IUCN Evaluation Policy

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Owner	Programme Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PPME)
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Applicable to	IUCN Secretariat
Purpose	The IUCN Evaluation Policy establishes common structures and standards across the IUCN Secretariat that govern the application of effective evaluation.
Related Policies, Procedures & Guidelines	Managing Evaluations: A Guide for IUCN Programme and Project Managers Project Guidelines and Standards (PGS) Project Appraisal and Approval System (PAAS)
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Contact	PPME Unit, evaluation@iucn.org
Document history	The IUCN Evaluation Policy issued in 2023 replaces the IUCN Monitoring and Evaluation Policy last issued in 2015. Policy and guidance on monitoring is available internally to staff in the PGS.

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TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition[1]
Evaluand	The institution or intervention that is being evaluated; the object of the evaluation.
Internal evaluation	Evaluation of an intervention conducted by a unit or individuals internal to the organisation, generally staff of the organisation who report to the management. Related term: self-evaluation
Evaluation	The systematic and objective assessment of a planned, ongoing or completed intervention, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an intervention. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making processes.
Mid-term evaluation	Evaluation performed towards the middle of the period of implementation of the intervention.
Evaluability	Extent to which an intervention can be evaluated in a reliable and credible fashion. Note: Some approaches to evaluability assessment involve early review of a proposed intervention in order to ascertain whether its objectives are adequately defined and its results are verifiable. In other instances, particularly with complex interventions, high uncertainty or in unstable contexts, evaluability assessment might instead identify a need for an evaluation approach that supports adaptive management (for example, developmental evaluation).
Quality assurance	Any activity or process that is used to assess and improve the merit or the worth of an intervention or its compliance with given standards and requirements. Note: Examples of quality assurance activities include appraisal, results-based management, reviews, and evaluations. Quality assurance may also refer to the assessment of the quality of a portfolio and its overall effectiveness.
Terms of reference	Written document presenting the purpose and scope of the evaluation, the methods to be used, the standard against which performance is to be assessed or analyses are to be conducted, the resources and time allocated, and reporting requirements. Note: Two alternative expressions sometimes used are "scope of work" and "evaluation mandate".

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[1] Definitions are adapted from OECD Development Assistance Committee Network on Development Evaluation (OECD DAC). 2022. *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*, available at: *https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/EV(2022)2/en/pdf*

INTRODUCTION

IUCN is committed to ensuring that evaluations are carried out according to a high quality of accepted standards in the professional field and based on reliable data and observations. The use of these standards by IUCN managers is reviewed on a regular basis, and progress towards improving the quality of IUCN's evaluations is reported by the policy owner on an annual basis. Improving the quality of evaluations in IUCN is a critical aspect of the credibility of its evaluation work.

External evaluators must receive a copy of this policy as an appendix to their contract and adhere to it. Internal evaluators will, in addition, adhere strictly to the [IUCN Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics for the Secretariat](#) (henceforth 'IUCN Code of Conduct'[2]). If wrongdoing is uncovered or suspected in evaluation activities, reporting should follow the procedures for reporting ethical misconduct as outlined in the IUCN Code of Conduct.

For further information please contact evaluation@iucn.org

CONTEXT

Following recommendations from several external reviews (1993, 1996 and 1999), IUCN built its MEL capacity, resulting, among other things, in the 2001 IUCN Evaluation Policy, which institutionalised the MEL function. The 2011 IUCN External Review noted the important progress made in MEL, but also recommended that IUCN continue to invest in this function, and 'develop critical mechanisms for information sharing, coordination and alignment'. The [External Review of the IUCN Programme 2017-2020](#) (conducted in 2020) identified the need to further strengthen the evaluation function and reporting system to robustly and independently measure the achievements of the Programme and help support IUCN as a learning organisation. In addition, the 2021 [IUCN Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Analysis](#) recommended elaborating standards and guidelines to support the function. This updated policy contributes to implementing these recommendations.

