

## INTERNATIONAL LAND CONSERVATION NETWORK

### Connecting for Conservation

-- Laura Johnson, Director, International Land Conservation Network

The month of September saw the ILCN team in two very different parts of the world – Hawaii and Chile.

Emily Myron, Program Manager for the ILCN, and I had the opportunity to attend five days of the World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Honolulu, Hawaii in early September 2016. Organized every four years by the [International Union for the Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\)](#), the Congress had more than 10,000 people attending over the course of 10 days. Emily and I were there to participate in the Congress “forum” - which featured numerous workshops, plenaries, knowledge cafes and other gatherings proposed and executed by a wide array of participants, sponsors, experts and interest groups. The breadth and depth of the offerings at the WCC were remarkable. Emily and I focused on presentations related to private land conservation, which, frankly, is still developing as an area of focus for the IUCN ([see following article](#)). Nonetheless we found plenty to engage us and many offerings in which we actively participated. For example, I was asked for comments on the development of land trusts in China and learned a great deal about what’s happening in China during that session ([see following article](#)).



ILCN Director, Laura Johnson, and Program Manager, Emily Myron, at the World Conservation Congress.



Many thanks to the friends of the ILCN who met up to share ideas, experiences, and stories. Looking forward to many more great conversations in the future.

Emily and I very much appreciated the generous amounts of time spent learning from many of our colleagues and partners, and also their genuine interest in and support of the work of the ILCN. If you were at the WCC and we didn't get a chance to meet you, then please let us know! We felt privileged and inspired to be in the company of so many committed global conservationists.

At the end of September, the ILCN team was in Chile, where we held a *Workshop on Emerging Innovations in Conservation Finance*, near Santiago. The aim of the workshop was to build on and sharpen concepts that are making, or have the potential to make, a substantial impact on conservation finance in the Western Hemisphere and beyond. The workshop offered an opportunity for North and South American conservationists to share successes and lessons learned, while also engaging in a broader discussion with finance experts representing foundations, investors, banks, and other stakeholders, around how to best engage the private sector in generating revenue for conservation efforts. [More on this workshop below.](#)

Both of these events were great opportunities to build relationships and learn about the tremendous work going on around the world. We look forward to sharing more in the coming months!

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## Highlights from the ILCN

We are excited to share stories from ILCN members. If you have a successful conservation initiative, story, event, or webinar to share, please contact us at [ILCN@lincolnst.edu](mailto:ILCN@lincolnst.edu).

### IUCN's commitment to privately protected areas

Despite being a relatively new area of interest for the IUCN, the privately protected area (PPA) movement was well-represented by practitioners from Canada, Australia, South Africa, Paraguay, China, Brazil, Armenia, Belize, the USA, and more at the World Conservation Congress. Countless presentations on finance, management, public-private partnerships, networks, biodiversity, and stewardship on community lands reinforced the importance of this movement to achieving global land conservation and biodiversity targets. The ILCN plans to highlight several of these case studies in the coming months, starting with the [story on China's land trust reserves, below](#).



The approval of a resolution put forward by the [Specialist Group on Privately Protected Areas and Nature Stewardship](#) further reaffirms the IUCN's interest in better understanding and supporting PPAs. Growing out of the 2015 [Futures of Privately Protected Areas](#) report, this resolution codifies the definition of privately protected areas and tasks the specialist group with establishing guidelines, studying the current status of privately protected areas, and exploring how they may be expanded. Finally, it encourages member states to include PPAs that meet the requirements of IUCN Protected Area Standards when reporting protected area coverage and other related information, including to the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in collaboration and agreement with the owners of such areas.

[The full text of the resolution can be read here.](#) Any questions related to the resolution or to the work of the

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specialist group may be directed to the group's leader, [Brent Mitchell](#).

The broader outcomes of the Congress are included in the [Hawaii Commitments](#), which highlight the areas of urgency and consensus discussed at the Congress.

## China's new land trust reserve movement

While the land trust model is old news to US-based conservationists, it has the potential to reshape the way that China approaches the creation and management of protected areas. Currently, over 15% of China's terrestrial land is designated as a protected area, with over 2,700 nature reserves, which have the highest level of legal protection. However, there are still many conservation gaps left out by the existing protected areas system in China, while most local and provincial reserves within the system are essentially "paper parks," with many lacking in funds, enforcement, and management staff. In order to strengthen and expand the existing protected area network, [The Nature Conservancy China program](#) (the Conservancy) and partners have adapted the US land trust model to a Chinese context.

