



Luc Hoffmann
Institute

BOOSTING INNOVATION FOR LIFE ON EARTH

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019

This review, published 5 September 2019, covers the Luc Hoffmann Institute financial year from 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019.

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The Luc Hoffmann legacy



“Conservation is not the protection of nature against human development but the preservation of life-supporting systems and processes as a basis for a lasting development.”

These are the words of a man who helped pioneer the modern conservation movement and drive the work of the Luc Hoffmann Institute. Dr Luc Hoffmann believed that science was the foundation for action but understood the wider reality of preserving life on Earth. He understood that problem-solving needs to be collaborative and take into account different perspectives, and that sustainable development must encompass both nature and people. He wished that the conservation sector would simply collaborate and he had the vision, competence, and means to help make this happen. He was not afraid to experiment with different, innovative approaches and to mix science, art, music and politics to achieve results.

For over 60 years Dr Luc Hoffmann helped generate effective new approaches to nature conservation, bestowing the institute with a strong lineage based on partnership and the arts of convening, connecting and incubating.

Foreword



I started my career in southern Africa in the late 1970s in the discipline of ecology. However, when the new discipline of conservation biology emerged in the early 1980s, I enthusiastically embraced its ambitious premise: not only to study the world around us but also to conserve what we studied.

And then came *biodiversity*.

The concept became a serious agenda item at the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (Rio 92), which culminated in a global biodiversity assessment and an international convention on an emerging concept, climate change, to complement it.

I, like many others, didn't buy into biodiversity immediately. After all, we already had a powerful suite of 'bio' concepts and narratives around biosphere, biome, biota and biomass. The addition of a 'diversity' suffix was far from apparent at the time. However, I was reassured that biodiversity was essential for measuring and monitoring life on Earth.

Since then, for over a quarter of a century, biodiversity has been successful for measuring trends, characterising a crisis and monitoring the alarming decline of the natural world over time. The term 'biodiversity' has since become widely accepted and recognised.

But could this be a problem? The unraveling of life on Earth is as existential a threat to humanity as climate change. Yet whilst every day we hear and read about climate change, biodiversity has been

less successful in mobilising society. Although we are a long way from the kind of necessary climate action that is needed, we are undeniably heading in the right direction.

‘Biodiversity Revisited’, the Luc Hoffmann Institute’s flagship initiative this year, is a rare attempt to question the very concept of biodiversity. How does it serve us, and what opportunities and aspects might we be missing because of its framing? Can biodiversity still succeed, and if so under what conditions?

Innovation and transformative change are essential if biodiversity is to be maintained as the bedrock of all life on Earth. The Luc Hoffmann Institute aims to be the world’s leading catalyst for societal change, whereby the role of biodiversity is widely recognised as the foundation for human development, security and continued life on Earth. We use systems thinking, co-creation, and a theory of change to ideate, incubate, and accelerate initiatives that will make that societal change happen.

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This year, we helped our partners leverage significant funds for global conservation collaboration. Our role in the design of a project that aims to make global trade a force of good for nature and people enabled the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre to secure a GBP 20 million grant to deliver it. To more closely relate biodiversity to social and economic systems, we orchestrated a convening to gauge the feasibility of a ‘Multidimensional Biodiversity Index’, for which we are seeing growing interest within government, business and philanthropic circles.

We continued to work closely with our Advisory Council, the WWF Global Science team and other partners to develop a global code of practice for navigating conflicts between people and wildlife, resulting in a successful pilot in Namibia.

Moving into the next financial year and making headway on our ambitious plans to boost innovation for nature, I look forward to seeing the conservation community pulling together towards a future worth living in. We need clear goals as well as effective, inclusive communication and leadership around shared priorities and solutions. To achieve this, as director of the Luc Hoffmann Institute, I am determined to play my part.

Jon Hutton
Director, Luc Hoffmann Institute

Promoting innovation in conservation

Innovation and transformative change are essential if biodiversity is to be maintained as the foundation of all life on Earth. The Luc Hoffmann Institute aims to be the world's leading catalyst for this change, incubating the ideas that will make it happen.

At the heart of our work is driving system-level change in non-profit conservation. We provide thought leadership on the future of conservation and help innovators turn their ideas into scalable projects to solve complex environmental challenges.

