



Keeping Nature Alive

Toward a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation

Brendan Mackey, Kathryn Kintzele et al.

Biosphere Ethics Project Paper No. 2



IUCN Environmental Policy and Law Papers online



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Windblown Hill Workshop
Chicago Wilderness Case Study

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Introduction

This report documents the findings of the second international meeting of the Biosphere Ethics Project (hereafter BEP). This workshop was held at the Windblown Hill estate of the Center for Humans and Nature on 11-14 September 2007. The aim of the workshop was to examine as a case study the achievements of the Chicago Wilderness conservation partnership, and to see what lessons could be drawn that might inform the development of a new code of ethics for biodiversity conservation. This was

the first of a series of case study workshops planned for the IUCN Biosphere Ethics Project.

The first BEP global meeting was held at the IUCN headquarters in Gland Switzerland. The main conclusions from that meeting are listed in Appendix 1 and helped frame the Windblown workshop agenda. A list of Windblown Hill workshop participants is given in Appendix 2.

The Story So Far

We are in the midst of a global biodiversity extinction crisis, only the sixth in the 3.5 billion year history of life on Earth and the first to be driven by human behavior rather than external forces. The proximate causes are well documented and include habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation; introduced and invasive species and diseases; the impoundment and diversion of fresh water; and altered fire regimes. Human-forced rapid climate change will place further stress on the viability of many species and ecosystems. The fundamental cause however lies in the simple fact that the human species is appropriating the biosphere for its own use – living nature in all its diversity is being consumed at an ever increasing rate by humanity.

If human behavior is the root cause of the biodiversity extinction crisis, it follows that ethics – the inquiry into what people and societies consider to be the right thing to do in a given situation – must be part of the solution. However, ethics is rarely accepted as an essential ingredient and is usually dismissed as being too theoretical a matter to help with the urgent and practical problems confronting conservationists.

In support of international responses to the biodiversity extinction crisis, at the 2004 World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, the IUCN members adopted Resolution 3.020 “on drafting a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation.” The Resolution was drafted by the IUCN Comité français and called for the Ethics Specialist Group (hereafter ESG) of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law to hold discussions that would lead to such a code, as well as to identify aims to be achieved and actions to be undertaken. A draft of the code is to be presented at the next Congress in 2008.

The Biosphere Ethics Project was created to give effect to this resolution, address the ethical dimension of the global biodiversity extinction crisis, and recommend the form and content of an ethical code. Amongst the myriad of ethical issues confronting us, BEP is using two critical ethical problems as a focus for its work.

1. A common sense understanding of nature conservation asks that the natural world be preserved

in its current form. The concern is that humans are causing too much change to happen too quickly, and the attributes we value about living nature are being lost. Therefore, the goal is to stop the detrimental changes humans are causing on the land, in the ocean, and to the atmosphere.

However, advances in scientific understanding tell us that living nature is molded and sustained by dynamic natural processes. Ecological communities are defined by interactions as much as they are by the species that inhabit them and evolution is an ongoing process whereby natural selection continually sifts the new genetic material that emerges every time a generation is born. As a result, ecosystems are continually adjusting to fluctuating physical environmental conditions.

It seems that keeping nature alive requires ongoing movement and flux. These dynamic characteristics of living nature are not unknown to traditional knowledge systems. The questions to consider therefore are:

- Do prevailing conservation values – and our ethical responses to the biodiversity extinction crisis - need to be modified so that they better reflect contemporary scientific understanding about the dynamic and changing character of living nature, including advances in evolutionary biology and Earth system science?
- If so, what kinds of ethical principles follow and what are their practical implications?

2. The second (and related) problem has been long recognized by conservationists, but the extent to which it is an ethical problem is not so widely appreciated. The natural resources of land, fresh waters, and oceans are factors in production, and are usually allocated to the economic use with the highest market-based monetary valuation; unless of course governments intervene (through legislation and policy) to protect nature’s non-market values. But market-based economic valuations invariably, and increasingly, trump non-market values. Going forward, will only those species and ecosystems be saved that have economic utility or that can fortuitously persist within industrialized landscapes?

Can the non-market values we hold about living nature ever be ascendant in how development unfolds?

This second problem therefore resolves around consideration of:

- How can the full range of values we hold about nature, especially living nature, transcend market-based economic valuations in the formulation of public policy and the allocation and management of land and resources?
- What is missing from our current values systems and ethics to enable this to happen?
- The Biodiversity Ethics Project is also addressing several other aspects of the fundamental challenges of biodiversity conservation in our epoch:
- The weakness of contemporary governance structures and the efforts being made at local and international levels to make them more democratic and effective, with special attention to the highly unstable geopolitical context in which we live (a significant opportunity to pursue this dimension of our work is being provided by the "Governance for the Community of Life" project of the IUCN CEL Ethics Specialist Group, led by Klaus Bosselmann);
- The great inequities within and between most human societies, associated with denials of social, economic and civil rights and leading to widespread poverty and despair, which must be corrected if we are to have any hope of keeping ourselves and the rest of 'nature alive'; and
- The motivational power of culture, including the linkages between cultural and biological diversity, and the impact of the creative arts, humanities, religion, and popular culture, both positive and negative, on our perceptions of nature and attitudes toward the natural world.

In all of these important respects -- the contested meanings of "ecological integrity" and evolution in contemporary science and conservation; the threat of economic globalization and instrumental/ technical rationality to our ability to rightly value, understand and protect the richness of the natural world; the critical need to find new forms of human governance that will encourage sustainable communities and be accountable to citizens; the imperative of joining the cause of conservation with the struggles for human rights, equality, and economic well-being for all people; and the increasingly salient role of cultural innovation and conflict in shaping social evolution and our complex relationships to the rest of nature -- the Biodiversity Ethics Project seeks to further the holistic vision of the Earth Charter, and to deepen and expand the dialogue on global ethics which led to its drafting and subsequent endorsement by thousands of persons and organizations throughout the world.

BEP is considering these problems by:

- Identifying the philosophical roots of our societies' dominant value systems and ethics regarding living nature and human-nature relations, and the concepts that must be promoted to meet the unprecedented challenge of the global biodiversity crisis;
- Understanding the conservation implications of contemporary scientific knowledge about living nature and associated dynamic natural processes;
- Investigating case studies of where communities and social networks are working to protect 'nature alive' in order to reveal the practical solutions, ethical values and principles that underpin this work.

By combining theory and practice, BEP aims to help advance a public code of ethics for the conservation of biodiversity – keeping nature alive through the 21st Century.

