

## **010 Preserving forest soils and their biodiversity**

CONSIDERING that soils, sometimes the result of a thousand-year-old evolution, are essential compartments of forest ecosystems, both a place where trees are anchored and the only place where they receive nutrients and water, at the interface between the above-ground and underground parts of the ecosystem;

CONSIDERING that forest soils constitute a major reservoir of biodiversity, being able to shelter up to ¼ of known species and that, given the multitude of interactions, this biodiversity guarantees the functioning and productivity of the forest ecosystem;

CONSIDERING that forest soils play a central role in the water cycle and its regulation both at the global and watershed scales;

CONSIDERING that forest soils with forest stands, particularly in mountain areas, play a central role in the stability of slopes, making it possible to limit landslides and promote the regulation of the water regime;

RECOGNISING the major importance of forest soil as a carbon reservoir and sink, thus playing an important role in mitigating climate change;

DEEPLY CONCERNED by the increasing degradation of forest soils by:

- a. deforestation or large-scale dieback causing rapid and sometimes complete disappearance of soils;
- b. climate change rapidly and drastically altering soil biodiversity and therefore its functioning; and
- c. those elements greatly impacting the ecosystem services they can provide; and

NOTING that awareness of the importance of these soils, although growing, is still very insufficient;

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

#### **1. CALLS ON Members and States to:**

- a. protect, sustainably manage and restore forest soils and their biodiversity, which are key to forest adaptation and resilience to climate change;
- b. restrict or prohibit forestry practices that degrade and compact the soil, and the use of heavy machinery;
- c. restrict or prohibit inputs and phytosanitary products during the renewal of forest stands and to favour biodegradable lubricants for equipment;
- d. have virtuous forestry practices, such as the establishment of and compliance with sustainable operating partitions and alternative solutions to logging by heavy machinery to limit their movement on the plots;
- e. maintain continuous plant cover, prioritising the natural regeneration of existing ecosystems by promoting their resilience capacities, thus contributing to the preservation of soils; and
- f. limit or prohibit single-species plantations, which are harmful to the soil;

#### **2. CALLS ON the relevant authorities to:**

- a. assess and integrate the services provided by forest soils into the establishment of regulations;
- b. integrate the fight against forest soil degradation into forest management strategies; and

c. improve training and research on forest soils and their biodiversity, and for their regular monitoring to be encouraged.