

019 Activating sustainable management of inland fisheries

RECOGNISING the importance of freshwater biodiversity, with nearly half of the fish species dependent on 1% of the Earth's available water;

CONCERNED about the freshwater biodiversity crisis, with 25% of freshwater fish species listed as at risk of extinction on The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™;

PREOCCUPIED by the degradation of the quality of certain aquatic environments and the impact on populations of wild species, but also by the repercussions on the health and food security of the populations that depend on them to ensure their subsistence (contamination, rarefaction, reduction in nutritional qualities);

PREOCCUPIED FURTHER by the proliferation of exogenous species in certain watercourses and wetlands, which damage biodiversity, unbalance ecosystems and jeopardise the survival of local communities;

NOTING that harvesting of wild freshwater species supports over a billion people worldwide, providing nutrition and livelihoods for the most marginalised communities, and contributing more than USD 122 billion annually to the global economy, with 99% of catch from small-scale fisheries;

WELCOMING the reaffirmation of sustainable inland fisheries supporting biodiversity, water, food and health in the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Nexus Assessment, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) Targets;

WELCOMING ALSO the efforts of IUCN to advance sustainable fisheries management, including the creation of an IUCN intercommissional Task Force on Fisheries and Conservation and the expansion of the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) Fisheries Expert Group to include inland fisheries expertise;

AWARE of the Convention on Biological Diversity Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group's report emphasising the need to advance implementation of inland fisheries to support national governments in fulfilling the KMGBF, including within the KMGBF Monitoring Framework;

CONCERNED ALSO that underinvestment in monitoring, management and valuation of inland fisheries has led to their omission from targets, indicators and actions in national and international plans and agendas;

MINDFUL of the need to ensure representation of low-income, food-deficit countries that produce 21% of the world's inland fish capture;

AWARE ALSO of the new opportunities arising from the KMGBF, IUCN's 20-year Strategic Vision and the IPBES Nexus Assessment, which can strengthen IUCN Resolution 7.018 *Valuing and protecting inland fisheries* (Marseille, 2020); and

RECOGNISING IUCN's role at the interface of conservation and human well-being in realising the KMGBF agenda and other agendas, Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and community-based conservation for promoting sustainable inland fisheries;

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

1. URGES the Director General, Commissions, Members and States to:

a. review, update and implement laws and policies to support co-managed inland fisheries as appropriate; and

b. include inland fisheries targets, indicators and actions in their national plans, including the following as appropriate: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (KMGBF Targets 1 to 3, 5,

9 and 10); National Action Plans for mercury reduction (Minamata Convention); National Action Plans (Ramsar Convention on Wetlands); and National Adaptation Plans (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change);

2. ENCOURAGES the Director General, Commissions and Members to advance conservation and development objectives from sustainable inland fisheries by:

a. applying the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United States Geological Survey Inland Fisheries Index and other resources with the IUCN Red List and climate vulnerability assessments; and

b. promoting collaboration among the Species Survival Commission (SSC) Freshwater Conservation Committee, the joint SSC and Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy Sustainable Use and Livelihoods (SULi) Group, and the CEM Fisheries Expert Group, to advance sustainable inland fisheries, *inter alia* through community-based approaches and integrated water resource management;

3. URGES the IUCN intercommissional Task Force on Fisheries and Conservation to include inland fisheries within its programme, including collaboration with SSC Specialist Groups and Committees; and

4. CALLS on IUCN Commissions to collaborate with FAO and others to develop indicators for assessing the sustainability of harvest.