The institute specialises in connecting ideas for transformative change. We actively drive the innovation agenda, drawing upon our experience and networks to facilitate complex conversations between a wide range of stakeholders on innovative topics. We apply our conservation know-how and a theory of change based on systems thinking for improved impact. We focus not only on the supply of solutions, but on supporting their demand and uptake in policy and business decision-making.



A word from Adil Najam

Chair of the Luc Hoffmann Institute Advisory Council

In nature, evolution is innovation, and generally, nature is very good at it on its own. Yet for centuries, the human innovation engine has focused primarily on extracting more from nature. Today, as much as three quarters of the Earth's land surface is under pressure from human activity. Deforestation, drilling, agricultural and other practices have become overwhelming and destructive. To reduce our footprint without reducing our well-being, we need to innovate differently.

How can we globally rethink the way we define, value, protect and restore life on Earth? We need credible, salient, and co-produced innovation that involves diverse stakeholders for impact. This year, the Luc Hoffmann Institute-led Biodiversity Revisited initiative is helping to do just that, and the timing could not be more critical.

In last year's annual report, I said that biodiversity was still hidden in the shadows, and this year I have been very excited to see biodiversity climbing up the list of society's concerns. To keep the momentum and secure the changes needed for a world worth living in, we need to put meaning into the word biodiversity, making it relatable and relevant to everyone.

The wonder that I have for the tree outside my office, and the monkey that once stole my camera near Victoria Falls, speaks louder to me than an abstract concept like biodiversity. People around the world must understand what biodiversity and the consequences of its loss means for them. Not all of nature is beautiful and wonderful – the ugly bugs that pollinate and give us the food we eat, and the

microbes that are in the soil have great value that speaks to me.

The single most important innovation that will be needed, if the combined well-being of nature and people is to succeed, is innovation that relates to how we think of nature, and about our own relationship with nature. That relationship cannot be one of domination and extraction, and has to be one of co-existence as one very special species in a planet full of very special species. We need a collective realisation of our own responsibility towards nature and other people. It is in triggering this innovation of thought that the Luc Hoffmann Institute can make its most important contribution to life on Earth.



Accelerating ideas for continued life on Earth

CONVENING



19

HIGH-PROFILE
CONVENINGS

473

PARTICIPANTS

87%

OF POST-CONVENING
AND ANNUAL SURVEY
RESPONDENTS
RECOMMEND US

INFLUENCE



81%

SAY OUR CONVENINGS HAVE
HAD A VALUABLE INFLUENCE
ON THEIR SUSTAINABILITY
THINKING

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP



31,306

READS OF STAFF PUBLICATIONS
ON RESEARCHGATE

VALUE FOR MONEY



1:9

FOR EVERY CHF 1
INVESTED ON THE INSTITUTE,
CHF 9 WERE RAISED
FOR INNOVATION

PARTNERSHIPS



37

CORE PARTNERS

WEB AND SOCIAL MEDIA



9,800

UNIQUE WEBSITE
VISITORS THIS YEAR



539

LINKEDIN
FOLLOWERS



1,721

TWITTER
FOLLOWERS

Highlights of our work

Taking a fresh look at biodiversity

For decades, the conservation community has underestimated how deeply nature is entwined with social, economic and political systems. The fragmentation of research and policy efforts into overlapping agendas around biodiversity, climate, oceans, land degradation and sustainable development has prevented the conservation community from developing a holistic approach to sustaining the diversity of life on Earth. [Biodiversity Revisited](#) is a deeply collaborative, interdisciplinary thought leadership initiative. It is a historic attempt to produce a five-year research agenda to create the conditions for research to help achieve the 2030 sustainable development goals set by the United Nations. Sourcing provocative input from around the world, this initiative, led by the Luc Hoffmann Institute, is undertaking the first comprehensive review of the concepts, narratives, governance, science, systems and futures underpinning biodiversity science since the emergence of the term 'biodiversity' in the 1980s. Biodiversity Revisited contributes to the ideas and efforts leading to 2020, a landmark policy year for biodiversity conservation, climate change and sustainable land use.

“Biodiversity Revisited is an exciting project. It offers an urgently needed opportunity to reframe the research agenda and the debate. In a time of growing global commitment to action for nature, it could not be more timely.”