The Chicago Wilderness Case Study

The center piece of the workshop was a case study of a regional conservation consortium, Chicago Wilderness⁶. Chicago Wilderness (hereafter CW) is an alliance of more than 200 public and private organizations that work together to protect, restore, study and manage the natural ecosystems of the Chicago region; contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity; and enrich local residents' quality of life. The consortium achieves its mission through collaborative work in natural area restoration, science, sustainable development, outreach, and advocacy throughout the CW region, which includes portions of Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Although significant challenges remain for CW, it has succeeded beyond all expectations at forging a coalition of organizations that have been able to achieve far more by working together than they

could have individually. Various elements have contributed to the success of the CW coalition: visionary, inspiring leaders; the ability to identify and discuss compelling conservation stories; and a decentralized structure that gives small groups just as much voice as large ones. In addition, CW creates a space in which member organizations can bring up any issue that will be taken seriously, discussed openly, and acted upon once a consensus has been reached.

During the BEP workshop, each representative from a CW member organization gave a presentation followed by an open discussion. These presentations are summarised in Appendix 3. Other appendices to this report include (4) a fact sheet on the Chicago Wilderness partnership, and (5) the Chicago Wilderness partnership's vision statement.

⁶ (see www.chicagowilderness.org and Appendices 3-5)

Recommendations for BEP

Building upon the lessons learned from considering the Chicago Wilderness conservation partnership presentations, the workshop participants made the following recommendations for the development of a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation and the next steps for the Biosphere Ethics Project.

It was agreed that the proposed code of ethics and associated programme to promote its uptake should include these elements: (a) ethical statement; (b) guidelines; (c) models of governance; (d) rationale; and (e) other issues including (i) ethical support network; (ii) outreach plan; and (iii) ongoing dialogue and consultation.

a. Ethical Statement

Participants agreed that the BEP should strive to produce a concise, one-page statement on the ethics of biodiversity conservation.

Summary of recommendations

- The language must speak to both the hearts and minds of people
- The document should be drafted using words from non-English languages which are rich in meaning
- The statement must speak candidly, stress the urgency of situation, address our responsibility for the biodiversity crisis and moral obligation to change
- The close interdependence of ecological and cultural integrity, of biological and cultural diversity, needs to be emphasised
- Economic and social justice must also be included; unless these are assured, justice for other species cannot be achieved
- The statement must reflect a scientific understanding of evolution and biodiversity.

Details of Recommendations

Although Resolution 3.020 called for a “code,” the drafting committee used that word for reasons of

convenience, not preference. Many workshop participants thought that the word “covenant” best described the proposed document: the joint affirmation of value, acknowledgement of failure, and commitment to respond. Others felt that “covenant” carried too much religious baggage, and instead suggested a “declaration” (e.g., Biosphere Ethics Declaration of Responsibilities), “resolution” or “agreement.”

We must also be aware of translation concerns when choosing a name for the statement. For example, in Arabic, “covenant” translates as *wasaya* or *mithaq*, a gift that you hold in trust to give to your children, which many felt eloquently captured the desired spirit of the BEP statement. Other words like “declaration” do not translate so appropriately into Arabic.

Several participants pointed out the need to consider who we expect to be the audience for this covenant or statement. Once the intended audience is identified, the language and tone of the statement can then be appropriately tailored. For all audiences, the BEP statement must stress the urgency of the need to act to change prevailing destructive behaviors. One useful metaphor that might be employed in the document is that we are standing at a fork in the road: one path leads to ongoing disasters, the other to a new hope. Or perhaps we are already on the path of continuing and ongoing disasters for the living world and our job is to create an alternate path (a fork in the road), which certainly can be called “to a new hope.”

Indeed, “hope” is a very appropriate keyword for this statement, since participants recommend the document have a positive outlook, not a blaming, shaming or despairing one. Just as the representatives of Chicago Wilderness consistently used positive language in their presentations - such as pride in natural areas, love of land (*amor à terra*), hopefulness, inspiration, action, humility, respect and trust - so too should the BEP document focus on articulating a positive vision inspired by our love of and desire to care for other living beings, places and people (see *Rationale* below). The following language was suggested: “We share a vision of an ecologically and culturally diverse world, brimming with vibrancy.”

Speaking positively, though, does not mean that the BEP statement should be soft. On the contrary, it needs to make a number of strong candid statements. For example, it must address our responsibility for the current global biodiversity crisis, and hence our moral obligation to act to change the destructive human behaviours that have caused the crisis. It must also acknowledge the global interdependence of all beings and our consequent duties to act fairly toward future generations of humans and all other species. Therefore, the statement must adopt a biospheric rather than anthropocentric perspective. It should also emphasize our charge to act as good stewards over the global commons with which we have inhabited, including fresh waters and the open seas, air, soil and outer space.

While the term “biodiversity” is central to the BEP, having inspired the resolution that led to its creation, CW representatives noted that the term is somewhat problematic for a general audience. Many people do not have a clear understanding of what it means, and it is often associated with negative statements, e.g., “the *loss* of biodiversity” or “the biodiversity crisis.” However, it is important to use the term biodiversity in the statement because it reflects scientific understanding of the problem. Yet, it is also important to use other words or phrases that convey a similar meaning but are more accessible to a general audience. One of the break-out groups suggested “community of life” or “maintaining the integrity of the community of life.” “Integrity” was a key word suggested for the statement by several participants, while others worried about the difficulty of defining integrity precisely in a scientific sense.

In addition to “biodiversity,” another scientific concept that emerged as central to the BEP statement was “evolution.” The diversity of life and evolution are absolutely correlated. The variety of genes, species and ecosystems springs from the evolutionary process. In turn, genetic diversity provides the raw material that enable populations to adapt to changing conditions, including climate change. The richness of, species and interactions between them maintain the resilience and health of ecosystems. From an evolutionary perspective, traits have emerged in humans that predispose us to care for other species, such as biophilia (as suggested by E.O. Wilson). Since evolution is so central to a full understanding of biodiversity and its importance, participants unanimously agreed that it needs to be

clearly explained in the BEP statement.

It was also agreed that the human side of biodiversity conservation in the BEP statement must not be ignored. We need to emphasize the close interdependence of ecological and cultural integrity, of biological and cultural diversity -- the interweaving of the fates of humans and nature as part of the same interconnected web of life. We must call for economic and social justice as well, for unless these are assured, justice for other species cannot be achieved. Healthy ecosystems are needed to produce healthy people, and vice versa.

Finally, from the Chicago Wilderness case study, we learned the importance of participation and inclusiveness (*simunye* in Zulu) for identifying and nurturing pro-environmental values. Valuing people and nature, in turn, leads to caring and action on their behalf. The BEP statement, then, needs to stress the importance of both participation and the concept of valuing.