DEFINITION OF EVALUATION AT IUCN

At IUCN, evaluation is defined as:

> *The systematic and objective assessment of a planned, ongoing or completed intervention, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. Evaluation also refers to the process of determining the worth or significance of an intervention. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making processes.[3]*

Evaluations are formal activities of IUCN that provide evidence of the achievement of results and institutional performance with a view to drawing lessons that may guide future work and provide overall assurance to key audiences. Evaluations are usually undertaken as an independent examination using applied research techniques of the background, strategy, objectives, results, activities, and means deployed,

Evaluations can focus on all IUCN activities and thematic areas of work, as well as organisational functioning, and should respond to institutional needs. Evaluations should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

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[2] Available on IUCN's website at: [Values, policies and procedures | IUCN](#)

[3] OECD DAC. 2022. Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management: https://one.oecd.org/document/DCD/DAC/EV(2022)2/en/pdf

Note on terminology:
This policy refers to the object of an evaluation or strategic review as the "evaluand" (as per the OECD DAC definition for evaluand: "The institution or intervention that is being evaluated; the object of the evaluation.")

PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The overall aim of this policy is to establish common structures and standards across the IUCN Secretariat that govern the application of effective evaluation systems with a view to maximising the benefits from IUCN interventions.

More specifically, this policy aims to:

- Demonstrate IUCN's commitment to evaluating its work and using the results to drive performance, assurance, learning, and impact.
- Set out minimum requirements, principles to be respected, as well as roles and responsibilities to ensure the quality of evaluations.
- Provide an overview of and basic introduction to evaluation at IUCN, with additional tools referenced to provide further guidance and information.

Within IUCN the purpose of evaluations is three-fold:

- **Learning and improvement**
  Evaluations help to understand why, and the extent to which, intended and unintended results are achieved, and their impact on stakeholders. It is therefore an important agent of change through the provision of useful feedback and a commitment to act on that feedback, thereby driving organisational learning. Furthermore, as a learning tool, evaluation adds to IUCN's body of knowledge with respect to best practices in evaluation and conservation.

- **Accountability**
  Evaluation plays a crucial role in accountability. IUCN is answerable to its Members, partners, donors and users on whether its policies, programmes and projects are having the intended results. IUCN also needs to demonstrate that resources are used efficiently and effectively. The evaluation process, together with the required documentation that accompanies it, holds IUCN staff and contracted implementing partners responsible for their performance. High quality evaluations build Members', donors', users' and partners' confidence in IUCN.

- **Evidence-Based Management**
  The results of evaluation activities are an important input to the decision-making process within IUCN and affect a range of management processes, including risk, assurance and performance management and decisions to change, expand or contract programmes.

IUCN's evaluation function is based on a hybrid model that combines elements of a service-oriented 'centre of excellence' model with a more accountability-oriented 'command and control' model. This approach fosters a more active evaluation culture and emphasises the use of evaluation for learning and improvement, while ensuring a degree of evaluation independence and structure for the accountability aims of evaluation.

Applicability

All IUCN staff must comply with this policy and therefore they constitute its primary audience. However, this policy is also aimed at external stakeholders such as donors, IUCN Members, IUCN Commissions, and partners who may jointly implement work with the Secretariat and may also be the

subjects and recipients of evaluation. Hence this policy plays an important role in delivering IUCN accountability and transparency on evaluation.

This policy describes the principles for commissioning, undertaking, and using evaluation of any aspect of IUCN work, whether undertaken as a project, programme or other initiative.

Staff are encouraged to consult the manual, templates and tools for evaluation management available on the internal website: Managing Evaluations at IUCN – A guide for IUCN programme and project managers (internal).

GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE FUNCTION

The governance and management of the evaluation function must provide efficient operational management to deliver timely and useful evaluations while maintaining the independence of the assessments they provide. The following section explains how independence and quality is assured and the roles and responsibilities to achieve this.

