

**Terms of Reference for bodies involved in implementation of WCC 2020 Res 123
“Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature
conservation” (<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/49795>)**

This document provides Terms of Reference for the seven different bodies involved in implementation of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123 “Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, namely, i) IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Res 123 Working Group members, ii) Policy Development Working Group members, iii) Policy development working group chair/co-chairs, iv) Citizens’ assembly members, v) Trainers, vi) Facilitators, vii) IUCN Secretariat support.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Process for the implementation of WCC 2020 Res 123.

IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Res 123 Working Group members

Composition: Three members appointed by the IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee – Bibiana Sucre (Chair), Hilde Eggermont, Peter Cochrane.

Objective: Ensure delivery of the draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, for consideration for adoption by the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress, according to the mandate provided in IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123.

Specific roles: 1) Comment and sign off on proposal for resource mobilisation in support of implementation of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123; 2) Provide oversight regarding the procedures and timeline for implementation of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123 as well as on the roles and articulation of the different bodies engaged in the process; 3) Advise the IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee and hence IUCN Council and IUCN President herself, specifically, on the appointment of nominees to the Policy Development Working Group, further to operative clause 2 of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123; 4) Advise the IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee and hence IUCN Council itself on the drafting and participatory discussion and review process for the policy, further to operative clause 1 and 3 of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123; 5) Provide assurance as to the stratified random selection of IUCN Members for participation in the citizens’ assembly; 6) Provide advice for the selection of the Trainers and Facilitators; 7) Provide an observer to the meetings of the Policy Development Working Group and of the citizens’ assembly; 8) Lead the development and submission of a Council motion to transmit the draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation” for consideration for adoption by the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress; 9) Support deliberation of draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation” at 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Mode of operation: 1) Regular 1-hr meeting (once / week); 2) Address ongoing issues by email as needed.

Policy Development Working Group members

Composition: Sixteen members, appointed in a balanced way by the IUCN President on the basis of the process established in operative clause 2 of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123. It is anticipated that Policy Development Working Group members are likely, although not required, to have relevant expertise or interest in synthetic biology. Fluency in either English or French or Spanish, the three official languages of IUCN, is required; whispering translations will be provided by the IUCN Secretariat to assist any working group members requiring this.

Objective: Draft the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”.

Specific roles: 1) Produce the first draft of the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, drawing on, inter alia, the recommendations and deliberations of the citizens’ assembly, summary reports from other elements of the inclusive discussion processes carried out by the different IUCN structures, the guiding criteria listed in Annex section II and previous IUCN Resolutions, and the IUCN report “Genetic Frontiers in Conservation” (<https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/48409>); 2) Produce a second draft of the IUCN policy, taking into account the comments received from the IUCN constituency on the first draft, and document how each comment was addressed; 3) Produce a third draft of the IUCN policy, taking into account the comments received from the IUCN constituency on the second draft, and document how each comment was addressed; 4) Serve as resource people for the deliberations of draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation” at the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Mode of operation: 1) Three in-person meetings, to produce respectively first, second, and third drafts of “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, and responses to comments on first and second drafts; 2) Address ongoing issues by email or electronic meetings as needed; 3) Attend the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Policy Development Working Group Chair/Co-chairs

Composition: One or two individuals, selected from among the Policy Development Working Group members by the IUCN President.

Objective: To provide leadership to the Policy Development Working Group in the process of drafting the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”.

Specific roles: 1) Chair the first, second, and third meetings of the Policy Development Working Group, and any electronic meetings or email discussions of the working group needed; 2) Promote respectful engagement among all members of the Working Group; 3) Participate as observer/s on the inclusive process of the citizen’s assembly; 4) Ensure that recommendations and deliberations of the citizen’s assembly and inclusive discussions are taken into account into the drafting of the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”.

Mode of operation: 1) Three in-person meetings, to produce respectively first, second, and third drafts of “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, and responses to IUCN constituency comments on first and second drafts; 2) Address ongoing issues by email or electronic meetings as needed; 3) Attend the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Citizens’ assembly members

Composition: A minimum of sixteen individuals selected in a stratified random fashion from across the IUCN Membership, with stratification ensuring regional and gender balance, as well as seeking indigenous and youth engagement, under the assurance of the IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Working Group. Citizens’ assembly members are not required to have existing expertise and interest in synthetic biology. Fluency in either English or French or Spanish, the three official languages of IUCN, is required; whispering translations will be provided by the IUCN Secretariat to assist any citizens’ assembly members requiring this.

Objective: Contribute to the inclusive process by ensuring a voice for the “silent majority” of

the IUCN Membership into the process for development of the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, as mandated in operative clause 1 of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123.

Specific roles: 1) Participate in training, responsive to needs expressed by the citizens’ assembly members, to develop a common understanding regarding synthetic biology and its interactions with and implications for nature conservation; 2) Produce reports with recommendations and summary deliberations for the Policy Development Working Group regarding content of the “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”.