Various participants also made a few other specific suggestions concerning the BEP statement: it should avoid the use of overtly religious language such as “creation” to ensure that it will reach non-religious people; and it should mention “private lands,” “active management,” and Aldo Leopold’s “land ethic.”

b. Guidelines

In addition to a concise statement, participants recommended BEP produce a set of practical ethical guidelines for biodiversity conservation.

Summary of Recommendations

- The guidelines should be four to five pages long and modeled on the IUCN “Guidelines for Applying the Precautionary Principle to Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management”
- The guidelines should be designed for use by anyone working on biodiversity conservation, in clear, accessible language that facilitates evaluating the ethical appropriateness of actions
- Specific issues were identified that should be addressed, such as the need for a shared vision; planning for inter-organizational conflicts; the

question of scale; identifying common threats to biodiversity.

Details of Recommendations

This document should be four to five pages long and its format could be modeled upon the “Guidelines for Applying the Precautionary Principle to Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resource Management,” which were approved by the IUCN Council in May 2007.⁷ The guidelines are intended for use by anyone working on biodiversity conservation, including scientists, private industry, and civil society groups; therefore, they should be written in clear, accessible language that avoids technical jargon, so that they can be more readily understood and more widely applied. One way to help people apply the guidelines to their own particular situations would be to rephrase them as a series of questions in a sidebar; these questions could then be used by decision-makers and others to evaluate the ethical appropriateness of various actions being considered.⁸

First, from the Chicago Wilderness case study we learned the importance of a shared vision for biodiversity conservation in a given region. Once the vision is agreed -- through participatory and consensual processes involving key stakeholders from the bottom up, including land owners and land managers -- an alliance for biodiversity conservation can then be built around that vision.

Conservation initiatives that involve multiple organizations would benefit from practicing some of the values we learned from Chicago Wilderness: a willingness to work with, listen to, learn from and nurture one another; seeking consensus rather than compromise; and humility. They should also plan for inter-organizational conflicts that may arise over financial issues (once outside funding is obtained), and should develop a strategy for managing the influx of new resources so that these resources do not distort, drive or destroy the initiative. Finally, they should also regularly renew and reinvigorate

themselves as they grow. Producing new products and tools to mark and monitor progress on a periodic basis can be a tremendous help in this renewal process.

The guidelines also need to consider issues of scale (both spatial and temporal) and borders, especially political borders. In terms of scale, biodiversity conservation projects need to include sufficient territory to encompass sufficient biodiversity and leverage sufficient resources, but not so expansive that people cannot relate to the project. Borders must also be considered at the start of a project, or the project will be less likely to produce successful conservation outcomes.

Biodiversity conservation projects should also focus on identifying the common threats to biodiversity, and advocate for the importance of applying a rich understanding of the precautionary principle (e.g. the German concept of *vorsorge*) to avoid or lessen the potential impacts of those threats.

Education is also a key to any conservation project, and should be pursued on a variety of levels: education on ethical issues, education on personal responsibility and obligation, education on ecology, etc.

c. Models of Governance

Because ethically responsible biodiversity conservation requires good governance, participants agreed on the need for a BEP document that provided models of good governance for the community of life.

Summary of Recommendations

- This document should be about five pages long, supported by separately published in-depth case studies.
- It should give examples of what good governance for the community of life might look like at all levels and from the perspectives of governments, academia and civil society groups.
- The document should be prepared in partnership with the IUCN CEL “Governance for Sustainability” project.

⁷ See www.iucn.org/themes/law/pdf_documents/LN250507_PPGuidelines.pdf

⁸ For an example of such an approach, see “Sustaining Wisconsin’s Waters: A Checklist,” pp. 100-101 in Chapter 4 of *Waters of Wisconsin: The Future of Our Aquatic Ecosystems and Resources*, www.wisconsinacademy.org/wow/downloadreport.html.

Details of Recommendations

This document should be about five pages long, supported by separately published in-depth case studies. It should give examples of what good governance for the community of life might look like at all levels (global, supranational, national, local, corporate and civil society) and from the perspectives of both governments and civil society groups. These examples should include visual diagrams as well as textual descriptions so that they are more accessible to readers with diverse learning styles. The document should be prepared in partnership with CEL's "Governance for Sustainability" project.⁹

Among other topics, the document will discuss the importance of ensuring that governance at all levels is inclusive (*simunye* principle). It will also emphasize the need to recognize different definitions of what count as "successful outcomes" in terms of governance. Regarding the formation of intergroup alliances, the models of governance document should highlight one of the lessons learned from Chicago Wilderness: the need for creating an open and equal space in which the alliance can unfold. To create such a space, more powerful groups may need to practice self-restraint so that other groups, especially those that are less powerful and resource-rich, can take leadership roles or make other important contributions. An alliance must also consciously and carefully cultivate an internal climate of respect and trust among all members.

d. Rationale

Participants also agreed on the need to produce a series of documents that would explain the rationale underlying the three key outputs described above.¹⁰

Summary of Recommendations

- This rationale should consist of a concise, five-page document supplemented by separate essays on key concepts

⁹ For more information about this project, see Klaus Bosselmann's "Project Concept for 'Governance for Sustainability' (April 2007)," which is available upon request from the IUCN Ethics Specialist Group.

¹⁰ Depending on the final form that the CEL "Governance for Sustainability" project takes, one of that project's outputs may serve as the rationale for the Models of Governance output document from BEP.

- The rationale, regardless of its formal title, should reflect the best of human ways of knowing nature and culture
- The rationale should be a strong document that is not afraid to state and provide clear arguments in support of some uncomfortable ethical and scientific truths that are strongly supported by the separate essays
- The rationale should lay out the three kinds of love for nature that are part of our evolutionary and cultural heritage, and which we share with other species

Details of Recommendations

This rationale should consist of a concise, five-page document supplemented by separate essays on key concepts. Key concepts to be discussed in such essays might include covenant, ecological integrity, responsibilities of democratic citizenship, 'utter dependence' and 'utter responsibility', the role of art and literature/story and cultural and religious dimensions. In addition to providing the rationale for the BEP outputs, these documents will help fill in some of the gaps in the Earth Charter in terms of biodiversity conservation, and will begin developing a more robust philosophy of humans and nature than is currently available.

Participants discussed whether the rationale should be referred to as an "intellectual and emotional" rationale or as a "philosophical, spiritual and emotional" rationale. Another possibility might be to call it an "intellectual, spiritual and emotional rationale," with "intellectual" defined in the concise document to include both scientific and philosophical understandings.

All participants agreed that the rationale, regardless of its formal title, should reflect the best of human ways of knowing nature and culture. Those ways of knowing, expressing, and inspiring care for the community of life (biological and cultural diversity) include not just often recognized disciplines such as science and law but also religion and spirituality, literature and the arts, and philosophy and ethics. All these ways of knowing should be recognized and employed in the rationale.

