

## Key outcomes of Survey on Nature-based Solutions and Young Professionals

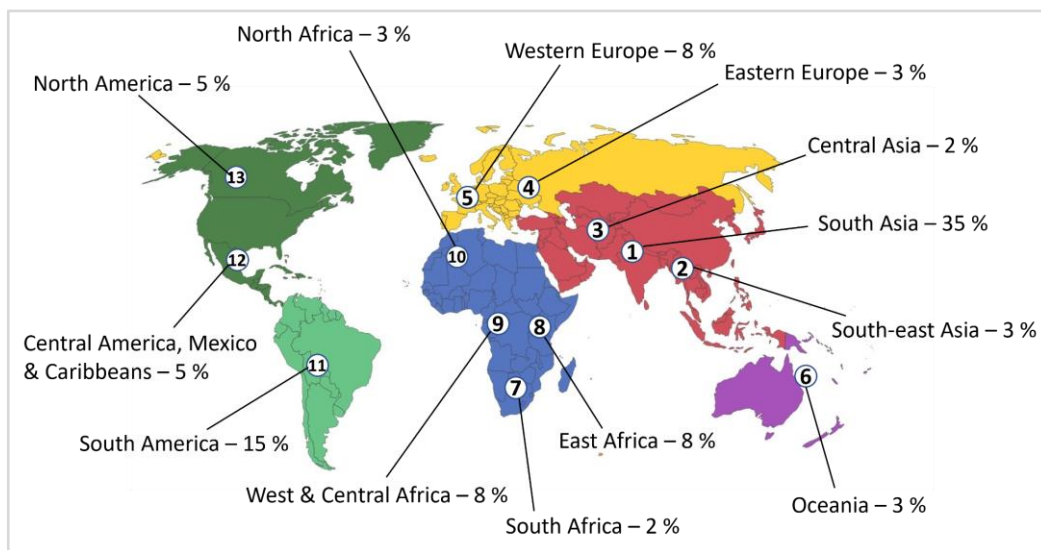
### *IUCN CEM Young Professional Network*

The IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) is highly interested in bringing forward the voices and involvement of Young Professionals (YP) to a new level in the next intersessional program (2021–2024). IUCN CEM requested the input of the YP in preparation for the World Conservation Congress to analyse and present the YP’s perspectives on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and on the Global Standard for NbS.

This document is divided in five parts: General information about the survey’s participants; Confidence level of Youth in Global Leadership; YP Perceptions and engagement on NbS; Feedback and Considerations from YP on the NbS Global Standard; and Key insights on the survey. It summarises the main outcomes of the YP survey, and will serve to guide the [WCC session](#)’s panel discussion. Based on this document, the discussion and the feedback that will be received during the session, a final position paper is expected to be developed after the WCC.

### Part 1. General Information - Demography & Affiliation

67 YPs responded to our request, the summary of which is captured below (Fig. 1).



*Figure 1. Geographical distributions of survey participants*

- **67%** self-identified as **Indigenous**
- Most are affiliated with universities, research centres and NGOs (Fig. 2)

