

001 Improving tree planting practices – Planting the right tree in the right place for the right purpose

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RECALLING that forest soils are fundamental for ecosystem functioning and biodiversity conservation, and that their degradation through deforestation, intensive logging, and poor restoration practices contributes to climate change, loss of geodiversity, and soil erosion;

ALARMED by the constant loss of soil on a global scale caused by poorly managed monoculture forest exploitation, which leads to the disappearance of this non-renewable element of geodiversity—taking thousands of years to form—from our mountains, creating issues such as poor water quality, eutrophication, turbidity, etc., downstream in riverbeds, along the coast, and on the adjacent continental shelf;

RECOGNISING the importance of incorporating geodiversity, soil integrity, and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities into all forest restoration and Nature-based Solutions initiatives;

CONCERNED that tree planting initiatives labeled as forest restoration under global initiatives such as the Bonn Challenge may, in some cases, result in monoculture plantations that degrade biodiversity and soil health;

ACKNOWLEDGING that distinguishing between tree plantations and natural forest restoration is crucial for the success of biodiversity and climate mitigation goals;

CALLS on the Director General, Commissions and Members to:

- a. ensure that rigorous biodiversity, geodiversity, and social safeguards are applied to all forest restoration initiatives – including those labelled as Nature-Based Solutions and under the Bonn Challenge – placing particular emphasis on locally-led initiatives;
- b. promote the use of native and threatened tree species in reforestation initiatives and highlight the risks of planting invasive, non-native species;
- c. work with international bodies (e.g. the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United

Nations) to differentiate between tree plantations and natural forests in reforestation projects; and

d. use a simple but scientifically robust international biodiversity certification scheme, recognising reforestation and restoration programmes that have a positive impact on biodiversity, soil protection against erosion and livelihoods;

CALLS UPON practitioners, policymakers, foresters, businesses, researchers and donors to support or carry out tree planting initiatives that protect and enhance biodiversity, soil protection and to protect the customary tenure and access rights of indigenous peoples and local communities;

ENCOURAGES them to partner with the botanical, ecological restoration, mycological, agroforestry, and wider conservation community, including holders of traditional knowledge, to adopt practices that protect, restore and enhance biodiversity and protect soils against erosion, and ensure ecological integrity and connectivity.