Mode of operation: 1) At least two in-person meetings, one to participate in training, the second to deliberate and produce recommendations; 2) Address ongoing issues by email or electronic meetings as needed; 3) Attend the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress; 4) Receive honoraria to cover opportunity cost of engagement time (on the rationale that citizens’ assembly members are selected at random rather than through nomination).

Trainers

Composition: Anticipated to be three individuals, from a respected scientific institution (e.g. national academies of natural and social science), selected through the IUCN procurement process. The same institution may be selected to provide both the training and the facilitation functions (see below), to reduce transaction costs and increase continuity and efficiency of the process.

Objective: Provide training to citizens’ assembly on synthetic biology and its interactions with and implications for nature conservation, so that participants share a common understanding as starting point for the discussions.

Specific roles: 1) Prepare a briefing addressed at all IUCN Members about what synthetic biology is, and why its implications for nature conservation require an inclusive debate, recalling the process on the topics so far within the context of IUCN; 2) Prepare as necessary training materials (e.g. powerpoints, course handouts, relevant publications, quizzes) for training session of citizens’ assembly, in ways responsive to needs expressed by the citizens’ assembly members; 3) Lead training session of citizens’ assembly.

Mode of operation: 1) One in-person meeting for the training session of citizens’ assembly; 2) Preparation time to develop training materials; 3) Address ongoing issues by email as needed.

Facilitators

Composition: Anticipated to be three individuals, from a respected scientific institution (e.g. national academies of natural and social science), selected through the IUCN procurement process. The same institution may be selected to provide both the facilitation and the training functions (see above), to reduce transaction costs and increase continuity and efficiency of the process.

Objective: Facilitate the meetings of the citizens’ assembly and of the Policy Development Working Group.

Specific roles: 1) Produce brief guidance documents on how different components of IUCN can carry out inclusive processes to discuss synthetic biology and collect inputs from discussions and produce summary reports (National, Regional and Interregional Committees, Regional Conservation Fora, Commissions); 2) Facilitate at least one deliberation meeting of the citizens’ assembly to produce recommendations for the Policy

Development Working Group regarding content of the IUCN policy; 3) Facilitate the three in-person meetings of the Policy Development Working Group to produce respectively first, second, and third drafts of “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, and responses to IUCN constituency review comments on first and second drafts; 4) Support deliberation of draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation” at the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Mode of operation: 1) At least one in-person meeting of the citizens’ assembly; 2) Three in-person meetings of the Policy Development Working Group to produce respectively first, second, and third drafts of “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”, and responses to IUCN constituency review comments on first and second drafts; 3) Address ongoing issues by email or electronic meetings as needed; 4) Attend the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

IUCN Secretariat support

Composition: IUCN Secretariat support will be drawn from the IUCN International Policy Centre and IUCN Science & Data Centre. Specific staff engaged are anticipated to be the Head of the International Policy Centre, the Senior Scientist & Programme Manager, the Chief Scientist, the Head of the Science & Data Centre, and a Programme Administrator. Objective: Provide scientific, technical, policy, fundraising, and administrative support to all bodies and processes involved, in particular to the IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Working Group members, the Policy Development Working Group Chair/Co-chairs, and the Trainers and Facilitators, but also more generally the Policy Development Working Group members and citizens’ assembly members.

Specific roles: 1) Draft proposal for resource mobilisation in support of implementation of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123, incorporate comments from IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Working Group members, and fundraise on the basis of this; 2) Support IUCN Council Programme and Policy Committee Working Group members in developing and maintaining the procedures and timeline for implementation of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123; 3) Undertake procurement of trainers and facilitators under IUCN procurement process; 4) Organise travel, venues, and logistics for all in-person meetings (two for citizens’ assembly; three for Policy Development Working Group), and participate in these; 5) Organise logistics for electronic meetings and document sharing and review as required; 6) Support deliberation of draft “IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation” at the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Note that the IUCN Secretariat will remain neutral on all aspects of synthetic biology until the formal adoption of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology, remaining cognisant as new understanding develops during the process, as mandated in operative clause 4 of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123.

Note also that Secretariat support is entirely dependent on external funding.

Mode of operation: 1) At least five in-person meetings (at least two for citizens’ assembly; three for Policy Development Working Group); 2) Address ongoing issues by email or electronic meetings as needed; 3) Attend the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress.

Other active stakeholders

Res 123 calls IUCN Director General, Commission Chairs and Members to carry out an inclusive and participatory process to inform the development of the policy, particularly through IUCN National, Regional and Interregional Committees, IUCN Regional Conservation Fora and IUCN Commission processes. IUCN Council Programme and Policy

Committee Res 123 Working Group will invite these different structures of IUCN to carry out inclusive discussions among their respective constituencies. Brief guidance documents will be provided to facilitate these discussions and to request consistent brief summary reports for input into the process.

Process schematic for development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation. Numbers relate to operative clauses of IUCN Resolution WCC 2020 Res 123 “Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation”.