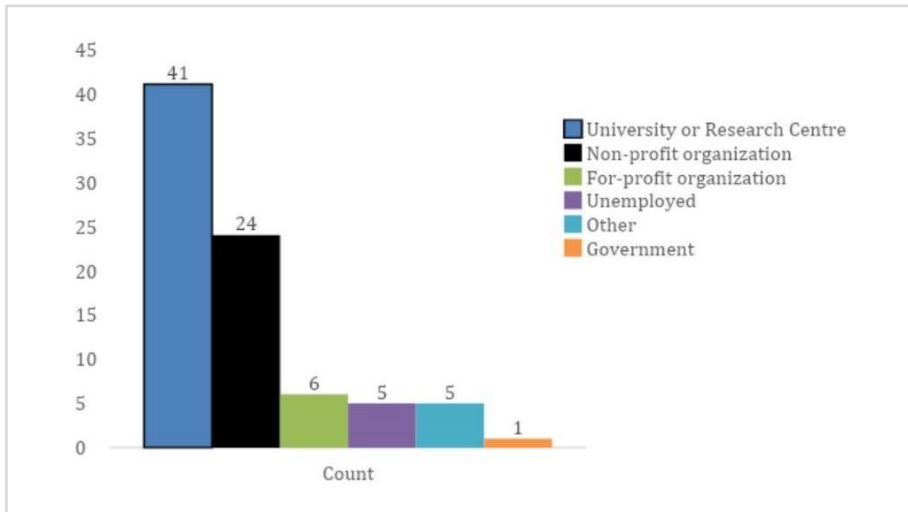


Figure 2. Affiliation of survey participants

## Part 2. Confidence level of youth in global leadership

62% of the survey participants are not satisfied with the level of engagement of Youth in decision-making by governments (Fig. 3).

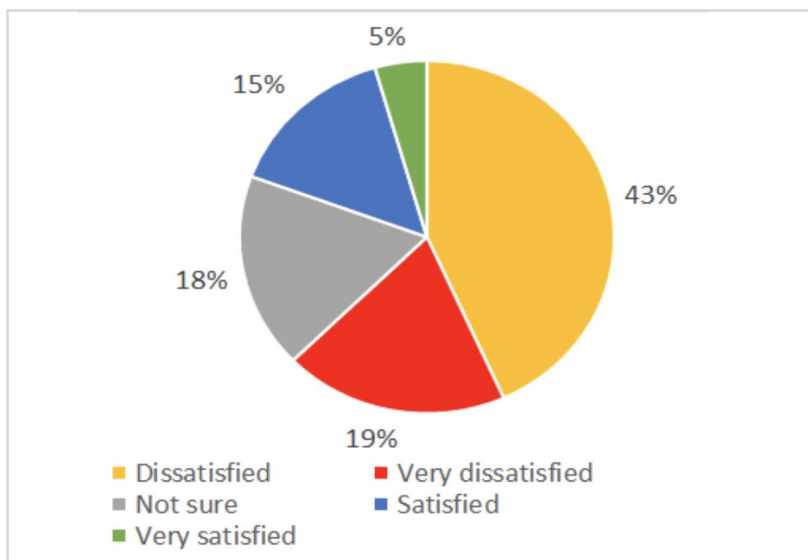
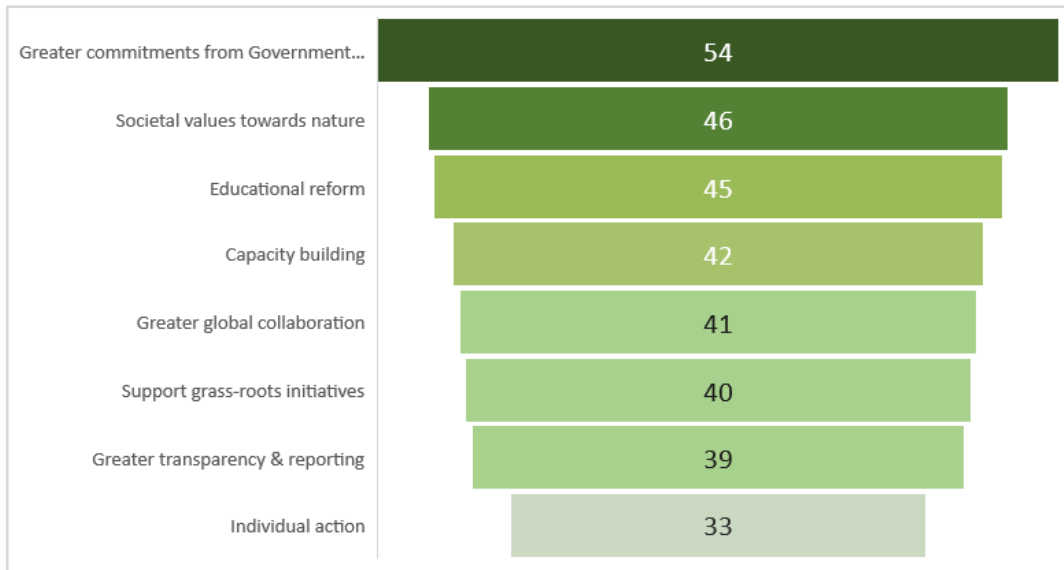


Figure 3. Level of youth engagement in decision-making by governments

When asked what needs to change to drive greater sustainability and intergenerational partnership and to meet conservation needs, most YPs ranked **Greater Commitments from Governments** the highest, followed closely by **Societal Values towards Nature** and **Educational reform** (Fig. 4).