Participants also felt that the rationale should be a strong document that is not afraid to state and

provide clear arguments in support of some uncomfortable ethical and scientific truths. Ethically speaking, the rationale must explain that because humans are one of the prime movers of global environmental change, we also bear a primary responsibility for acknowledging and acting to correct the harms we are inflicting on other human beings and on the planet. Scientifically, the rationale must highlight our utter dependence on nature and on each other, which provides another sort of argument for the preservation and nurturing of biological and cultural diversity.

Still other truths, both inspiring and uncomfortable, come to us from the study of evolution, and these also need to play their part in the rationale. On the inspiring side, the rationale should lay out the three kinds of love for nature that are part of our evolutionary and cultural heritage, and which we share with other species: biophilia, or love of living beings; locophilia (in German, *heimatverbunden*), or love of place; and sociophilia (in Zulu, *ubuntu*), or love of people. We might also speak of a fourth sort of love: egophilia, or love of self. All of these evolutionary loves need to be extended: biophilia to every living being, not just charismatic megafauna like elephants or pandas; locophilia to every place in its entirety and to all of the Earth, both “wild” and domesticated areas; and sociophilia to love of all human beings, of all races and income levels, including future generations. But on the uncomfortable side, the study of evolution also teaches us that we may have inherited a short-term, consumerist outlook from our hunter-gatherer forbearers: an outlook we must work to overcome.

Finally, the rationale should cover a few specific issues, including ecological integrity, which is meant to refer to the complete functioning of entire ecosystems, and not just to constancy in their constituent parts (e.g., individual species), and the importance of respect for the fundamental good of all beings and for the Earth itself.

e. Other Issues

(i) Ethical Support Network

Several participants expressed the need for a network of ethicists that could provide expert ethical guidance to IUCN and other bodies on critical issues. Such

issues might include topics like climate change, engaging with the business sector, genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and sustainable use.

The core of such a network already exists in the Ethics Specialist Group (ESG) of IUCN CEL, members of which have begun long-term projects on the ethics of climate change and on engaging with the business sector. However, BEP should work to ensure that mechanisms are put in place that would facilitate requests for assistance from the ESG. Because such ethical guidance is needed so crucially today, it would also be highly desirable to grow the ESG itself, expanding its network of volunteers by adding other qualified members.

(ii) Outreach Plan

Our messages about biodiversity conservation must be communicated to the general public. If people are not convinced of the value of preserving biological and cultural diversity, they will not likely be willing to make the needed changes in their behaviour – and in public policy – to ensure such preservation. This is, of course, a lesson that applies to all projects and organizations that work on conservation, including IUCN.

Therefore, the BEP should design a communications and publicity strategy for all of the outputs listed here, as well as for the project as a whole. Ideally, that strategy would include a funded position to help carry out this marketing work, using the IUCN membership network as a primary means. Additionally or instead, we might also seek pro bono assistance from established communications professionals. Whatever specific publicity strategy is pursued, its primary goal should be to ensure that the BEP’s arguments for ethical commitments for conservation are available to all, worldwide.

Chicago Wilderness showed us the unique ability of a powerful story told passionately to change minds and open hearts. As the BEP develops its outreach efforts, we must keep the power of story firmly in mind, and seek out especially enlightening and moving case studies. Where possible, we should also try to have the people involved tell the stories of these case studies in their own words; such first-person narratives are far more powerful than second-hand reporting.

(iii) Ongoing Dialogue and Consultation

The concluding section of the Earth Charter states that “We must deepen and expand the global dialogue that generated the Earth Charter, for we have much to learn from the ongoing collaborative search for truth and wisdom.” Accepting the truth of that statement, many workshop participants argued that the BEP needs to envision and facilitate processes for ongoing dialogue, review, and revision of its outputs. This will help ensure these outputs remain living guidance, not just words on a page, continually adapting as the world situation changes and new issues arise.

It is, of course, much more difficult to put such a sentiment into actual practice than it is to write it down. But we can encourage continuing dialogue at local and global levels over the ethics of biodiversity conservation in many ways. First, the BEP could catalyze the formation of Chicago Wilderness-like alliances of stakeholders dedicated to preserving biological and cultural diversity in places all over the world. Such organizations are by their very nature dedicated to ongoing dialogue. Second, the BEP can experiment with Wikispaces (see www.wikispaces.com) and other similar online venues by which people around the world can share their experiences and ideas on the ethics of biodiversity conservation, and comment on BEP documents.

Next Steps

At the end of the workshop, participants discussed the next steps that should be taken in the Biosphere Ethics Project over the short, medium and long terms. More funding is needed to move the project forward. Critical needs include a staff person dedicated to coordinating the BEP, publicizing its outcomes and interfacing with IUCN staff in Gland.

Funding for this position could be sought from a variety of sources, perhaps in the form of matching grants, including the IUCN “Innovations Fund” (IIC).

In the medium term, participants decided to organize at least two more regional case study workshops in South Africa and Brazil to take advantage of key actors already contributing to BEP activities.

Over both the short and medium terms, the BEP will contribute to the ongoing discussions of IUCN’s Future of Sustainability Initiative. Such contributions might include participating in one or more of the Initiative’s regional workshops, drafting text for the next Future of Sustainability report, and helping with the editing of that report.

In the long term, as stipulated in Resolution 3.020, the IUCN Ethics Specials Group will prepare a draft statement on the ethics of biodiversity conservation for the next World Conservation Congress at Barcelona in October of 2008. Ideally a first draft of this statement would be prepared by late August 2008, so that BEP workshop participants and others could discuss it electronically before the Barcelona Congress.

Finally, participants would also like to use the worldwide discussions around the Convention on Biological Diversity’s 2010 Biodiversity Target as an opportunity to publicize the outputs of the Biosphere Ethics Project internationally. (In its “Strategic Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity,” the CBD’s Conference of the Parties committed “to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth.”)¹¹

¹¹ See www.cbd.int/2010-target/default.asp for more information about the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

The Covenant of Windblown Hill

At our final dinner together, CHN President Strachan Donnelley raised a toast in honor of the Biosphere Ethics Project, its purpose, its participants and its goals. A Covenant of Windblown Hill was proposed to continue the

project, the profound dialogue which informs it and the collaboration of all of the wonderful individuals and organizations involved. In the spirit of the Covenant of Windblown Hill, we look forward to the future of the Biosphere Ethics.



Appendices

Appendix 1. Main conclusions from the BEP Gland workshop

A. The need for a new ethic for nature conservation:

- We need to recognize and reaffirm our dependency on nature.
- The urgency is now.
- There is a lack of a biodiversity conservation ethic to guide the world at this most crucial and fragile point in history.
- Existing documents are inadequate.

