

064 The HIMEK Alliance proposal for mitigation of climate change in the Himalayas and the Mekong Region through forest land restoration and reduction in emissions of black carbon and greenhouse gases

RECOGNISING the critical role of the Himalayan and Mekong regions in sustaining over one-fifth of humanity through freshwater resources, biodiversity, and ecosystem services;

MINDFUL OF the accelerating impacts of climate change, including glacial melt, reduced snowfall, and increased frequency of extreme weather events, which threaten the ecological stability, wildlife, health and livelihoods of millions of people in these regions;

NOTING that black carbon emissions from urban centres, vehicular traffic, biomass burning and industrial activity significantly amplify atmospheric warming and accelerate the retreat of glaciers in the Himalayas, apart from negative impacts on human health;

CONCERNED about the degradation of forest ecosystems in the Himalayas and the Mekong Basin resulting from invasive species, deforestation and land-use changes, which exacerbate black carbon emissions, biodiversity loss and threats to wildlife, human health, and access to water and food;

RECALLING international commitments such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, and the Bonn Challenge, which call for urgent action to mitigate climate change and restore degraded ecosystems;

AWARE OF the potential for forest landscape restoration and sustainable community-based interventions to act as powerful nature-based solutions for carbon sequestration and black carbon mitigation, while simultaneously improving access to water, human health, agricultural productivity and economic well-being;

WELCOMING the efforts of organisations such as the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), RECOFTC and IUCN in promoting multi-stakeholder approaches to address these interconnected challenges; and

CONVINCED that a regional cooperative framework encompassing the 11 nations of the Himalayan and Mekong Basins will be essential to implement coordinated actions to achieve emission reductions, ecosystem restoration, and community resilience;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. REQUESTS the Director General to facilitate the establishment of the HIMEK Alliance as a regional cooperation framework among the 11 nations of the Himalayan and Mekong Basins;
2. CALLS ON State Members to prioritise the reduction of black carbon and short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) by implementing stricter emissions regulations, promoting clean energy technologies and phasing out inefficient industrial practices;
3. URGES State Members to integrate forest landscape restoration into national and regional development strategies, with a focus on areas most vulnerable to climate change impacts;
4. ENCOURAGES collaboration with international organisations, funding mechanisms and knowledge-sharing platforms, to support the implementation of scalable, sustainable solutions; and
5. RECOMMENDS the development of pilot projects to test innovative approaches in emission reduction and ecosystem restoration, ensuring equitable participation of local communities.