

015 Primary forests at the next World Conservation Congress

RECALLING IUCN Resolution 5.060 *Strengthening the role of IUCN in saving the worlds primary forests* (Jeju, 2012) and Resolution 7.127 *Strengthening the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe and facilitating their restoration where possible* (Marseille, 2020), and IUCN's Policy Statement on Primary Forests Including Intact Forest Landscapes;

RECOGNISING the critical importance of retaining ecosystems with high ecosystem integrity, and the irreplaceability of primary forests and other primary ecosystems;

EMPHASISING the need to operationalise multilateral policy decisions that address the climate and biodiversity crises in a synergistic manner in accordance with Decision 16/22 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Decision 1.CMA 5, para .33, of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

ALSO RECALLING CBD Decisions 14/5 and 14/30, Goal A and Targets 1, 2, 8 and 12 of the CBD Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

FURTHER RECALLING the emphasis on retaining areas of high ecological integrity and recovering and reconnecting degraded ecosystems in the UNFCCC Paris Agreement Preamble and in UNFCCC Decisions 1/CP.25, para. 15 and 1/CP.26, para. 21;

NOTING the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change "Sixth Assessment Report, Working Group III: Mitigation of Climate Change", which states, at section 7.4.2, that "Avoiding the conversion of carbon-rich primary peatlands, coastal wetlands and forests is particularly important as most carbon lost from those ecosystems are irrecoverable through restoration by the 2050 timeline of achieving net zero carbon emissions...";

RECALLING ALSO the crucial work of the Global Environment Facility via its Strategy on Forests, its Critical Forest Biomes Integrated Program and its project "Strengthening Conservation of Primary Forests through Partnership Enhancement and Coordination of Support";

NOTING ALSO that the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2030 calls for halting both deforestation and forest degradation, as does UNFCCC 1.CMA 5, para 33;

FURTHER NOTING the Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, which commits signatories to halting and reversing deforestation and land degradation by 2030; and

FURTHER RECALLING that primary forests are often the territories of indigenous peoples, that their rights should be recognised and that they should receive much greater direct financial assistance;

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

1. CALLS on the Director General, working with Commissions, to:

- a. prepare a report documenting IUCN current activities related to primary forests; and
- b. identify activities and potential funding sources for new activities focused on primary forest for its next quadrennial work programme;

2. REQUESTS that the Director General, working with Commissions and Members, disseminate and draw upon IUCN's primary forest policy and associated guidance, including updated information on primary forests as climate and biodiversity solutions, in support of making primary forest protection a priority in international policies and conservation finance;

3. REQUESTS that IUCN include a thematic focus and symposium on primary forests and other primary ecosystems at the next World Conservation Congress, to further raise awareness of the importance of primary ecosystems and ecosystem integrity, and the contributions of such ecosystems

to addressing the climate and biodiversity crises, and their significance for Indigenous peoples and Local communities; and

4. REQUESTS ALSO that IUCN and its Members advocate for and take action to protect, buffer and where feasible recover, primary and old-growth forests in all biomes and ensure primary-forest protection is a priority in international policies, programmes and conservation finance.