B. The content of a new ethical code:

- The Earth Charter should serve as one of the primary reference texts for the Code.
- Biodiversity needs to be expressed in terms that reflect contemporary understanding of evolution and ecology, including ecosystem dynamics.
- A new philosophy of nature needs to inform the document.
- The ethics of the code should express the values of to the world's diverse religious faiths while at the same time expressing the ultimate commitments we all share.
- Global/Local (expression of CBD "common but differentiated responsibilities")
- The whole range of issues raised by the imperative of biodiversity conservation needs to be addressed or have the capability of being addressed.
- The appropriate name for the Code needs to be finalized.

C. IUCN's role in the development of a new ethical code:

- IUCN is in an excellent position to draft a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation.
- IUCN is in need of a unifying moral and ethical rationale for its work.
- Practical ethical tools are needed in the work of IUCN.

D. Consultative Process for a new ethical code:

- Project Governance
- Target Audiences
- IUCN Involvement
- Consultative Meetings and Partnerships - the Code should be an invitation to serious reflection

E. Drafting Process for a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation:

- The Drafting Committee
- Continue global/local dialogue and encourage local communities to draft their own codes - there is a need for member organisations to engage in the international drafting process.
- Present the Benchmark Draft at the 2008 World Conservation Congress, and the final draft at the 2010 CBD Conference

Appendix 2. List of Chicago BEP Workshop Participants

Name	Affiliation
Abu-Jaber, Mayyada	CEO, Jordan Career Education Foundation
Aftandilian, Dave	Research Assistant, CHN
Athanas, Andrea	Senior Programme Officer, Business and Biodiversity Programme, IUCN
Blandin, Patrick	Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris; Comité français, IUCN
Bosselmann, Klaus	Co-chair, Ethics Specialist Group, CEL, IUCN
Claus, Anja	Program Coordinator, CHN
Cornelius, Stephen	MacArthur Foundation
Donnelley, Strachan	President, CHN
Engel, J. Ronald	Senior Scholar, CHN; Founder, Ethics Specialist Group, CEL, IUCN
Heltne, Paul	Director, CHN
Kintzele, Kathryn	Post-Doctorate in Environment, Ethics and Law, CHN
Lopez, J. Gabriel	Director of Global Strategies, IUCN
Mackey, Brendan	Co-chair, Ethics Specialist Group, CEL, IUCN; Earth Charter International Council
McNeely, Jeffrey A.	Chief Scientist, IUCN
Meine, Curt	Director, CHN; Aldo Leopold Foundation
Monteiro Matos, Karla	Ministry of Environment, Brazil
Pruett-Jones, Melinda	Executive Director, Chicago Wilderness
Rabb, George B.	Chicago Zoological Society; Board Member, CHN; Honorary Member, IUCN
Rogner, John	Chair, Chicago Wilderness; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ross, Laurel	Urban Conservation Director, Field Museum of Natural History; Chicago Wilderness
Wagiet, Razeena	Managing Executive, People and Conservation, South African National Parks; Earth Charter International Council

Appendix 3. Summary of Chicago Wilderness Presentations

Chicago Wilderness Overview

John Rogner, Chair, Chicago Wilderness

Urbanization has both destroyed and preserved natural areas in the Chicago region. The region has the largest concentrations of both natural wetlands and endangered species in the state of Illinois; 25% of the state's natural areas are preserved in the Chicago region. However, the region faces a number of threats to its biodiversity, including habitat fragmentation, unsustainable land use and incompatible development, such as suburban sprawl and draining wetlands for farming, invasive species, fire suppression and the resulting ecological changes, as well as limited public understanding. To combat these threats to biodiversity, senior staff, scientists and land managers from various organizations in northeastern Illinois decided they must work together on issues of shared concern, yet also maintain the autonomy of each organization.

Chicago Wilderness was officially launched in early 1996, with biodiversity conservation as its primary mission. CW manages land to address both natural changes and human-induced changes, like climate change, by striving to maintain the resiliency of natural systems. To do this, CW works to keep or restore native species.

CW consists of a loose network of organizations that works both jointly and separately to achieve its goals. Member organizations include local, state and federal government; land owners and land managers; research and education institutions; and a variety of

civil society groups. The Executive Council is made up of a third of the member organizations. The Steering Committee includes representatives from each of the different member organizations. There are also four smaller work groups for land management, science, education and outreach, and policy and strategy. Some local politicians are strongly supportive, such as Mayor Richard M. Daley of Chicago, while others are less so.

The following basic beliefs guide CW's work: peoples' lives are improved by a connection with nature; healthy ecosystems are critical to a healthy economy; people are an essential part of the conservation equation; natural communities need active management and restoration; conservation work is bioregional and transcends political and socioeconomic boundaries; conservation decisions should be science-based; and regional collaboration is the most effective way to achieve conservation goals.

The richness of the natural communities of the CW region demands that its citizens act as good stewards of these lands, protecting them for the future. This sense of stewardship responsibility may arise from a sense of religious obligation, from a deep respect for evolutionary diversity, from the hopefulness in restoration work, or from a simple love of the land. Connecting with nature is crucial for human welfare, as well as for a sense of place, or bioregional pride.

Connecting People with Nature:

Engaging Volunteers

Jane Balaban, Volunteer Steward, North Branch Restoration Project; Laurel Ross, Urban Conservation Director, Field Museum; and Larry Suffredin, Cook County Board Commissioner and Forest Preserve District Board Commissioner, 13th District

Volunteer activities are important to achieve conservation goals, as well as to provide local residents with a personal connection to nearby natural areas. CW consists of more than 300,000 acres of protected lands, overseen by only 364 employees. Therefore, a statewide network of 8,000-10,000 volunteers is crucial to the work of the organization, especially the time-consuming,

meticulous tasks of ecological restoration.

While some volunteers participate occasionally as time allows, others become strong advocates. These "volunteer stewards" are charged with the restoration of a particular natural area. What binds volunteers together is their passion for the land, as well as their sense of personal ownership of and responsibility for

particular places. Community-building events like potlucks, ecology tours and biannual conferences for volunteers reinforce these bonds. There is careful matching of volunteer interests to expertise. For example, volunteers with a passion for gardening will grow rare plants in their yards for later transplant to natural areas. New volunteer stewards are recruited through an apprentice steward program. Some local community colleges also provide course credit to students who participate in ecological restoration of local forest preserves. Growing the volunteer pool, especially to include more children and youth, is key to the long-term success of conservation in Chicago Wilderness.