Roles and responsibilities

Areas of responsibility for the evaluation function sit with the Council (e.g., Programme and Policy Committee) and with the Director General. Council responsibilities and approvals include validating evaluation annual planning and reporting and provide overall oversight on evaluative questions. For all other organisational aspects, the function is situated under the line management of the Director General. This includes, among others, evaluation planning and budgeting, the function's budget and staffing structure, reviewing and acting on the learning or main findings and trends highlighted by evaluations. The evaluation function is located in the Programme Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (PPME) and as such, is part of the second line of defence, supporting and advising managers across the Secretariat while ensuring quality of IUCN's evaluative work.

The IUCN Council, through the Programme and Policy Committee (PPC), is responsible for overseeing the evaluation function. The Committee's role is exercised through the Director General, who has responsibility for the evaluation function and reporting to the Council through PPC.

The Director General, Deputy Director Generals, Regional Directors, Global Thematic Centre Directors, and programme and project managers are the primary users of evaluation results. These results are used to improve performance, perform adaptive management, control risk, enable learning and provide accountability.

Senior management is expected to be an active participant in evaluation by collaboratively setting a workplan of institutional evaluations, commissioning, participating in design, contributing to evaluations, and using results in institutional learning activities and in decision making. Senior management also monitors the implementation of changes as recommended by an evaluation.

The primary audience of each evaluation (often project and programme managers) should receive project evaluation feedback and participate in defining management responses.

The Programme Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation (PPME) Unit coordinates the function and specifically has responsibility to:

- Own the evaluation policy and guidelines, ensure evaluation tools are in line with international best practice, and provide support and controls to ensure the implementation of this Evaluation Policy
- Coordinate evaluation activities at the regional and institutional levels

- Facilitate the implementation of the Evaluation Commissioning Framework, by working with senior management to prepare annual institutional evaluation workplan and regular review of implementation of management responses
- Manage global institutional evaluations and strategic reviews
    - Support evaluation commissioners and managers to develop and monitor management responses
- Undertake internal evaluations as needed, including supervision missions
- Provide quality assurance for project and institutional evaluations
- Advise commissioners on evaluation design, management and quality
- Liaise with donors and evaluators on evaluation requirements, when required and on behalf of evaluands

MEL Coordinators provide assurance for project evaluations directly through participation in evaluation consultant selection, assurance of appropriate evaluation management, and review of evaluation outputs for quality assurance. MEL coordinators manage institutional evaluations and strategic reviews for their region or Centre, and may manage project evaluations when required.

MEL Coordinators also provide assurance by coordinating the appropriate implementation of the evaluation function within their operational remit, including through training and advising the project's management and MEL staff, supporting evaluation commissioners and managers to develop and monitor management responses, and by supporting the monitoring of the implementation of this policy.

Individual project and programme staff are responsible for planning, managing, participating in and using evaluations. For project evaluations, the project manager commissions the evaluation and when possible, should outsource its management to another team. In cases where this segregation of duties is not possible, the project manager or Project MEAL Officer may play the role of evaluation manager, with oversight by the reporting line manager. The MEL Coordinator provides advice and assurance of appropriate evaluation management.

Independence of evaluations
To avoid bias and conflict of interest, independence of evaluations is ensured at multiple stages of the process:
1) During consultant selection:
    a. Evaluators must be external and independent of the design and implementation of the evaluand.
    b. Evaluation bids must declare:
        i. If any team members were or are involved in the design or implementation of the evaluand.
        ii. How the evaluation team proposes to avoid bias arising from a potential conflict of interest, either by excluding that team member from segments of the evaluation design, data collection or analysis; or
        iii. Which aspects of the evaluand design or implementation will be excluded from the work to be sampled.
    c. Evaluators are selected and hired according to the IUCN Procurement Policy.
2) Evaluation management:
    a. Every evaluation has an assigned evaluation manager who should be a staff member who is independent of the project where possible. When this is not possible the staff member is trained in evaluation management, and supervision is provided by a staff member who is independent of the project.

3) Quality assurance:
   a. An evaluation specialist in IUCN that is independent of the project will also review key evaluation deliverables with the evaluation manager to ensure compliance with this policy.
   b. The deliverables to review before approval are: evaluation terms of reference (ToR), procurement bid evaluation, inception report, and draft report.

