

011 Delivering equitable accountability and means of implementation for international forest protection goals

ACKNOWLEDGING that preserving the ecological integrity of all forest biomes through preventing deforestation and forest degradation is critical to the achievement of biodiversity and climate targets, as well as for human well-being;

ACKNOWLEDGING the inconsistencies in approaches to defining, monitoring, and reporting on forest degradation and associated terms and metrics, particularly among Parties with differing forest biomes and national circumstances;

RECOGNISING the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local communities over lands, territories, and resources for their cultures, survival and livelihoods;

RECOGNISING that equitable accountability in forest protection must be considered in light of differences in national capacities, as well as differentiated historical responsibilities;

WELCOMING Decision 16/22 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognising that conserving, protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity is necessary for climate mitigation and adaptation;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the IUCN policy outlining the importance to climate and biodiversity of primary forests in all biomes;

ALSO WELCOMING the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement (Decision 1/CMA.5) emphasising the importance of conserving, protecting and restoring nature and ecosystems to achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal, including through enhanced efforts to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030;

CONCERNED that the 2024 Forest Declaration Assessment finds that deforestation and degradation rates are trending too high to meet the 2030 goal to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation;

RECOGNISING ALSO the need for global consistency in how deforestation and forest degradation are monitored, reported on, and defined, and the need for transparency in forest carbon accounting;

FURTHER NOTING the need to increase financial support from all sources for developing countries and Indigenous Peoples and local communities in delivering forest protection and restoration;

FURTHER WELCOMING the 2023 African Ministerial Conference on the Environment's support for a framework to drive progress and promote greater equity between forest protection standards; and

RECALLING relevant IUCN Resolutions and outcome documents, including Resolution 7.127 *Strengthening the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe and facilitating their restoration where possible* (Marseille, 2020), emphasising the importance of the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe;

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

1. CALLS ON the Director General and relevant IUCN Commissions to conduct an analysis of inconsistencies in definitions, standards and expectations between countries that are relevant to the equitable and robust implementation of the 2030 forest goals in the first Global Stocktake by the end of 2026;

2. ALSO CALLS ON the Director General and Commissions to provide technical support and to promote and support the participatory advancement and implementation of equitable accountability on forests through processes to develop harmonised definitions, standards and expectations in forest monitoring and reporting, including through the recognition and integration of community-led forest monitoring systems and the validation of community-generated data;

3. URGES State Members to consider the analysis of inconsistencies in definitions, standards and expectations between countries and their implications for equitable accountability in the advancement of harmonised and equitable implementation of the 2030 forest targets that promotes the establishment of:

a. agreed, equitably applied definitions and understandings of terms and indicators relevant to achieving the 2030 forest goals, where such agreement and commonality does not currently exist, derived from the latest scientific understandings, including traditional knowledge, and aligned to relevant frameworks;

b. comparable monitoring criteria that address disparities in how metrics - such as primary forest loss - are tracked, common criteria and tools for data collection that reflect relevant metrics and indicators and maintain consistency across Conventions, and recommended mechanisms for facilitating the provision of financial support and technology sharing with developing countries; and

c. guidance to align countries' existing reporting obligations with tracking progress toward the 2030 forest targets and to enable cross-national comparability globally; and

d. recognition of community-collected data, and the provision of financial, technical, and technological support to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities to ensure their full and equitable participation in all stages of data collection, validation, analysis, and use;

4. ENCOURAGES IUCN and its Members to promote these objectives and to actively support rapid uptake of harmonised definitions, standards and expectations in forest monitoring and reporting once agreed.