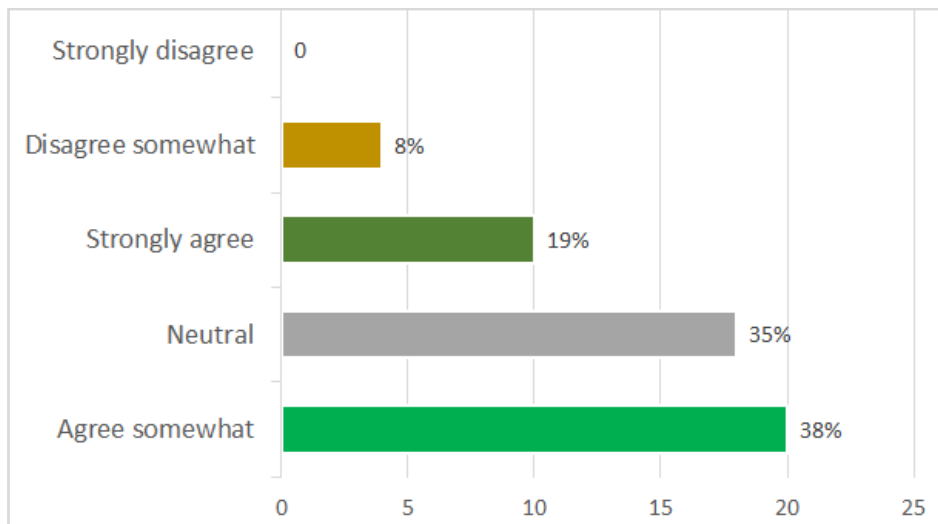


*Figure 4. Most important drivers for sustainability and intergenerational partnership*

### Part 3. Nature-based Solutions – Perceptions & Engagement by YP

Although **52%** of survey participants said they were familiar with NbS, and some of them have been involved in an NbS intervention, **37%** of them were not aware of the NbS Global Standard. However, most of the YPs (64%) said they had not been involved in an NbS intervention.

According to the NbS Global Standard (Criteria 5), an NbS intervention should consider the view and participation of all stakeholders. Nevertheless, only **19%** strongly agreed that the NbS interventions they encountered promote inclusive and multi-stakeholder participation (Fig. 5).



*Figure 5. Perception on inclusivity in Nature-based Solutions*

Nature-based Solutions are actions to protect, manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges, effectively and adaptively, providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. Based on the survey, we found that all three main aspects of NbS - restoration,

protection and management - are very / almost equally relevant to YP (Fig. 6). This shows the importance of complementarity approaches within the NbS umbrella.