For guidance in following these procedures, see the accompanying staff manual available in the evaluation section of the IUCN internal Project Guidelines and Standards page (PGS Home): Managing Evaluations at IUCN – A guide for IUCN programme and project managers (internal link).

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

All IUCN evaluation activities must respect the standards, criteria and guiding principles below to ensure that evaluation activities contribute to the IUCN Global Programme and the goals of the Union. Other concerns such as financial viability, equity, gender and poverty are equally important and should also be explored as necessary.

Types of evaluation at IUCN

IUCN engages in a range of evaluation types at different levels and with different purposes. There are many different types of evaluation, and some may be more appropriate and useful depending on the activity being evaluated. Innovative and experimental methods that enhance the usefulness of each type of evaluation are encouraged. Evaluations can be commissioned internally or externally, and implemented by internal or external teams, or mixed teams.

Below are the main types of evaluation carried out at IUCN. The Annex provides the detailed Evaluation typology, including defining the commissioner, manager, frequency/trigger, funding sources and accessibility of results for each evaluation type.

Types of evaluation carried out at IUCN:

- Project evaluations (midterm, final, and, when feasible, ex-post)
- Thematic evaluations
- Programme or portfolio evaluations
- External reviews of the IUCN Intersessional Programme
- Impact evaluations[4]
- Meta-evaluations
- Strategic reviews
- Internal reviews (including supervision missions)

It is recommended that evaluations be conducted in an external and independent manner, however, internal reviews are useful and meaningful where learning is the primary aim.

Guiding principles for evaluations

IUCN's 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.

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[4] See definition in the Evaluation Typology table in the Annex of this policy.

IUCN is proud and privileged to work across a wide range of countries and cultures, with a diverse range of peoples, and in varied economic, social and political systems. Our reputation and credibility are derived from the quality of our work, and the recognition of the people with, and for whom, we work. We recognise that to maintain our reputation and credibility we must demonstrate good governance and accountability from the highest level of the organisation.

All IUCN evaluation work must adhere to the following Guiding principles for evaluation, which are informed by the Union's values and underpin and exemplify good governance and accountability:

Independence and impartiality

Evaluation processes are expected to truthfully and honestly describe successes and shortcomings. The evaluation function should therefore be independent to avoid conflicts of interest, ensure credibility, and maximize benefits. Independence contributes to impartial evaluation and ensures that the ability of those carrying out the evaluation to provide credible reports and advice is not compromised. Independence is achieved where evaluation is independent from managers responsible for programme design, management and implementation, or organisational processes. The evaluation function is separate from IUCN's management in most cases. Where evaluations are commissioned and managed by project teams and/or managers (as in the case of project midterm and final evaluations), the monitoring and evaluation function provides oversight and quality assurance. Globally, the evaluation function reports to Council via the Director General.

Senior management may comment on factual errors or insufficient data analysis leading to possible misinterpretation in an evaluation but may not change the findings, conclusions and recommendations. Management influence over terms of reference, selection of evaluators and scope of evaluations is limited and is described in the table in the Annex. The Head of the PPME Unit may propose to the Director General any measure that he or she believes is necessary to ensure evaluation independence.

While a high degree of independence is desirable, it does not mean all evaluations should be external but rather that the principle of independence must be respected. Independence should not prevent the evaluation function from enjoying a close working relationship with management and the programme functions to ensure maximum organisational learning and improved organisational practices as well as capacity building of staff on evaluation.

In addition, evaluation processes should be complete and fair in their examination and record the strengths and weaknesses of the evaluand under consideration. As much as possible, evaluation procedures should guard against distortion caused by personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation.

Ethics

IUCN is committed to the highest standards of conduct and professional ethics by acting with integrity and ethical behaviour. Evaluation processes will provide due regard for the welfare, beliefs, and customs of those involved or affected, avoiding conflict of interest. Stakeholder rights and interests shall be respected, particularly with regard to respecting culture and customs, fundamental values, the right to or not to participate, and ensuring confidentiality of individual stakeholders. To minimize risks to evaluation participants, evaluations must abide by professional ethics and standards, including the use of clearly defined informed consent for all participants. Ethical evaluation requires that management and/or commissioners of evaluation work remain open to the findings and do not allow vested interests to interfere. It also involves ensuring that

IUCN carefully considers whether an evaluation process is the appropriate tool to address the questions and issues raised about any evaluand, or if some other process is more suitable such as an audit or performance appraisal.

