

007 Soil security law

AWARE of the fundamental roles that soils play in addressing the existential global challenges of food security, climate change and biodiversity conservation, while recognising that soil security is itself an existential challenge;

CONVINCED that soil security, including soil health, deserves the same level of legal protection as these global challenges;

RECOGNISING the critical importance of protecting and restoring the physical, chemical and biological health of soils for their multiple functions, ecosystem services and contributions to people;

AWARE that intensified agricultural production and other land uses have escalated soil degradation, undermining its availability and capacity for food production and agricultural sustainability;

RECOGNISING ALSO the importance of Indigenous knowledge in securing soil health;

AFFIRMING that soil security is integral to the right to a healthy environment, supporting sustainable ecosystems, food systems, and non-toxic environments;

STRESSING the importance of promoting soil security and in particular sustainable agriculture to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including the land degradation neutrality target in SDG 15 (Life on Land);

ACKNOWLEDGING the potential of the three Rio Conventions to protect and restore soils, but emphasising the need for an urgent development of a dedicated global instrument to address soil security, including sustainable agriculture, holistically; and

FURTHER RECOGNISING the substantial work of the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) and its Specialist Group on Soil and Sustainable Agriculture Law in advancing environmental law to promote soil security;

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

REQUESTS the Director General to collaborate with the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law as well as other relevant Commissions:

- a. to develop concepts and parameters for an international convention or a global legal instrument on soil security;
- b. to evaluate and propose national or regional laws to protect, restore and rehabilitate soil ecosystems, with a focus on sustainable agriculture; and
- c. to encourage States and regions to adopt legal frameworks addressing threats to soil and promoting soil security and in particular sustainable agriculture practices.