

PRESS RELEASE

Under embargo until 1830 Abu Dhabi time, 9 October 2008

STARTS

NEW FUND FOR SPECIES CONSERVATION ANNOUNCED AT WCC

Work to commence in January 2009

**Barcelona, Spain, 9 October, 2008:** A new fund that places species conservation at the forefront of the environmental debate was announced on the sidelines of the World Conservation Congress (WCC) today.

The Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund is a 25 million euro endowment fund established by His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, who hopes to make a genuine contribution to species conservation worldwide when the Fund's operations commence in January 2009.

Speaking at the WCC, Razan Khalifa Al Mubarak, Managing Director of the Emirates Wildlife Society, made the announcement by saying; "It is not just species, but species conservation as a whole, that is endangered. And by that, I don't mean the threats facing individual species and habitats, but the predicament facing species conservation as a discipline, and its declining status as an environmental priority.

"Too often, species conservation is expected to benefit from the trickle down effect of our efforts to address the world's 'bigger picture' environmental issues, and is not being addressed in its own right.

"Challenges to the cause are well documented and include the lack of funds, basic support for people on the front line and the focus of environmental debates moving towards climate change."

The Fund will provide targeted grants to individual species conservation initiatives, recognize leaders in the field and elevate the importance of species in the broader conservation debate. Its focus will be global and eligibility for grants will extend to all plant and animal species conservation efforts, without discrimination on the basis of region or selected species.

It also aims to reduce the unwieldy processes usually associated with the award of donations, especially for smaller projects where a huge amount of administration can negate the benefits of a contribution. Responses on all applications will be returned within 3 months of their receipt and grants will be awarded on the basis of a detailed application form.

Most importantly, the fund aims to attract further contributions from around the world in the future to expand its ability to finance projects and support what it refers to as the 'on-the-ground champions' of species conservation.

To receive more information or to request an alert when the fund officially calls for grant applications in January 2009, please go to [www.mbzspeciesconservation.org](http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org) and register your contact details using the Contact Us form provided.

ENDS

For more information go to [www.mbzspeciesconservation.org](http://www.mbzspeciesconservation.org) or contact:

**International/ UAE:**

Emma Cantwell

Telephone: +971 (4) 3344 930

[Emma.Cantwell@hillandknowlton.com](mailto:Emma.Cantwell@hillandknowlton.com)

Tessa Richardson

Telephone: +971 4 33 44 930

[Tessa.Richardson@hillandknowlton.com](mailto:Tessa.Richardson@hillandknowlton.com)