Data privacy

IUCN is committed to safeguarding and protecting personal data of private individuals. IUCN is aware of the risks involved, and of the importance of having appropriate data protection standards in place. Evaluation work must ensure the respect of these data protection standards.

Transparency

IUCN is committed to transparency in decision making, both internally and externally. The transparency of the evaluation process is an important aspect of ensuring that evaluation information is appropriately used by managers, the Director General, and Council. Clear communication with stakeholders concerning the purpose of the evaluation work, the key questions and intended uses of the results of the evaluation process, along with standards for the design, data collection and analysis will maximize the transparency of the evaluation process.

The rationale for commissioning evaluations is provided by the Evaluation Commissioning Framework in this policy.

Access to information

IUCN is committed to accurate, effective and open communication. As such, IUCN makes all independent evaluation results accessible to the public. Exceptions are made for internal reviews and strategic reviews that state in the terms of reference the intention to limit access to results All final reports (unless specified), as well as management responses as appropriate, are uploaded on the [IUCN website](https://www.iucn.org)[5]. Findings and lessons learned will be disseminated as appropriate and in accordance with IUCN's aspiration to be seen as a leader in evaluation and in the spirit of collaboration. IUCN retains the right not to publish any evaluation on its website that does not meet the quality criteria and principles outlined in this policy.

Working in partnership

Evaluations often involve multiple stakeholders. Those affected by the outcome of evaluation work have a right to be involved in the process. IUCN is committed to public participation and ensuring genuine involvement in decision making, including with key participants, especially Indigenous peoples' organisations, women and youth. Stakeholders should be actively involved in all aspects of the evaluation process. Such involvement will make evaluations better understood, promote contributions and acceptance, and will increase the likelihood of use.

Promoting full respect for human rights and gender equality

IUCN is committed to protect and promote human rights wherever possible and interwoven with good environmental governance. Gender equality and women's empowerment are an integral element of the good governance principles and a cross-cutting theme in all of IUCN's work. Evaluation work must take into account elements pertaining to gender and human rights to ensure IUCN's alignment with its commitments. This can include a gender analysis to understand the intervention and its results through a lens of gender dynamics, norms and practices, as well as ensuring that the evaluation incorporates the voices of people of different genders throughout the process and methodology.

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[5] IUCN Evaluations web page URL: https://www.iucn.org/about-iucn/accountability-and-reporting/external-reviews-and-evaluations/evaluations-database

Evaluation criteria

In general, IUCN evaluations explore all six OECD DAC evaluation criteria[6] as outlined below and as relevant to the purpose of the evaluation. These criteria support both accountability and learning across IUCN's evaluative work. They should be applied in a thoughtful manner that responds to the specific context of an evaluand and that is tailored to the purpose of its evaluation.

1. **Relevance –** Is the evaluand doing the right things? The extent to which the evaluand's objectives and design respond to the objectives of the current IUCN Programme, or to global, national, or the donor's or other beneficiaries'[7], needs, policies, and priorities, and can be expected to continue to do so if circumstances change.

2. **Coherence** – How well does this intervention (project, programme, portfolio or other) fit? The compatibility of the evaluand with other interventions in the country, sector and within IUCN in terms of delivery of the IUCN Programme.

3. **Effectiveness –** Is the evaluand achieving its objectives? The extent to which the evaluand achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results.

4. **Efficiency** – How well are resources being used? The extent to which the evaluand delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way.

5. **Impact –** What difference does the evaluand make? The extent to which the evaluand (i.e. policy, programme or project) has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects.

6. **Sustainability** – Will the benefits last? The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue. The extent to which the evaluand strengthened enabling conditions, in particular partnerships, capacities or policies, that can be expected to contribute to lasting change.