Volunteers are environmental ambassadors who can help others reconnect to the land, as well as serve as a political constituency to call for better governmental policies. For example, U.S. Senator Dick

Durbin met with CW after receiving questions about their federal funding. He was very impressed with their commitment and their work, and began to speak out at the national level on behalf of the organization. Chicago Mayor Richard Daley also works to engage the public by communicating the financial benefits of conservation efforts (e.g., clean water and stormwater management) to his constituents.

The quarterly magazine, *Chicago Wilderness*, helps to expand the constituency of biodiversity conservationists; individuals subscribe to it and learn from it. One participant added that South African National Parks builds local interest in parks through widely advertised adult and junior “Honorary Ranger” programs and by organizing local community interest groups for each park.

Values-Based Communications

Lucy Hutcherson, Director of Conservation and Communication Programs, Chicago Wilderness and Peggy Stewart, Manager of Outdoor and Environmental Education, Chicago Park District

Values-based communications is a technique that CW uses to communicate the importance of biodiversity conservation to the public, described in detail in a report published by The Biodiversity Project.¹² First, conservationists need to create a values statement that will resonate with the public. Second, they should identify and illustrate a threat to those values. Finally, they should provide specific actions that people can take to act on the threat.

A new Chicago Wilderness initiative, called “Leave No Child Inside” (www.kidsoutside.info), draws on Richard Louv's book *Last Child in the Woods*. The project's goals are to raise public awareness about the dangers of “Nature Deficit Disorder” among American children, increase the number of kids that spend time outside and increase the amount of time that children spend outside.

The solutions are being pursued in a coordinated fashion by various CW member organizations. For

example, the DuPage County Forest Preserve District is giving children who participate in its programs more time for outdoor unstructured play and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is sponsoring a workshop called “No Teacher Left Inside.”

Some groups with outdoor programs, such as such as the National Rifle Association and the Boy and Girl Scouts, have not yet opted to become CW members. The Girl Scouts own a number of campgrounds in the region, yet their girls often prefer to go to the mall; therefore, they are an ideal target audience for this campaign. The campaign's target audiences are still being defined, but CW has begun outreach to potential outside partners such as outdoor recreation groups, communities of faith, corporations and health care organizations.

¹² The Biodiversity Project (1999) *Life. Nature. The Public. Making the Connection: A Biodiversity Communications Handbook*; see www.biodiversityproject.org/commhandbook.htm.

Approaches to Conservation Problems

Public Lands and Associated Values-Based Issues

Stephen Packard, Executive Director, Audubon-Chicago Region; Debra Shore, Commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago; and Larry Suffredin, Cook County Board Commissioner and Forest Preserve District Board Commissioner, 13th District

Ecological restoration work on public lands often requires control of certain species. Deer, for example, no longer have any wild predators in the Chicago region and are severely overpopulated. Garlic mustard, buckthorn and other invasive plant species are so prevalent in some areas that most native plants cannot grow. Species control efforts are sometimes draw criticism, from a variety of sources. Complaints from three small groups of vocal critics once caused all restoration activity in the forest preserves of three counties to be slowed or postponed until hearings could be held. The challenge for CW is therefore how to educate people about the need for plant and animal species control in restoration. Providing scientific evidence is one approach, but does not address people's emotions: "too many deer destroy rare wildflowers" is not a good counter for "I love deer because they're beautiful." Instead, CW needs to develop conservation messages that incorporate feelings as well as facts, sentiment as well as science.

Public officials are often not well educated about the importance of conservation, yet they must make

policy decisions regarding public lands that balance the needs of all their constituents. One solution is to elect, orient and train public officials on the importance of biodiversity conservation. Another is for policymakers to hold public meetings on contentious issues regarding public lands, identify all the leaders of the various constituencies, and bring them to the table to work out a solution together.

Various policy initiatives have been helpful to elected officials. For example, the Cook County Forest Preserve Land Management Ordinance has deflected many inappropriate uses of public lands. Participatory democracy can also be quite helpful, since no other group is as organized as the environmental movement in terms of advocating for sound policies. On the other hand, another participant pointed out that to really engage in deliberative democracy, public officials need to be willing to take risks, and also to connect with peoples' core concerns on an emotional level, even if those core concerns do not directly involve the environment.

Non-Public Lands and Associated Values-Based Issues

Dennis Dreher, Natural Resources Engineer with Cowhey, Gudmonson, Leder, Ltd.

CW's "Green Infrastructure Vision" is a landscape-scale project for which resource management experts in the region identified and prioritized the best quality natural areas that were not protected as public land. The resulting Green Infrastructure map linked natural areas with corridors, usually along rivers. The vision also considered how best to protect these lands. One option is to purchase the land; Chicago area residents have approved more than \$1 billion worth of funds for open space acquisition over the last ten years. However, there is not enough money to purchase all the important lands. Other protection methods the vision proposed include conservation easements, owner-led ecological restoration on private lands and conservation development. Conservation development involves providing tax breaks, expedited permit approvals and other incentives for developers to set aside open space, restore landscape and design their

developments to work with nature rather than against it. Examples of successful conservation developments in the region include Prairie Crossing (www.prairiecrossing.com), The Sanctuary of Bull Valley (www.sanctuaryofbv.com) and McAndrews Glen (www.legacyhomes.net/mc_community.htm).

Several key regional planning agencies have adopted CW's Green Infrastructure Vision, including the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission. CW convinces developers to "go green" by first making it clear that CW is not opposed to all development, but instead feels that developers' designs could be improved upon in specific ways. Conservation development can save developers both time and money, fewer roads need to be constructed and paved and natural rather than engineered stormwater management systems can be

used. Also, such developments can offer a marketing advantage and a price premium: developers can receive \$25,000-50,000 more per house in

conservation communities as compared with other developments.

The CW Report Card

Geoff Levin, Director, Division of Biodiversity and Ecological Entomology, and Plant Systematist, Illinois Natural History Survey, and Stephen Packard, Executive Director, Audubon-Chicago Region

In April of 2006, CW released a report entitled “The State of Our Chicago Wilderness: A Report Card on the Health of the Region's Ecosystems.” Following up on Chicago Wilderness's *Biodiversity Recovery Plan* from 1997, this new report found that 68% of the land in the region was in poor condition, and very little was in good or excellent condition. A later study focused specifically on the region's woodlands and found that two-thirds to three-quarters of wooded areas were of poor quality and none were of high quality.

