

Find AWF at #IUCNWCC2025

IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025

October 9-15, 2025 in Abu Dhabi, UAE

What it is: The IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) 2025 is a once-every-four-years global gathering of conservation experts, leaders, and decision-makers. It features a dynamic forum and a Members' Assembly—where members like AWF vote on critical issues shaping the global conservation agenda

Why it matters: The congress matters because it sets the direction for global conservation action—bridging science, policy, and practice. Decisions made here influence international biodiversity goals, funding priorities, and partnerships. Our presence there ensures that Africa's voice and priorities shape solutions for people and nature worldwide.

Beyond participating in the Members Assembly and voting on key issues, AWF will be engaging in strategic side events at the congress:

OCTOBER 9TH

High-Level Event: Safeguarding Africa Keystone Protected Areas through enhanced Collaborative Management Partnerships

The side event aims to showcase the significance and vision of the [Africa Keystone Protected Areas Partnership](#), a bold new collaboration bringing together African government leaders, communities, NGOs, and funders to protect 162 of Africa's most irreplaceable protected areas by 2035. The event aims to demonstrate the practical operationalization of the Keystone Partnership on the ground through a case study of Mozambique, highlighting the vital roles of governments, communities, and partners in translating the vision into tangible action. Additionally, the event will highlight sustainable financing solutions, particularly the role of Conservation Trust Funds such as BioFund, in ensuring predictable and long-term support for Keystone Protected Areas.

Session Speakers: H.E. Moses Vilakati- The African Union Commissioner, ARBE , Kaddu Sebunya- CEO AWF, Duko Hopman- Executive Director, Rob Walton Foundation, Sean Nazerali- Director of Innovative Financing, BioFund, Pejul Calenga- Director General of the National Administration for Conservation Areas (ANAC), Luther Anukur- Regional Director for Eastern and Southern Africa for the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

Time: 5:00-5:45pm (GMT +4)

Location: Africa Pavilion (Booth number 205)

Link to more information on event:

<https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/safeguarding-africa-keystone-protected-areas-through-enhanced-collaborative-management>

Session Partners: African Union, African Wildlife Foundation, BioFund, Administracao Nacional das Areas de Conservacao (Mozambique), IUCN ESARO, Rob Walton Foundation

OCTOBER 10TH

Conflict-sensitive Conservation in Practice: Learning from Peers

This event will set the scene on conflict-sensitive conservation before opening the floor for some flash exchanges between participants on specific components of conflict-sensitive conservation practice, including: Integrating conflict sensitivity and rights-based approaches, ensuring inclusivity and a gender-responsive approach, particular challenges and opportunities for young conservation activists and MEL in conflict-sensitive conservation. The session will conclude with information about the new online, self-paced Conflict-Sensitive Conservation course, hosted by the IUCN Academy. The course will serve as a tool for ongoing learning and exchange across the sector.

Time: 2:00-2:40pm (GMT +4)

Location: Conference Hall B: Session Room 8

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/conflict-sensitive-conservation-practice-learning-peers>

Session Partners: PeaceNexus Foundation, African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), Conservation International (CI), Environmental Peacebuilding Association (EnPAX) / Environmental Law Institute (ELI), Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), IUCN CEESP and WWF.

Conservation Education in Africa: Navigating African Conservation Landscapes

In this session we will showcase how young leaders are being empowered for conservation action, leveraging locally available tools and the power of technology to educate and amplify their stories. We will explore the ground realities of conservation

education in key Africa landscape, addressing barriers, challenges and sharing existing opportunities. Dodo Moke, AWF's Senior Social Safeguards Officer will be part of the panel drawing on stories from the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) landscape approach in Kenya, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the session will highlight the power of partnerships and of adapting on local contexts. AWF's Associate Director Conservation Education and Youth Leadership, Simangele Msweli will be moderating this session.