Additional lines of inquiry for IUCN evaluations

The following additional specific lines of inquiry should be applied as appropriate to test the key assumptions in IUCN's institutional theory of change and to assess responsiveness to gender, youth and Indigenous peoples when these are specific aims of the evaluand. In addition, evaluand-specific concerns such as, among others, financial viability, equity, or poverty reduction are also important criteria and should be explored as required by the situation.

7. **One Programme Approach**: To what extent was the evaluand designed and implemented in accordance with the One Programme Charter[8], to leverage the Union to achieve its objectives? To what extent did it engage with other constituents of the Union to achieve, disseminate, strengthen, scale up or embed its outputs or outcomes?

8. **Gender, indigenous peoples and youth**: The extent to which the evaluand's objectives and design promote and advance gender equality, gender responsiveness, and/or the needs and priorities of Indigenous peoples and youth. Also, to what extent has the evaluand monitored its progress with

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[6] OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria: https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf
[7] Beneficiaries are defined as, "the individuals, groups, or organisations, whether targeted or not, that benefit directly or indirectly, from the development intervention." Other terms, such as rights holders or affected people, may also be used.
[8] IUCN One Programme Charter: https://www.iucn.org/resources/file/iucn-one-programme-charter

appropriately disaggregated monitoring data and with the participation of women, Indigenous peoples and/or youth?

9. **Science/policy/action interface:** The extent to which knowledge or science produced or disseminated by the evaluand was relevant and the processes to apply it to influence policy or action were effective. To what extent was the knowledge and science generated or provided by the evaluand relevant to policy or action? What was the effect of the knowledge or science on the evaluand's policy or action outcomes, if any?

10. **Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS):** To what extent has the evaluand implemented the mitigation measures identified through the ESMS process? (Applicable to projects that have been identified as substantial or high risk during the ESMS Screening Report process.)

EVALUATION COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK

In addition to the body of evaluative work undertaken on the project portfolio, the Evaluation Commissioning Framework, implemented through the annual cycle, aims to ensure regular and intentional evaluation of IUCN's strategic, thematic and geographic priorities.

Bringing all the evaluation coverage requirements under one framework for annual review by the highest level of Secretariat leadership advised by the PPME Unit ensures adequate and intentional coverage of IUCN's evaluation needs and independent assurance of the validity of project and institutional performance monitoring data.

The ultimate aim is to plan and use evaluation strategically to ensure regular assessment of IUCN's performance in delivering its four-year Programme. As such, the Director General implements the framework through the annual institutional strategic planning and budgeting process that provides the decision-making mechanism that oversees the commissioning, use and response to evaluations. This is documented in the annual institutional evaluation work plan.

Implementing the framework

The evaluation work plan is implemented through IUCN's annual institutional strategic planning and budgeting process, where Secretariat senior management reviews completed evaluations and progress on management responses and approves the work plan and budget for the subsequent year's evaluations and management responses.

Evaluation selection criteria

IUCN has defined selection criteria to determine and prioritise evaluations to be carried out and ensure adequate coverage of the work undertaken by the IUCN Secretariat in implementing the IUCN Programme. This enables the Union to organise its evaluation plan for the year and to concentrate efforts on priority areas of work, including decisions about whether to pursue a specific evaluation.

When making decisions about evaluation priorities beyond the restricted funding of the project portfolio, management will consider the institutional significance and strategic relevance, evaluation frequency, utility, feasibility, timeliness, risk management, and commitments and requirements.

Evaluation of projects supported by restricted funding are commissioned based on:
- **Financial threshold:** This criterion relates to the budget of a project above which this policy requires an independent evaluation. Every IUCN project where IUCN has an executive role and with a value over CHF 1,000,000 (one million Swiss francs) will plan for final evaluation. In addition, every IUCN project with a value over CHF 2,000,000 (two million Swiss francs) and

at least a two-year duration will include a mid-term evaluation. The evaluation budget may sit with IUCN or with the donor.

