

Moving on

Saliem Fakir leaves IUCN, and an unforgettable footprint.

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Saliem Fakir, the IUCN Country Program Coordinator for South Africa, has announced that after 8 years with IUCN he will be moving on to take up new challenges elsewhere. After an exciting and productive spell at IUCN, Saliem feels it is time to let someone else push the envelope further. Saliem joined IUCN South Africa as the inaugural Country Programme Coordinator in January 1998 from the South African ‘think tank,’ the Land and Agriculture Policy Centre (LAPC). During his time with IUCN, he has overseen the development of the programme in South Africa and has developed various diverse and innovative relationships with a broad range of partners, ranging from the South African government to existing and new NGO members. He has also developed partnerships with a range of different organisations nationally and internationally. Saliem strategically placed the Union at the centre of environment, conservation and development issues in South Africa.

Many will remember Saliem’s provocative and at times controversial ‘Policy Think Tank Series,’ an occasional publication that amplified environment and development dialogue. Others will remember Saliem for his passion for engaging business and the private sector – an indulgence which when first started did not always endear him to the more conservative elements of the conservation community. But as so often with Saliem’s initiatives it is now recognised by most that he was ahead of the curve and his engagement with the private sector has been instrumental in unleashing new opportunities in the fight for a just world that conserves biodiversity. His ideas on alternative financing for philanthropic work inspired many, as did his love affair with the media and its power to influence change. Whether it is on globalisation, the new South Africa or the emerging role of women in development – Saliem sees opportunity and makes the most of them.

As a member of the Senior Management of IUCN in southern Africa, he played a key role in the development, management and implementation of the regional programme. His decision to leave his current position comes at a time when IUCN – ROSA is reorganizing the regional programme. Saliem will leave his position in December 2005. We congratulate Saliem on a most successful tenure as the IUCN South Africa Country Programme Coordinator and wish him all the best as he embarks on new challenges in his career. Whilst Saliem’s departure will be a loss for the Union, his professional management ensures that the appropriate structures and personnel are in place to ensure a smooth transition and we look forward to welcoming his successor. Saliem takes his dedication, passion and commitment to new heights but leaves a good legacy and basis for the country program to build upon and raise the bar further.

**IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa
Information, Marketing and Membership Group**