch members, the conservation and responsible management of nature and natural resources in the international context.



For further information about the Tourism for Nature, Nature for Tourism® project, please contact the Netherlands Committee for IUCN:

Mr. Marc Hoogeslag
Tourism and Conservation Officer
Netherlands Committee for IUCN
Plantage Middenlaan 2B
1018 DD Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: ++ 31 20 344 9450
or 626 1732
Fax: ++ 31 20 627 9349
E-mail: marc.hoogeslag@nciucn.nl
Netherlands Committee for IUCN
Website: www.nciucn.nl

IUCN Website: www.iucn.org

Tourism for Nature, Nature for Tourism® is supported by SNV Netherlands Development Organisation and the National Committee for International cooperation and sustainable development (NCDO).

NETHERLANDS COMMITTEE FOR
IUCN
THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION

Tourism for Nature, Nature for Tourism®

Dutch touroperators supporting
nature conservation projects in
destination countries.

NETHERLANDS COMMITTEE FOR
IUCN
THE WORLD CONSERVATION UNION

The project

The Dutch project *Tourism for Nature*, *Nature for Tourism*[®] focuses on the positive effects tourism can have on the conservation of nature. The project aims to create close co-operation between Dutch tour operators and local nature conservation organisations and projects in the countries in which they operate. This gives them the opportunity to financially support nature conservation with local community involvement and contribute to the preservation of the basis of their sole existence, nature. The *Tourism for Nature*, *Nature for Tourism*[®] project will aim for small-scale projects concerning the conservation of biodiversity through training, education, capacity building of local Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) and ecotourism.

The motivation behind this project is the ever increasing number of tourists visiting southern countries, whilst the income generated is rarely used for nature conservation or local participation. *Tourism for Nature*, *Nature for Tourism*[®] is an initiative of the Netherlands Committee for IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature).

The importance of nature conservation

According to the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), tourism will be the world's fastest growing industry: 1,5 billion people are expected to travel abroad in the year 2020, twice the present number. Tourism and nature are closely related. Unspoilt nature is for many people a prerequisite for a successful holiday. Therefore tourist developments are often located in, or very close to, vulnerable nature. Growing numbers of tourists increase the pressure on the environment's carrying capacity, sometimes resulting in serious disruption or even irreversible destruction. Yet it is not only the natural environment that can suffer from increasing pressure caused by these activities. The cultural and social environment of the local communities in the area will also be widely affected by uncontrolled development of tourism. However, tourism can have a positive effect on nature conservation.

Project examples

Ecuador

The Ecuadorian NGO Fundación Maquipucuna manages 4,500 hectares of tropical rainforest in conjunction with the local communities. By developing different initiatives, like small-scale ecotourism, they provide the local communities with an alternative, less destructive way of using their natural resources.

Bonaire (Netherlands Antilles)

Bonaire's National Parks Foundation has plans to develop a program for nature boardwalks and self-guided nature tours around the Lac Bay area to establish a better appreciation of the mangrove system and the flora and fauna.

Ghana

Ghana's Nature Conservation Research Centre is working on the development of a local-styled project compound to serve as a base for continued fieldwork on the effects of elephant crop-raiding in the reserve and a base for starting up of ecotourism activities as an alternative land-use.

Botswana

The Chobe Wildlife Trust is currently developing an environmental education programme for school wildlife clubs local communities. CWT considers environmental education to be of vital importance in the process of ensuring the conservation of natural resources on a long term basis.

The potential economic benefit from tourism can give an ecosystem added value, as well as create awareness and provide a basis for conservation measures. Successful examples can be found in the National Parks in East and Southern Africa and the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador. In this way, tourism can become an alternative for the current, more destructive uses of available resources, such as logging and unsustainable agriculture.

The procedure

If a touroperator would like to participate in the *Tourism for Nature*, *Nature for Tourism*[®] project, the Netherlands Committee for IUCN (NC-IUCN) will provide them with a list of projects and nature conservation organisations in the country of their preference. The ultimate goal of all projects is the conservation of biodiversity, based upon local participation. This can be achieved in a direct manner by, for instance, supporting the management of threatened rainforest or sponsoring active scientific research on threatened flora or fauna. This goal can also be achieved in an indirect manner by supporting the development of sustainable ecotourism, awareness raising programmes or education and training of local communities. NC-IUCN works, therefore, as an intermediary between touroperators and local organisations, utilising the global IUCN network.

Destination countries

During the pilot phase the project focuses primarily on the following countries:

- South Africa, Botswana, Ghana and Benin
- Nepal, Vietnam and Bhutan
- Costa Rica, Ecuador, Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles & Aruba

If requested by touroperators, countries not on this list can also be taken into consideration.