Evaluations of projects and other work supported by unrestricted funding are commissioned based on:

- **Institutional significance and strategic relevance**: This criterion relates to issues of importance to IUCN's operations, strategy, and functioning. This criterion also relates to ensuring an adequate coverage of IUCN's Programme priorities, statutory regions, country operations, thematic topics, investments, etc. IUCN is committed to ensuring coverage of evaluations commensurate with the size and scope of the Union. When setting evaluation priorities, management should consider:
  - Potential for learning, scale up or leverage, regardless of timeframe or budget
  - Overall scale, scope and cost of a given portfolio, especially larger or longer-running programmes or portfolios
  - Visibility and risk of the programme, especially those that are high profile, complex, innovative or risky in nature
  - The need to comply with donor, partner or stakeholder accountability requirements or demands

- **Evaluation frequency:** To ensure accountability for unrestricted resources entrusted to IUCN and to provide regular feedback to the institution on its programmatic work, IUCN undertakes an External Review of its Programme each intersessional period. IUCN is also committed to regularly evaluating the work supported by unrestricted resources aiming for balanced coverage of work undertaken by the different units and regions across different thematic areas of work. This includes aiming for regular evaluation coverage of:
  - Programmatic work by the Regional Offices, Outposted Offices, Global Thematic Centres, and IUCN Commissions;
  - Organisational elements;
  - Operations of global corporate services;
  - Implementation of internal policies and guidelines.

- **Utility:** This criterion pertains to how useful the findings of an evaluation are expected to be. Evaluations must contribute to learning and improving IUCN's work. It is important to note that an evaluation's usefulness can go beyond a specific project or programme, and speak transversally to the Union's operations, respond to a particular learning need, or serve as a documentation process for IUCN's practices in relevant areas.

- **Feasibility:** This criterion relates to how feasible it is to perform an evaluation. This includes taking into account the available financial and human resources and capacities for the evaluation, the level of access to the location or stakeholders, and the complexity of analysis required to produce meaningful and coherent results. This criterion should be assessed by the PPME Unit or MEL Coordinators.

- **Timeliness**: This criterion pertains to when an evaluation should be planned to ensure its relevance and alignment with the Union's work and strategic vision. An evaluation should be planned for when its findings will be the most pertinent and useful. This can be mid-term for instance, or in the time-period directly after an intervention is completed and closed, or when results are expected to appear according to the predetermined time horizon for change (e.g. ex-post evaluations).

- **Risk management:** This criterion relates to the use of evaluations to respond to, mitigate and account for risks that may present themselves in the planning and execution of IUCN's work.
- **Commitments and requirements:** This criterion relates to meeting and coordinating any evaluation commitments or agreements made with a partner or donor, and ensuring that projects/programmes are not evaluated by each donor separately. IUCN aims to facilitate donor coordination regarding evaluation priorities and interests.

Resource allocation

In most cases, evaluations should be funded by the same source that funded the evaluand, therefore, in most cases:

- Evaluations of projects are funded by the funding source (the project donor). When the evaluation budget sits within IUCN's project budget, the IUCN Project Costing Framework guides the appropriate budget and staff time required for evaluations.
- Institutional, geographical, thematic evaluations and strategic reviews are funded by unrestricted funding.
- Specific resource allocations can be made directly by units as part of their annual workplans and budgets during the annual strategic planning and budgeting process.
- Evaluations can also be supported through the global evaluation budget (provisional reserves made on an annual basis to support institutional needs stemming from the annual cycle).

ANNEX

Evaluation Typology

IUCN engages in a range of evaluation types at different levels and with different purposes. There are many different types of evaluation, and some may be more appropriate and useful depending on the activity being evaluated. Innovative and experimental methods that enhance the usefulness of each type of evaluation are encouraged. Evaluations can be commissioned internally or externally, and implemented by internal or external teams, or mixed teams.