Jim Leape

*William and Eva Price Senior Fellow at Stanford Woods
Institute for the Environment;
Co-director, Center for Ocean Solutions*





Towards a code of practice for navigating conflicts over iconic wildlife

The rapid expansion of the human population, coupled with extensive habitat loss and fragmentation, has increased the potential for negative interactions between animals and people, potentially with damaging consequences for all involved. From livestock depredation by wolves in Europe to elephants in Africa destroying crops and endangering people's lives, these conflicts can be highly charged, involving stakeholders with strongly held positions. Although a multitude of conflict management and mitigation approaches exist there is no overarching global standard or code of practice that incorporates the perspectives of all stakeholders including community groups, hunters, conservation organisations and government agencies. This year, the Luc Hoffmann Institute has been working with Griffith University, the University of Aberdeen, the IUCN-SSC Human-Wildlife Conflict Task Force, WWF Governance and Wildlife Practices, Namibian groups and others to explore the creation of such a standard, learning from approaches used in other sectors such as peace-building and conflict resolution. The aim is to identify the governance structures and implementation methods that will allow a global standard to be developed that will provide locally relevant guidance for donors, governments and practitioners.

“The process that we are developing has been shown to be successful in finding solutions in conflictual environments but it hasn’t been applied in the conservation sector sufficiently. Thanks to the Luc Hoffmann Institute’s initiative, we are applying it for the first time to address conflicts over iconic wildlife.”

***Duan Biggs,
Senior Research Fellow, Environmental Futures Research
Institute, Griffith University***

Making biodiversity meaningful for all

One of the main reasons we are losing biodiversity is that it is not valued in our global systems. ‘Value’ has many meanings, including economic but also social, moral or aesthetic. Can we develop an overarching indicator of the state of biodiversity in all its dimensions? An indicator that includes links to human wellbeing and transforms environmental decision-making in the way GDP influences economic decisions? Joining forces with the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the Luc Hoffmann Institute has been consulting widely to explore the feasibility of such an index, learning from other successful indices such as the Multidimensional Poverty Index and the Ocean Health Index. The discussions fed into a convening held in June 2019 involving innovators, foundations, government, NGO and business representatives to further scope the idea of a [Multidimensional Biodiversity Index](#). The aim is to transform biodiversity loss into a tangible entity that everyone can understand and act on. There has been significant interest in the concept and we are now working with partners to take the initiative forward.

“Some things are very difficult to count, but if we create an infrastructure for measuring biodiversity, then it begins to count for society and people start to see the impact.”

*Pali Lehohla,
former Statistician General of South Africa and
Founder of the Pan-African Institute for Evidence*

“This is going to be important in designing policy interventions that can affect the trend [in species depletion] and hopefully turn it back.”

*Adriana Conconi,
Executive Director, Oxford Poverty and Human
Development Initiative*