Because of the documented decline in the health of the region's ecosystems from 1997 to 2006, CW decided it needed to institute a regional monitoring program. This program would both periodically assess the status and trends of regional ecosystem health and the success of land management efforts. Scientists working on the monitoring plan encountered a number of difficulties, including the lack of existing, standardized data to use as a baseline and lack of agreement about which animal and plant communities were most important to monitor. Eventually a draft regional monitoring plan was developed, focusing on plants and birds, and sent out

for comment. Yet so far very few CW member organizations have responded. This lack of response may be related to fears that the data will reflect badly on land management organizations, or that organizations might be told to monitor in a new way. In the end, CW decided to bring in an outside consultant with expertise in environmental conflict resolution to help the group reach consensus on a regional monitoring plan. This experience gives an example of where one of the strengths of CW, its organization as a loose consortium of independent member organizations, can also be a weakness.

CW has funded a regional monitoring program focused on plants of conservation concern and some county-level and regional vegetation and bird inventory programs that can serve as prototypes for regional monitoring. In addition, the CW science team has received funding from the Donnelley Foundation to set up a small number of monitoring sites throughout the region. A monitoring program for a land manager working for a public agency, however, must be driven primarily by management goals, and only secondarily by scientific goals.

Future Challenge

Expanding the Conversation Beyond Science Practitioners

Rev. Clare Butterfield, Director of Faith in Place, and Liam Heneghan, Professor of Environmental Science and Co-Director of the Institute for Nature and Culture at DePaul University and Chair of the Chicago Wilderness Science Team

There are a number of challenges with involving academics, both scientists and non-scientists, in the work of CW. Many scientists prefer to do their work in parts of the world far removed from where they teach. And even if scientists choose to do their research locally, it can be difficult to marry the data needed by land managers with the kinds of studies many scientists want to conduct. On the other hand, many non-scientists have a difficult time seeing how their work can relate to the goals of CW.

To help encourage the participation of scientists, the Science Team has developed a program of science research for CW, identified sources of funding and is locating scientists to do the research. To bring in humanities scholars, the Institute for Nature and Culture at DePaul University is coordinating a structured reading of CW's Biodiversity Recovery Plan, evaluating the language used and whether this language makes it more difficult for CW to reach the public with its conservation message.

Because of its religious focus, the faith community can offer scientists and the general public something rare and precious: grounds for hopefulness in an area too often dominated by grief and loss. Another lesson conservationists can learn from people of faith is how to really listen to others, and learn to speak in a language that they will understand.

Several participants argued that more attention needs to be devoted to the humanities and to

religious understandings, which together provide ethical foundations for and creative expressions of our conservation work. Several other participants emphasized the need for adaptive management, to not wait until we have a perfect understanding of how to manage lands to conserve biodiversity, but rather start managing now and learn how to improve as we go along. Our needs for preservation and restoration are too great to allow us to wait for science to ground all our decision-making.

Defining the Mission and Determining Program Emphasis

Jerry Adelman, Executive Director, Openlands Project and Suzanne Malec McKenna, Commissioner, City of Chicago Dept. of the Environment

For CW member organizations, “our business is people and their love of nature.” Yet CW has not done enough to engage the public in its work. One way to bridge this gap is to make conservation more relevant by better integrating it with other issues people care about, such as the economy, public health and safety, and education. For instance, the City of Chicago’s Conservation Corps has founded Chicago Conservation Clubs in the public schools with 150 schools participating in 2007. Another solution is to listen to and learn from communities outside the elitist circle, acknowledging their concerns and working to earn their trust. CW also needs to engage the private sector. The City of Chicago has had good success with the Green Permit Program, which both speeds permit approval and waives fees for environmentally sustainable projects.

The Openlands Project, Field Museum and the Chicago Botanic Garden have worked together with communities where a lot of disinvestment has occurred, meeting with church groups, school councils, block clubs, etc. to develop open space plans that capitalize on those neighborhoods’ greatest

assets: people and vacant land. Schools are another place where CW should focus its efforts, helping with curriculum development, developing native plant gardens, and purchasing locally grown food for the cafeterias. Food security is a very important concern for many people.

Although the local foods movement is exploding, so too are calls for farmers to grow corn for biofuels. Should we devote the agricultural lands just outside Chicago’s suburbs to subdivisions, corn production for ethanol, or growing local, healthy foods? CW needs to focus more on the local foods movement. Only 3% of the organic food in the Chicago region is grown here, which offers a tremendous business opportunity for local farmers who transition to organic agriculture. The Fresh Taste Initiative is helping local farmers with the transition to organics, land availability and marketing. It is also important to bring nature into the city, such as through gardens, since this builds a political constituency that wants to support environmental initiatives. Community gardens can also be excellent hands-on tools to teach kids.

Promoting a Conservation Ethic in an Apparent Land of Plenty

Dennis Dreher, Natural Resources Engineer with Cowhey, Gudmonson, Leder, Ltd. and Debra Shore, Commissioner, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

In the Chicago region, water seems plentiful because we live on the shores of Lake Michigan. Yet many communities in this region have begun to run short of groundwater due to overuse and waste. Much of the water that is pumped out of our aquifers is polluted with runoff from streets, agricultural fields and other sources. This polluted water then drains

into the Mississippi River, and eventually empties into the Gulf of Mexico, where the pollutants cause a growing dead zone. Lake Michigan, too, is suffering from overuse, 1.5 billion gallons of water are pulled from the lake every day, and almost none of it is returned. 20% of the world’s fresh surface water is in the Great Lakes; therefore we have a global

responsibility to manage this precious resource wisely. Green roofs, permeable roadways, bioswales, using wastewater for irrigation are all ideas for reducing water waste, but as long as local residents believe that fresh water is plentiful, they will have little incentive to pursue such innovations.

Fresh water supply, although not an issue in Chicago due to its proximity to Lake Michigan, is an issue for many surrounding communities. Most

households and businesses are not even metered in terms of water usage, but instead are charged a flat fee. New buildings, however, are being required to have water meters, and Chicago is working with the owners of older buildings to install meters on them. Several suburbs are also using price incentives to reduce water usage; an average amount of water use is charged one price, while rates go up exponentially after that.

Chicago Wilderness: General Discussion

Two key themes emerged during the general discussion: the challenges of integrating the humanities into conservation work and involving more diverse communities in conservation efforts. Although CW as a whole does not have a clear plan for how to include the humanities in its work, several member organizations have sponsored such initiatives. Faith in Place, for instance, engages faith communities in environmental work, such as ecological restoration. The citywide Chicago Humanities Festival adopted climate change as its overall theme in 2007, approaching the topic not just from scientific perspectives, but also from art, music, drama and religion. The Institute for Nature and Culture at DePaul University is interested in helping develop a Humanities Research Agenda for CW, similar to the existing Natural Science and Social Science Research Agendas. One problem with incorporating humanities scholars in conservation work is that many such scholars focus their research on nature as primarily a social construct, which can

lead to problems with application to actual conservation efforts.