Below are the main types of evaluation carried out at IUCN. Definitions are adapted from OECD DAC. 2022. *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*.[9]

Evaluation type	Definition	Commissioner	Evaluation manager	Funding source	Accessibility
Project evaluations	Project evaluations represent the large majority of evaluations conducted at IUCN. They are an evaluation of an individual project designed to achieve specific conservation and human wellbeing objectives within specified resources and implementation schedules, often within the framework of a broader programme. A project rests within a programme unit or region and contributes to the intended results of that programme and of the IUCN Global Programme. A project evaluation will assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence and impact of the project. The evaluation budget may sit with IUCN or with the donor.	Donors Project teams	Every evaluation has an assigned evaluation manager who is a staff member who is independent of the project where possible. When this is not possible the staff member is trained in evaluation management, and supervision is provided by a staff member who is independent of the project.	Restricted funding	Always public

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[9] OECD DAC. 2022. *Glossary of Key Terms in Evaluation and Results Based Management*

Thematic evaluations	Thematic evaluations assess themes, programmatic approaches (e.g. IUCN's policy influencing efforts or the implementation of IUCN Resolutions and Recommendations), or organisational elements of IUCN's work with the aim of developing cross-cutting lessons (i.e. beyond the remit of a single project, programme or portfolio) to inform the relevance IUCN's policy, programmatic and organisational/operational approaches.	Donors Director General Executive Board Units	The commissioner or PPME	Unrestricted funding when internal, and with external funding if available.	Always public
Programme or portfolio evaluations[10]	Programme or portfolio evaluations focus on a set of projects delivering on similar objectives or pertaining to the same intervention. This type of evaluation covers IUCN's regional and global thematic programmes, and includes the work of the IUCN Commissions where appropriate. Programme or portfolio evaluation again assesses relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, coherence and impact of the programme or portfolio.	Donors Director General Executive Board Units	The programme or portfolio owner	Unrestricted or restricted funding	Always public
Strategic reviews	Strategic reviews are selective evaluations that focus on limited set of questions and areas of performance.	Director General Executive Board	PPME	Unrestricted funding	Public unless restricted audience determined by ToR
External reviews of the IUCN Intersessional Programme	Quadrennial reviews of the implementation of the IUCN Programme, which assess organisational performance as a whole. The objective of the review is to evaluate the overall performance of the IUCN Programme to ensure the accountability of IUCN towards its Members, donors and other stakeholders, and to provide lessons learnt that will generate actionable recommendations for the effective implementation of the following Programme.	Director General jointly with the main IUCN framework partners	PPME	Unrestricted funding from framework partners	Always public
Internal evaluations and reviews	A non-independent assessment of a project or programme conducted by those who are responsible for its design and delivery or by peers from the organisation. These units or	Units Programmes or Projects	Commissioner	Restricted funding	Generally internal

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[10] A programme is a group of projects that are similar or related to one another, and which are often managed and coordinated as a group instead of independently. In IUCN, a project with multiple internal agreements operates like a programme. A portfolio is a group of different programmes and/or projects within the same organisation, which may be related or unrelated to one another.

(including supervision missions)	individuals are internal to the organisation, generally staff of the organisation who report to the management. Supervision missions are required for GEF and GCF projects following their requirements (annual).	PPME			
Impact evaluations	Assess the degree to which an intervention meets its higher-level goals and establish the causal effects of the intervention on one or several outcomes. They analyse the positive and negative, primary and secondary long-term effects produced by an intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Impact evaluations may use experimental, quasi-experimental and non-experimental approaches[11]. Adopting the OECD-DAC definition of impact leads to a focus on two underlying premises for impact evaluations: - Attribution: attributing impacts to interventions, rather than just assessing what happened or effects indirectly related to the intervention. - Counterfactual: gauging what would have occurred in the absence of the intervention and a comparison with what has occurred with the intervention implemented.	Director General Executive Board Units	PPME	Restricted or unrestricted funding	Always public
Meta-evaluations	Designed to aggregate findings from a set of evaluations. They can also be used to denote the evaluation of an evaluation to judge its quality and/or assess the performance of the evaluators.	Director General Executive Board Units	PPME	Unrestricted funding	Always public

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[11] Recommended resource for definition of impact evaluation: Impact Evaluations EN 170201.pdf (ethz.ch)