

CURRICULUM VITAE



Personal

Name : Ashok Khosla
Nationality : Indian
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Education:

- BA (Hons) in Natural Sciences, Cambridge University, UK (1962)
- PhD in Experimental Physics, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass, USA (1971)

Professional Status and Experience

- Chairman, Development Alternatives, New Delhi (1983 to Present)
- Chairman and CEO, Various Social Enterprises in India (1985 to Present)
- Director, Infoterra, United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi (1976-82)
- Director, Office of Environmental Planning, Govt of India, New Delhi (1972-76)
- Manager, Various Businesses in the US (1965-70) and India (1985 to Present)
- Faculty, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass (1963-70)

National and International Positions

- President, Club of Rome (2006-)
- Member or Invitee in the IUCN Council (1975-94)
- Member, International Advisory Council, Criteria Caixa Corp, Barcelona (2008-)
- Chair, ICSU/SCOPE Programme on Environmental Information (1984-87)
- Member of the UNEP Governing Council (1972-76)
- Member of the Boards of WWF-International, IISD, SEI, World Future Council, etc
- Member of the Boards of National Environmental Council, WWF-India, etc in India

Awards and Honors

- Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), 2008
- Schwab Foundation Award for Outstanding Social Entrepreneur, 2004
- The United Nations Sasakawa Environment Prize, 2002
- The Stockholm Challenge Award, 2001
- Officer of The Order of the Golden Ark of The Netherlands, 1999

Additional Activities

- As Teaching Fellow with Professor Roger Revelle, designed and taught Nat Sci 118, "Population, Resources and the Environment" at Harvard in 1965, the first University course on the environment – the course that sparked Al Gore's interest in the field
- Set up and headed the first governmental agency for the Environment in the Third World – and among the first few in the world, establishing early policies for India on environmental and conservation issues
- Set up the first international information system on the environment, Infoterra at UNEP
- Spoken, written and published extensively on environmental issues, copies on request from the Development Alternatives Information Centre (<http://www.devalt.org/ashok.htm>)

Websites

- www.khosla.in
- www.devalt.org
- www.tara.in
- www.empowerpoor.org

Ashok Khosla

Candidate for President
International Union for Conservation of Nature



With the growing global concern about today's environmental trends but slow pace of concrete and concentrated efforts, IUCN is at a crucial point in its history. It has to build on its greatest assets – its Members and Commissions – to instil a renewed sense of purpose and commitment throughout the Union and mobilize them in concert to deepen understanding of the issues and heighten our authority with decision makers. A new President, with the necessary breadth of experience, scientific knowledge and cultural sensibility can help IUCN in achieving this critical goal. Ashok Khosla believes he can build on the work of previous Presidents and Councils to take IUCN to a new and higher level, in substance, in policy influence and in impact on the ground.

- In 1972, he set up and headed the Government of India's first agency for the environment, the Office for Environmental Planning and Coordination, which was responsible for formulating India's early policies for environment, including conservation and monitoring their implementation.
- He has been working on issues of conservation ever since, and has pioneered the interface between conservation and the creation of sustainable livelihoods.
- With more than 30 years of close association with IUCN (18 of which were in the Council as Regional Councillor (1975-78), Representative of UNEP (1978-82), Deputy Chair and then Chair of the Commission on Environmental Planning (CEP, now CEESP, 1984-90) and again for two terms as a Regional Councillor (1988-94), and 20 years as head of a Member NGO) he has a solid understanding of the current strengths, vulnerabilities, challenges and needs of the Union.
- Having served for a decade each as a university teacher, civil servant, NGO and social entrepreneur, his particular contribution to the field of conservation has been to build effective working links among science, policymaking and field action.
- After three decades of management experience in civil society, government, international agencies and business, he has the skills necessary for creating, guiding and running large organisations working at the cutting-edge of their respective mission areas and scaling them to new heights.
- As chair or member of the Boards of more than a dozen major international organisations, he is familiar with the intricacies of institutional governance, the methods of international fund raising and maximizing organizational effectiveness. He has the ability to bring the concerns and knowledge of field workers to decision-makers.
- As representative of UNEP, visited and worked with all governments in South America and many governments in Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific and Europe (some 100 nations) to set up national agencies for environment and conservation information. Subsequently has made strong operational connections with civil society organisations in many of these countries.
- Widely recognized as a Bridge: between Conservation and Development, Theory and Practice, the Traditional and the New, and between the North and the South.
- Well placed to help establish a leadership role for the Union in the global architecture and enable it to use the full potential of its complex structure of members, commissions, staff and partners in meeting the great challenges ahead: climate change, species and habitat loss, food and energy crises, peaking of natural resources, ocean acidification and other emerging threats.

