



PAWA NSW  
PO Box 3031  
Asquith NSW 2077  
[pawa.nsw.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pawa.nsw.contact@gmail.com)

WPC 2014 Secretariat  
ICMS Australasia  
GPO Box 3270  
Sydney NSW 2001  
[info@worldparkscongress.org](mailto:info@worldparkscongress.org)

5 November 2014

### **Submission to the Promise of Sydney declaration**

The Protected Area Workers Association of NSW (PAWA) is a non-profit, non-industrial, apolitical professional association for all those who are working in and for protected areas in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Parks Australia.

The aim of PAWA is to advance sustainable practices for the conservation of our natural and cultural resources both here in Australia and in developing countries throughout the world.

PAWA wishes to make the following submission to the Promise of Sydney declaration:

#### **OPERATIONAL CAPACITY**

Protected areas are reserved to protect and maintain important natural and cultural heritage values. To maintain healthy protected areas, protected area managers must develop, resource and implement strategic, science-based programs to manage threats to these natural and cultural values. These programs must incorporate research, adequate monitoring and review.

PAWA strongly recommends that protected area management must ensure staffing is adequate at an operational level to plan and implement conservation management effectively. This will require a sustained increase in funding to ensure that natural and cultural values can be maintained and improved. Training must be adequately funded to improve the capacity of protected area workers to use best practice methods to carry out management actions on the ground.

Competing priorities can result in poor planning, or in well-planned programs being carried out with haste and imprecision. This has the potential to put threatened species, cultural heritage values and the safety of workers and visitors at risk. Maintaining operational capacity is crucial to the carrying out of

essential activities such as fire management, cultural heritage management, pest management and visitor management which protect the values for which these protected areas have been reserved. This may sound kind of simple, but around the world this essential component of protecting land and sea values is under serious pressure with reduced personnel and budgets, resulting in values being degraded.

## **ROLE OF RANGERS**

Rangers have a key role to play in motivating and inspiring both new and existing audiences to appreciate and respect protected areas. This in turn encourages people to visit protected areas, however it also facilitates awareness of the values of protected areas beyond recreational or commercial opportunities, as people grow to understand the value of healthy ecosystems.

Inspiring people to love and respect protected areas for their intrinsic values has positive spin-offs across the landscape, for example an increase in people planting native rather than introduced trees and shrubs in their gardens because they understand the benefits to native wildlife.

Rangers as frontline workers in the global conservation community need to continually innovate to effectively reach communities with our messages and actions.

Rangers have formed global partnerships to contribute to capacity building of protected area workers in critically endangered ecosystems. Support of these partnerships by all governments is essential to resource these activities.

Exchanges and partnerships promote awareness of the challenges of working on the front line in parts of the world where biodiversity is most under threat, such as Africa and the Amazon basin. This awareness can be spread by rangers to the wider community through education and outreach programs. Governments need to support Rangers in spreading innovative management practices and capacity building around the world to meet their commitments to maintain and improve the global protected area system.

## **COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES IN PROTECTED AREAS**

The intrinsic value of protected areas is much greater than their value for revenue raising. The more governments try and make a profit from parks and protected areas, the more they will degrade them.

The “profit” from protected areas is that they sustain our planet’s life-support system and the flow-on effects this has. Benefits include the physical and mental health of the population, the economic benefits of moderating damaging effects of climate change, and the impacts this will have on the fabric of human society.



PAWA NSW  
PO Box 3031  
Asquith NSW 2077  
[pawa.nsw.contact@gmail.com](mailto:pawa.nsw.contact@gmail.com)

Increasing commercial development in protected areas will make it more difficult to protect natural and cultural landscapes for future generations. Making protected areas pay for their management could put the values of these reserves at risk. The loss or degradation of values in our protected areas undermines confidence in government's objectives for conservation management of lands specifically dedicated to the protection of natural and cultural heritage.

It is imperative that governments around the world commit to moderating the actions of their citizens and of their industries which are impacting on the protected areas in their countries and other countries.

This commitment is essential to halt the highly destructive illegal wildlife trade and the decimation this is creating in regions due to the loss of keystone species such as elephants in Africa. Governments from regions such as Asia must recognise the destructive nature of illegal trade in animal products such as ivory and rhino horn and the devastating impacts this has on protected areas in Africa. Governments must move to stop their use and trade to arrest this degradation.

## **EXPANSION OF THE GLOBAL PROTECTED AREA NETWORK**

PAWA recognises the importance of protected areas in sustaining the health of the planet and strongly advocates expansion of the protected area system. It is imperative that existing and new protected areas be maintained to protect their values.

Commitments on a global scale are necessary to prevent extinction of threatened species and protect biodiversity cornerstones, such as primary forest, from logging and mining in places like Indonesia, Brazil and Australia. PAWA recognises that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) informs this process.

PAWA recommends that the Promise of Sydney document adopt the recommendations of Venter et al. (2014) to strengthen the CBD targets to expand protected areas more strategically by tying protected area establishment to the protection of threatened species by:

- The addition of large intact landscapes to the global protected area system.
- Focusing on the creation of new protected areas in biologically threatened areas.
- Directly linking CBD targets on protected areas and threatened species to formalise the interdependence of these key commitments.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, PAWA recommends that the Promise of Sydney strongly support the following:

- That all governments adequately resource park management by providing adequate funding, staffing, equipment and training to their respective park services.
- That all governments provide substantial financial and material assistance to Ranger organisations, assisting their less fortunate colleagues and working together to improve the effectiveness of Rangers throughout the world.
- That all governments ensure that commercial exploitation of parks and protected areas be restrained and is secondary to the protection of the natural and cultural heritage values of the protected areas.
- That all governments recognise the value of protected areas in protecting the health of the planet and commit to expanding protected areas to ensure the protection of the world's flora and fauna and landscapes.

Sincerely



Duncan Scott-Lawson  
Chair, Protected Area Workers Association of NSW

## REFERENCES

Venter, O., Fuller, R.A., Segan, D.B., Carwardine, J., Brooks, T., Butchart, S.H., Di Marco, M., Iwamura, T., Joseph, L., O'Grady, D., Possingham, H.P., Rondinini, C., Smith, R.J., Venter, M. and Watson, J.E.M. (2014). 'Targeting Global Protected Area Expansion for Imperiled Biodiversity'. PLOS Biology 12(6):  
<http://www.plosbiology.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pbio.1001891>.