A new policy that was adopted in 2008 allows private individuals and organizations to have management rights over collectively-owned forest land, which opened the door for a conversation about land trusts. Three years later, the Conservancy initiated a collaboration with the local government of Sichuan Province's Pingwu County on exploring the establishment of the country's first land trust reserve. In staying true to the local nature of the land trust movement, the Conservancy then worked to help register a new local entity – the Sichuan Nature Conservation Foundation, now known as the Paradise Foundation. In 2013, the foundation signed the nation's first conservation lease, lasting for the next 50 years.

The local government, the Conservancy, and the foundation promptly designated the leased land a county-level nature reserve, named Laohegou Land Trust Reserve; thus protecting its over 27,000 acres of important giant panda habitat. This reserve's strategic location connects existing protected areas for species like the giant panda and the Sichuan snub-nosed monkeys, creates an area of enforcement to deter poachers trying to enter other protected areas, and protects local streams from being diverted for hydropower.

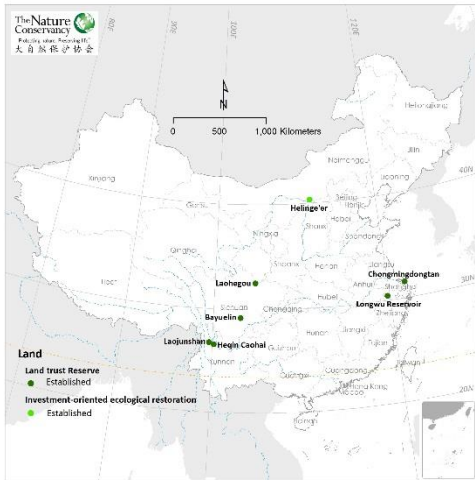
The reserve is also important from a research perspective; scientists have carried out a baseline inventory of wildlife, as well as set up dozens of camera traps to learn more about the numerous important species in residence. Already, the cameras have captured rare footage of a giant panda eating the remains of a takin; reinforcing the relatively new discovery that pandas are omnivores.



Sichuan snub-nosed monkeys image captured in the Laohegou Land Trust Reserve (credit: TNC China).

To manage the reserve, the foundation sponsored the creation of a local entity, the Laohegou Nature Conservation Center, which has hired nearby residents for management, enforcement, and ecological monitoring.

The Conservancy is also piloting mechanisms to increase income in communities bordering the reserves, as well as to fund the management of such reserves. For example, outside of Laohegou Reserve, the foundation has set up a system in which they sell the community's eco-friendly agricultural products to high-end markets. This increases community income and reduces the need for hunting and foraging within the reserve. Foundations are also exploring the potential for limited ecotourism into the reserves and online fundraising for individual projects. Finally, they are also optimistic that China's growing philanthropic sector will take interest and support these efforts. However, [it remains to be seen](#) whether these techniques will yield equitable profits for communities around reserves, or provide the consistent, long-term funding needed for management activities.



The Conservancy's goal is to create 10 land trust reserves in China by 2020 with partners, each employing a slightly different model to demonstrate the flexibility of this approach (such as leasing land and turning it into a reserve, like in Sichuan Province; or taking on management responsibilities of an existing reserve). To date, [six land trust reserves](#), including Laohegou, have been created around the country in partnership with various local entities, and interest continues to grow.

For more information, please contact [Dr. Jin Tong](#), Science Director of TNC's China Program.

## ILCN workshop on conservation finance

On September 27-29th 2016, a group of conservation and conservation finance practitioners convened at the ILCN's Workshop on *Emerging Innovations in Conservation Finance*, held at Las Majadas de Pirque near Santiago, Chile. The aim of this workshop was to build on and sharpen concepts that are making, or have the potential to make, a substantial impact on conservation finance in the Western Hemisphere and beyond.

Estimates claim that as much as \$93 trillion will be required in the next 15 years to build the infrastructure necessary to address climate change, and governments alone will be unlikely to supply the trillions of dollars of capital needed to adequately address these and myriad associated challenges to natural systems. It will take some of the world's best talent, most inventive technologies, and not least, financial ingenuity, coming from the public, private, NGO and academic sectors, to help pass along to future generations the green and biodiverse natural capital now facing ongoing existential threats.

In order to start thinking about addressing these challenges, workshop topics included: examples of value capture in Latin America, restructuring insurance markets to make cities more resilient and financially sustainable in the face of intensified storm events, financial incentives for conservation as written into Chilean and U.S. law, compensatory mitigation, the role for conservation finance-oriented networks, where the conservation finance community of practice will go after COP21 in Paris, the potential role that capital markets might play in addressing climate change, and, particularly, how Chile is emerging as a global leader in land conservation.

Pancho Solis gives a presentation on the successful passage of the *Derecho Real de Conservación*, which now allows private landowners to protect their land in perpetuity.