People protecting landscapes

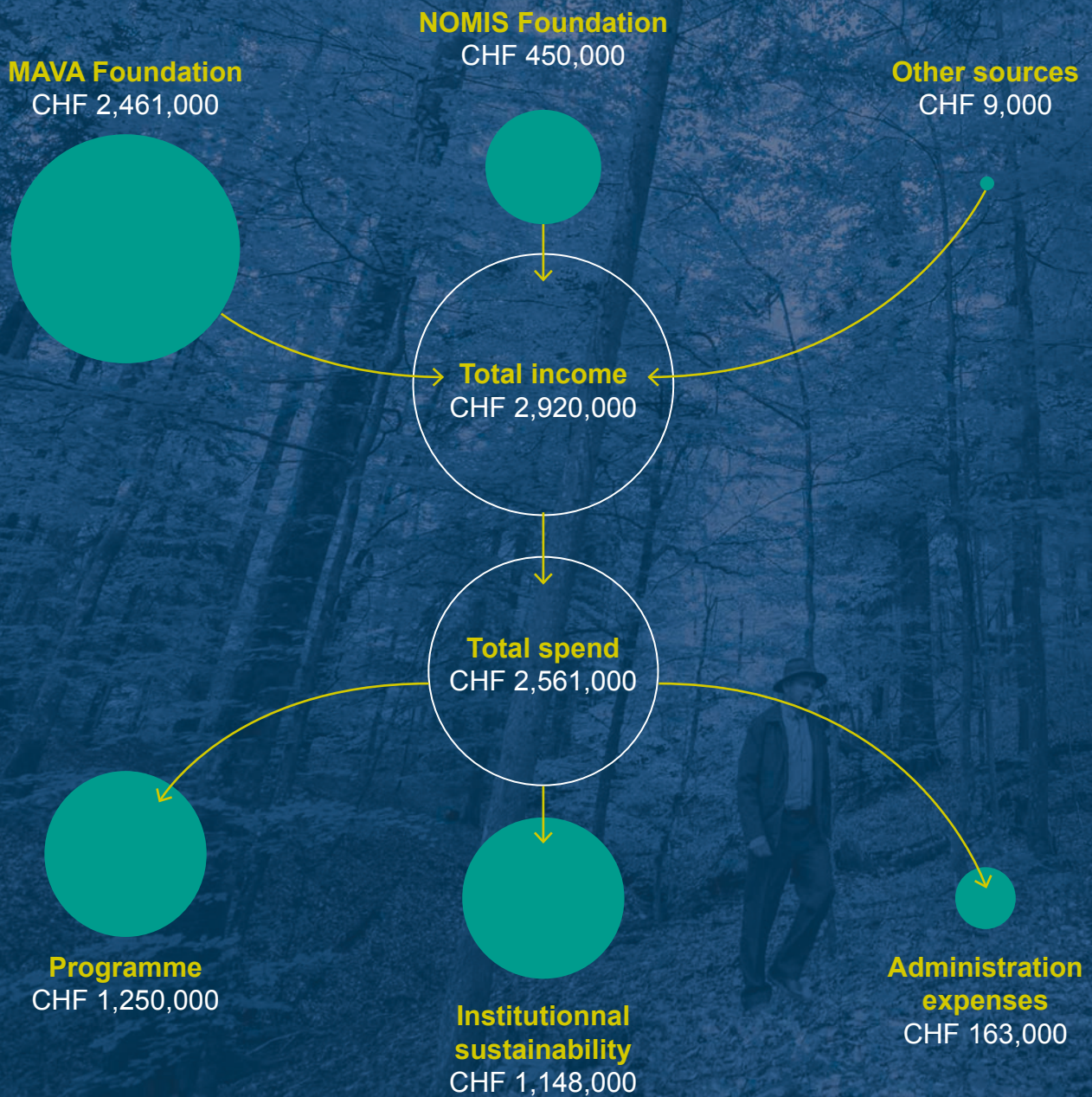
Throughout millennia, indigenous peoples and local communities have often developed the values, knowledge and approaches to manage our land and oceans sustainably, but this has not been formally recognised by many decision makers. In order to empower these groups to exercise their own choices, remove barriers, and build the enabling conditions for a more inclusive and sustainable future, WWF has been working to support indigenous and local community-led visions for conservation. Working with WWF offices around the world, the Luc Hoffmann Institute led a rapid response intervention to co-design a global theory of change process with WWF. This co-designed process included reimagining the role of conservation itself for a better future, and ensured early engagement with indigenous peoples, local communities and human rights groups for maximum impact. As a result, the design of the initiative was more thoroughly tested and the initiative was able to have an impact almost immediately.

“The Luc Hoffmann Institute brought real added value [to this initiative] - actively listening to the conversations and then creatively and lightly structuring the Theory of Change discussion in a way that built on the issues surfacing and gave us some first steps forward towards more clarity and coherence, and also identified some of the other questions we need to explore more deeply. I hope we can continue to count on support from the Luc Hoffmann Institute.”

Elaine Geyer-Allély, Deputy Leader and Business Manager, Governance Practice WWF International

Financials

FY19 spend and income



Notes

Spend and income is reported using the methodology agreed with the MAVA Foundation, the institute's primary donor. Income of CHF 450,000 received in FY19 from the NOMIS Foundation will be spent over FY19 and FY20. Spend includes CHF 151,731 of funds that were contracted in FY19 for activities that will be completed in FY20.

Our team

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Nicola Chapman*

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Anca Damerell

Research and Projects Coordinator

Adrian Dellecker

Head of Programme

Michelle Demateis Schmitt

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Richard Gauld

Head of Operations

Jonathan Hutton

Director

Sandrine Jimenez

Logistics and Administrative Coordinator

Melanie Ryan

Senior Programme Manager

Jessica Villat

Head of Communication

Carina Wyborn

Research Adviser

The institute is supported by several consultants on its programme, communication, and other activities.

**left on 16 July 2019*

Our Advisory Council members (2018-2019)

Bill Adams

Moran Chair in Conservation and Development, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge

Rosie Cooney

Chair, IUCN CEESP/SSC Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group

Renata Dwan

Director, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

André Hoffmann

President, MAVA Foundation

Jean Jalbert

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Jim Leape

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