Rather than just “preaching to the choir,” CW seeks to broaden its reach to include diverse organizations. Anthropologists from the Field Museum have been asking local cultural organizations what environmental projects would interest them. Many replied that projects involving food and art (music/dance/poetry) would likely attract their participation. One productive avenue, then, might be to work with community organizations to identify their environmental interests and concerns, and then develop projects together in those areas. If people do not have enough to eat, they might be reluctant to support spending tens of millions of dollars on ecological restoration. To achieve the goals of biodiversity conservation, then, we need to work not just on conservation, but also on ensuring equity and justice for all members of our communities.

Appendix 4. Chicago Wilderness Fact Sheet



CHICAGO WILDERNESS

Learn more at www.chicagowilderness.org

What is Chicago Wilderness?

Stretching from southeastern Wisconsin, through northeastern Illinois, into northwestern Indiana and southwestern Michigan, **Chicago Wilderness** is a regional nature reserve that contains some of the rarest natural communities in the world. Embedded in one of North America's largest metropolitan regions, Chicago Wilderness is a mosaic of natural areas that includes more than 300,000 acres of protected lands and waters, as well as many that are unprotected. These natural areas are home to a wide diversity of life: thousands of native plants and animals live here among the more than 10 million people who also call the region home.

The **Chicago Wilderness consortium** is an alliance of more than 200 public and private organizations working together to protect, restore, study and manage the natural ecosystems of the Chicago region, contribute to the conservation of global biodiversity, and enrich local residents' quality of life. The consortium achieves its mission through collaborative work in natural area restoration, science, sustainable development, outreach and advocacy.

Why Chicago Wilderness is Important and What Threatens It

The Chicago region is one of a handful of metropolitan areas in the world that has a high concentration of globally significant natural communities. The region includes some of the best surviving examples of Midwestern prairies, woodlands and wetlands and supports many rare plants and animals, including nearly 200 species listed as endangered or threatened. Since less than one-tenth of one percent of Illinois' tallgrass prairie, and even smaller fragments of oak savannas, remain, these communities are more rare than tropical rain forests.

Yet while Chicago Wilderness still harbors a rich natural heritage, the region's biological diversity is under great stress. Two centuries of farming, industry, and urban development have transformed the region's landscape. Nature has been squeezed into small, fragmented, and vulnerable patches: prairies, woodlands, wetlands and dunes are encroached upon by invasive species and languish without fire and renewal; wildlife populations are disconnected, losing genetic diversity and declining or stressed by overpopulation due to lack of management; and our lakes, rivers, and natural communities are declining gradually from the impacts of pollution and being altered by the effects of global climate change.

To address these threats, in 1996, 34 organizations joined together to launch the Chicago Wilderness consortium, an extraordinary effort to conduct conservation on a regional scale. Since its formation, the consortium has grown to more than 200 member organizations, including federal, state, county, and local agencies, municipalities, conservation organizations, universities, homeowners associations, faith-based organizations, schools, and corporations.

What We Do

The goals of Chicago Wilderness are to:

- Increase public awareness of local natural resources and encourage people to participate in and become advocates for conservation;
- Restore the health of our natural communities and the rare species they harbor;
- Promote best practices in habitat restoration and land management; and
- Collaborate with other stakeholders to ensure that a healthy and sustainable economy for the region is based on a healthy and sustainable ecology.

Notable achievements of Chicago Wilderness include:

- Development of the Chicago Wilderness *Biodiversity Recovery Plan*, which describes the natural communities of the Chicago region, assesses their health, and makes recommendations for their conservation.
- Publication of *Chicago Wilderness, An Atlas of Biodiversity*, which details the region's natural history and diversity and serves as a resource to teachers, students, planners, and others.
- Outreach to local governments and land-use planners to promote sustainable development, and implementation of a "Green Infrastructure Vision" for the region.
- Development of a regional research agenda to identify and address the critical questions that need to be answered to heal and sustain local nature.
- Production of the Chicago Wilderness *Report Card*, which assesses the health of our natural communities and measures progress against the *Biodiversity Recovery Plan*.
- Engagement of local citizens in environmental stewardship. Volunteers help restore habitat through activities such as invasive species removal, planting native shrubs and flowers and assisting with controlled burns. Many volunteers are trained as "citizen scientists" to help monitor wildlife and plant populations.
- Launch of the *Leave No Child Inside* initiative to provide more opportunities for kids to connect to nature, promote children's health, and foster generations of kids who care enough about nature to protect it.

Chicago Wilderness Today

Celebrating more than 10 years of collaborative conservation, Chicago Wilderness is looked upon as a model for collective action in an urban setting, and on a regional scale. Yet the threats to the health of our natural areas remain stark and pressing. The greater Chicago metropolitan area hosts two of the fastest-growing counties in the country and is likely to become home to a million more people during the next 20 years. Whether the necessary residential growth, transportation plans, and economic factors harm or help our natural resources is the great challenge we face. Chicago Wilderness is working to address this challenge, and to restore and protect our natural heritage for today's residents and for future generations.

Appendix 5. Chicago Wilderness Vision, Mission and Beliefs



CHICAGO WILDERNESS

Vision for the Chicago Wilderness Region

We envision a future:

- Where accessible, interconnected, restored and healthy ecosystems contribute to economic vitality and quality of life for all residents in the Chicago metropolitan area;
- Where the region's abundant open spaces and natural communities are actively protected, restored, and managed to ecological health;
- Where people appreciate, take pride in, and provide support to our native ecosystems; and
- Where the resulting culture is one of conservation and stewardship of nature.

Mission for the Chicago Wilderness Consortium

To realize this vision, Chicago Wilderness is a consortium of organizations that champions biodiversity and its contribution to the quality of life in the urban, suburban, and rural areas of the Chicago Metropolitan region. Together, we work across the region to:

- Raise awareness and knowledge about the biodiversity and value of nature in our region, our neighborhoods, our workplaces, our schools, and our homes through formal and informal education.
- Increase and diversify public participation and environmental stewardship.
- Build alliances among the diverse constituencies throughout the Chicago region to foster a sustainable relationship with nature.
- Facilitate applied natural and social science research, best practices development, and information sharing.
- Generate broad-based public and private support and attract resources to achieve our goals.

Basic Beliefs of all Chicago Wilderness members

We believe that:

- People's lives are improved by a connection with nature.
- Healthy ecosystems and biodiversity are critical to a thriving, vital economy.
- The natural communities in our region, some globally rare, need to be actively managed and conserved.
- Our work is regional in nature and can transcend political and socioeconomic boundaries.
- The decisions that we make are based on the best scientifically defensible information and research programs available.
- Regional collaboration is the most effective way to achieve our goals.