Ashok Khosla's Views on Conservation and the Union

Science and Action – for People, for Nature



IUCN's Unique Strengths

“The Union is a truly remarkable organisational innovation. Its impacts are a tribute to the genius of those who designed and founded it. Already 60 years ago, they set up a structure that brings together the best scientists and experts (through the Commissions) with the strongest activists on the ground (the Members); that ensures direct and effective interaction among governments and civil society; and that nurtures activity ranging from practical action to reality based policy formulation. For the broad range of issues underlying the conservation of biodiversity, particularly relating to the protection of species, habitats and ecosystem processes, IUCN is certainly unique and its members, experts and staff, guided by the Council must work together to ensure that it remains so. [Keynote, IUCN General Assembly Montreal, July 1996]

Focusing on IUCN's Heartland

“In conservation, as in other spheres, the obvious solution is not necessarily the best one. To achieve a specific goal we may have to act in an altogether different sector – which needs a good understanding of how the sectors relate to each other. We clearly need more systemic solutions in addition to alleviating symptoms. Long-term prevention is often even more important than immediate cure. The best way to achieve this, I believe, is for the Union to focus on its heartland – conservation science and action – at the highest levels of excellence and work closely with world class partners who bring the other, complementary skills needed.” [Special Presentation to the IUCN Council, Gland, May 2007]

Key Role of IUCN Council

“It is the job of the Council, first and foremost, to listen carefully to the members, both State and Civil Society, the scientists in the Commissions, and other external partners, and interpret their views as expressed at the General Assembly and other forums into the policies and programmes of the Union. Its perspective must be global and above particular interests, and its efforts must ensure integrity, objectivity, due process, transparency and through these, excellence. Its basic task is to facilitate the work and interaction of all parts of the Union, the Members, the Commissions and the Secretariat so they mutually support each other and have a clear understanding of their roles to enable the entire

excellence. Its basic task is to facilitate the work and interaction of all parts of the Union, the Members, the Commissions and the Secretariat so they mutually support each other and have a clear understanding of their roles to enable the entire Union to act in unison, as one result-oriented organism.” [Intervention at IUCN Council Meeting, Nyon, 1983]

Need for Urgent Action

“In the face of the impacts on the world of how we live, produce and consume, and of the impacts of how others – from the very rich to the extremely poor – live, produce and consume, only urgent and radical measures will save nature as we know it. Conservation of biodiversity needs concerted, direct action to revive our ecosystems. It also needs systemic change in our societies to sustain them. And these require deep commitment and high skills to enable the people and communities to build a healthy environment and to create an equitable and empowering society. Only thus will they be able to take responsibility for maintaining communities to build a healthy environment and to create an equitable and empowering society. Only thus will they be able to take responsibility for maintaining our natural heritage, now and in the future.” [Darwin Lecture, London, October 2006]

Need for Balance

“Environmental issues, generally, have captured public attention. They are now among the hottest topics in the media and in daily conversation. But media coverage and public attention often tend to become mono-dimensional; today, the focus is almost entirely on climate change. Fundamental and urgent though this threat to civilisation is, loss of biodiversity is no less important and must now also quickly be brought back to the top end of the international agenda.” [Chairman's Welcome Speech, Club of Rome Annual Conference, Madrid, September 2007]

Learning from Nature

“It is the value of ecosystem services that will provide the strongest rationale for investing in conservation in the future. One of the most valuable ecosystem services is the knowledge accumulated over billions of years by nature – the basis of technologies that serve human needs without destroying the environment: Biomimicry.” [Inaugural Speech, World Environment Day, Chicago, June 2008]

Ethics

“The outcomes of our conservation effort depend as much on why we make it as they do on what we do. To be in the right direction and to be sustained, this effort must be driven by the highest ethical considerations and a deep respect for the rights of all living things. Given its importance to planetary survival, the practice of conservation is today among the highest callings a professional can aspire to. It must therefore set the highest benchmarks for personal, scientific and ethical commitment and integrity”. [Asian Regional Conference, Kathmandu, November 2007]

Financing

“Conservation is a public good, of benefit to all. As such, it needs and deserves public financial support – funds from international sources, governments, philanthropic foundations and the public at large. But to cover the inevitable gap between such funds and the need to do creative, path-breaking work, organisations such as IUCN must also now evolve entrepreneurial methods to generate additional income from the work they do. But in all such initiatives, whether from sponsorships or consultancy assignments or sale of products and services, the Union must carefully act within the basic principles on which its work rests: organisational mission, integrity, caring and putting nature first.” [World Economic Forum, Davos, 2004]