Time: 4:00pm-4:45pm (GMT +4)

Location: Nature-Based Education Pavilion

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/conservation-education-africa-navigating-african-conservation-landscapes>

Session Partners: AWF, Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, Esri, Global Youth Biodiversity Network- Africa Chapter, Uganda Wildlife Authority, Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, Madagascar.

OCTOBER 11TH

Launching Conflict-sensitive Conservation Training on the IUCN Academy Platform

This session will launch a new course that will fill this gap and share experiences on how to apply conflict sensitivity in conservation work. Hosted on the IUCN Academy platform and supported by the PeaceNexus Foundation, the course will be available free of charge. The session will include brief presentations on the course and how these tools are used in current conservation practice. Participants and session contributors, like AWF's Senior Social Safeguards Officer, Dodo Moke will also have the opportunity to discuss how the course could be useful for their work.

Time: 11:00-11:30am (GMT +4)

Location: Collabtorium

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/launching-conflict-sensitive-conservation-online-training>

Session Partners: PeaceNexus Foundation, African Wildlife Foundation, IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic, and Social Policy, IUCN Academy, Conservation International, Environmental Law Institute, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), IUCN Youth Advisory Committee, IUCN CEESP Young Professionals, GYBN, Environmental Peacebuilding Association (EnPAX) and WWF.

OCTOBER 12TH

Future-Proofing Conservation: Scaling Impact Through Intergenerational Collaboration in Africa

This session is for youth, donors, development partners, youth-focused organizations, and policymakers ready to move from intention to impact. Youth aren't waiting to be included, they are leading, organizing, and innovating. But without strategic support, their impact is limited. We'll spotlight real-world lessons, share practical tools, and launch initiatives that show strategic investment in youth leadership. AWF's Associate Director Conservation Education and Youth Leadership, Simangele Msweli will be moderating this session.

Time: 12:00-1:00pm (GMT +4)

Location: GEF Pavillion

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/future-proofing-conservation-scaling-impact-through-intergenerational-collaboration>

Session Partners: African Wildlife Foundation, Esri, Global Youth Biodiversity Network- Africa Chapter

OCTOBER 13TH

Scaling conflict-sensitive conservation to benefit nature, people and peace: Understanding the challenges

This session will provide insights into how conflict and its aftermath affect the ability of conservation managers and decision makers to safeguard nature, how conservation can be made more resilient in these situations and how we can apply locally learned lessons globally. Discussions will include legal and policy analysis. AWF's Senior Social Safeguards Officer, Dodo Moke will be part of the panel discussion sharing key insights and lessons from AWF field programs.

Time: 1:00-2:00pm (GMT +4)

Location: IUCN Commissions Knowledge Hub

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/scaling-conflict-sensitive-conservation-benefit-nature-people-and-peace-understanding>

Session Partners: African Wildlife Foundation, World Commission on Environmental Law, PeaceNexus Foundation, Conflict and Environment Observatory, and the Zoological Society of London

How Can Youth and Senior Leaders Co-create Shared Conservation Leadership in Africa

The African Wildlife Foundation is investing in this potential through programs like the AWF-Wall Youth Leadership Program, which equips emerging conservationists with skills in policy, research and community engagement. This session draws on experiences of Policy Fellows to explore how young Africans are reimagining conservation through bottom-up, African-led models. Through intergenerational dialogue, participants will identify the levers, barriers, and opportunities to build an inclusive and resilient conservation movement. Three of the speakers in this event are in the ongoing cohort of the Wall Policy Fellowship.

Time: 4:00-5:00pm (GMT +4)

Location: Nature-based Education Pavillion

Link to more information: <https://iucncongress2025.org/programme/how-can-youth-and-senior-leaders-co-create-shared-conservation-leadership-africa>

Session Partners: African Wildlife Foundation, Community Conservation Fund of Namibia, Indian Ocean Islands Foundation, IUCN Commission on Education and Communication, Wildlife Conservation Action (Zimbabwe)