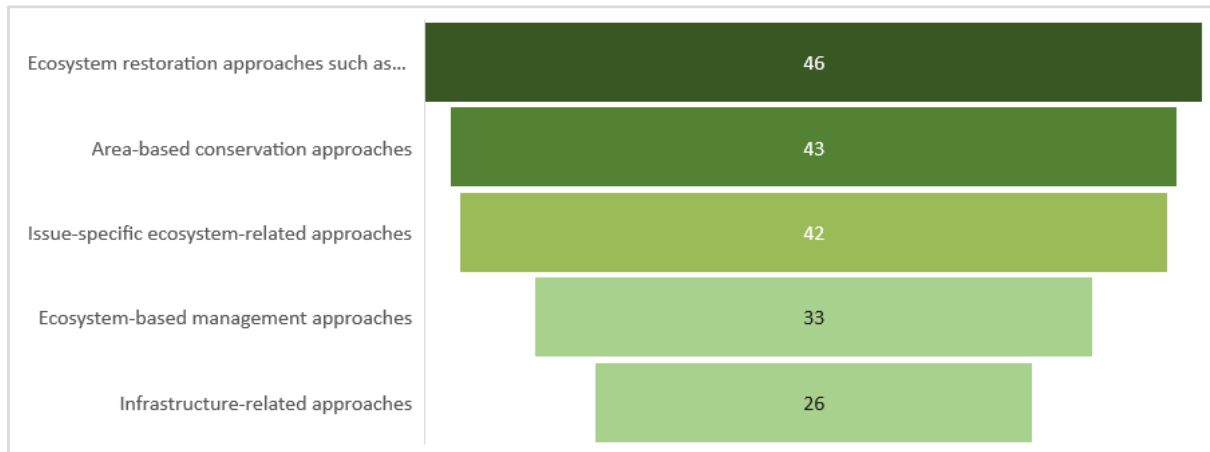


Figure 6. Interests of YP to be involved in NbS

#### Part 4. Nature-based Solutions Global Standard – Feedback & Considerations from YP

The questions related to the NbS Global Standard were open-ended and therefore many different answers were given. Below, is a list of the most common underlying feedback and considerations received.

##### Strengths of NbS Global Standard

- It takes nebulous buzzword and turns it into a standard;
- It standardises how to implement NbS and the potential for reporting on its practical application;
- Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and grievance redressal are especially very well included;
- It enhances the focus on Indigenous People and Local Communities;
- It opens up the potential for reporting on how this is applied in practice.

##### Weakness of NbS Global Standard

- Regional standards for better outreach could complement context-specific gaps of the NbS Global Standard;
- There is a portion of YP, who do not understand the Global Standard nor the IUCN definition of NbS;
- There is a serious issue of misinformation on NbS among YP.

## Part 5. Key insights

- Respondents of the survey shared concerns that the younger generation will be most impacted by climate change and are heavily relied on, for future solutions to global climate and environmental catastrophes, while being the group with the least decision-making influence, despite making up a large portion of the global population.
- 62% of young professionals were dissatisfied with the level of engagement of Youth in decision-making by governments. Only 20% were satisfied, and the remaining were unsure.
- Government & policies, followed by educational reform and societal values towards nature, were ranked as the highest key areas to drive greater sustainability, intergenerational partnerships and to meet conservation needs.
- While the IUCN has its own definition, there are other available definitions and interpretations of NbS, which may lead to confusion.
- Only 36% have been involved in an NbS intervention, 37% of which were not aware of the NbS Global Standard.
- According to Criterion 5 of the Global Standard, NbS should be inclusive and transparent for all stakeholders. Most of the YP agree somewhat that NbS interventions promote this approach, however, a significant percentage remains neutral on this application.
- All three main aspects of NbS - restoration, protection and management - are almost equally relevant to YP, underlining the importance of complementarity approaches within the NbS umbrella.
- According to the YP, the strong points in favour of the Global Standard for NbS are:
  - It defines and sets a quality for interventions;
  - It includes IPCL and FPIC;
  - It recognises future benefits and alternatives that can be provided with NbS.
- Some YPs shared the complexities in balancing the competing interests of various stakeholders in NbS and the importance of ensuring that the needs and interests of local communities are not dominated by larger industrial or government interests.
- The issue and implications of framing natural vs unnatural solutions was raised.
- Some YPs felt that regional standards for the practical application of NbS would help promote this approach.
- YPs showed concerns for ensuring the involvement of local communities, who often are best positioned to integrate NbS.
- Many of the weaknesses identified for the NbS Global Standard were not actually weaknesses. On the contrary, aspects such as cultural and biodiversity importance or conflict resolution mechanisms, which had been mentioned as weaknesses by the YP, are core components of the Global Standard. Based on part of the answers received on the survey, we understand that the Global Standard on NbS is not yet fully understood and that more efforts should be taken to properly transmit its full scope.