Workshop participants on a field trip to San Juan de Piche Nature Sanctuary, managed by Fundacion Robles de Cantillana.

Conversations were rich and wide-ranging, and the ILCN will soon share a compendium summarizing the main topics presented during the workshop.

The ILCN would like to thank its partners, without whom this workshop would not have been possible: [Las Majadas de Pirque](#), [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy](#), [David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies \(DRCLAS\)](#), [Harvard University](#), [Fundacion Robles de Cantillana](#), [Templado](#), and [Que Pasa](#).

## Steering Committee Spotlight

### *Victoria Marles*

Ten years ago, Victoria was a communications lawyer wondering what she could do for the natural world; today, she is the CEO for [Trust for Nature](#) (TFN) in Victoria, Australia.

Those many years ago, she and her partner decided to buy a property with a conservation covenant on it. They settled on 40 acres near Wedderburn that was part of a larger Malleefowl habitat restoration project. Becoming a part of an existing conservation community and seeing how her property and her actions played an important role in a larger conservation landscape inspired Victoria, and when a position at Trust for Nature opened, she applied.



Victoria has been the CEO at Trust for Nature for the last seven years, drawing from her experience as a landowner, a conservation practitioner, and a business manager. In the first year in this position, she attended the Land Trust Alliance Rally in the United States. This experience allowed her to see how her work in Australia fit into an international context, as well as to learn about ideas and techniques that were transferable across landscapes. Two years later, she was at the Rally's first international reception, and two years after that, she was at the International Land Conservation Network's (ILCN) first gathering. Since that time, Victoria has been an integral part of the ILCN's steering committee, sharing the Australian experience and bringing international lessons home.

In the last several years, she has also been working to create a network of Australian land trusts, and the Australian Land Conservation Alliance (ALCA) will host its second national meeting this November. She hopes to see this network continue to grow – by building bridges across states, consolidating policy agendas, and exchanging expertise on shared issues. Through Victoria's work with the ALCA and the ILCN, she is ensuring that the best ideas from around the country and around the world are taken into account when shaping the direction of land conservation in Australia.

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## Upcoming Events:

### **International Workshop: Nature Conservation and EU Financing - Challenges, Best Practices and Options** -- *October 10 Bratislava, Slovakia*

This workshop will bring together nature conservation experts, decision-makers and stakeholders from across the EU to discuss how best to address the deficiencies in existing finance and how they might be addressed in the upcoming reforms of the EU Multiannual Financial Framework. More information is available [here](#).

### **Workshop on Cross Boundary Collaboration** -- *October 27 in Minneapolis, MN, USA*

Hosted a day before the start of the 2016 Land Trust Alliance Rally, the ILCN will host a workshop featuring case studies of cross-boundary conservation collaboration from Mexico, Canada, the European Union, the United States and others. Participants will explore successful models of cross-border conservation collaboration, planning, and fundraising. Presenters will share lessons learned and discuss how their successes may be replicated in other localities. Capacity for this workshop is 60 participants, so please [register](#) as soon as possible to ensure there is a spot for you. More information is available [here](#).



### **Rally 2016 - National Land Conservation Conference** -- *October 28-30 in Minneapolis, MN, USA*

Hosted by the Land Trust Alliance, [Rally](#) is an annual gathering of nearly 2,000 inspired and passionate land conservation practitioners from the US, Canada, Latin America, Australia and beyond, who are dedicated to conserving cherished places in local communities.

### **National Private Land Conservation Congress**

Hosted by the [Australian Land Conservation Alliance](#), this conference provides the forum to hear about the latest innovations, opportunities and successes in private land conservation from conservation leaders, practitioners and supporters in Australia. Delegates will come from a spectrum of backgrounds that support Private Land Conservation including land trusts, private landholders, indigenous organisations, environmental NGOs, regional NRM bodies, governments, business, finance and the philanthropic sector. The objective of the conference is to grow a national private land conservation collaboration and network so that the capacity of the sector in Australia is appropriately informed, supported, financed, and recognized. More information is available [here](#).



See more on the ILCN's [Calendar of Events](#).

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## Please take our survey

We are currently compiling a survey of organizations around the world that are engaged in the conservation of private land.

If you have not yet completed our survey and feel that your organization's work is in line with the mission of the ILCN, then we invite you to [please take our brief survey](#) and to share it with relevant partners.



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Many thanks to our content contributors: Jin Tong (Science Director, The Nature Conservancy China Program) and Victoria Marles (Chief Executive Officer, Trust for Nature).

October 2016

The mission of the International Land Conservation Network is to connect organizations and people around the world that are accelerating voluntary private and civic sector action that protects and stewards land and water resources.

Learn more at [landconservationnetwork.org](http://landconservationnetwork.org).



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