

036 Facilitating synergistic delivery of multilateral commitments on conserving coastal ecosystems

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of coastal ecosystems for biodiversity and as providers of many ecosystem services;

RECONFIRMING that coastal ecosystems, comprising intertidal wetlands and ecologically-associated habitats, require an ecosystem approach to conserve them effectively and the migratory and resident species that rely on them;

CONCERNED that coastal ecosystems are among the globally most threatened, and ecologically connected, with exceptionally fragmented governance that fails to address challenges specific to coasts, as distinct from terrestrial and marine environments, and inadequate availability of evidence-based guidance on effective management and restoration methods;

EMPHASISING that, with sea-level rise and other climate change effects, there is unprecedented urgency for coastal nations to replan their coasts, using Nature-based Solutions to help ensure the protection, sustainable management and restoration of natural coastal ecosystems, so reducing climate-related risks and increasing resilience;

NOTING IUCN Resolution 7.030 *Enhancing the resilience of coastal areas in the face of climate change, biodiversity crisis and rapid coastal development* (Marseille, 2020), and other resolutions and decisions of the Convention on Migratory Species (2017), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) (2018), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (2018), which recognised a need for a multistakeholder global coastal forum;

WELCOMING the conferences of the World Coastal Forum (WCF) (in 2022 and 2023, Yancheng, People's Republic of China) and endorsement of the WCF Partnership Initiative by 24 partner organisations;

RECOGNISING the WCF's crucial role in advancing implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF); and

FURTHER WELCOMING development of the Call to Action and knowledge products, the State of the World's Coastal Ecosystems Report and the World Coastal Ecosystem Conservation Toolkit, initiated at the 2023 WCF Conference, and the crucial contributions of IUCN throughout the development of the World Coastal Forum, including its contributions to these outputs;

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

1. RECOMMENDS that the Director General:

a. strengthen IUCN's role in developing the WCF to support synergistic delivery of multiple multilateral commitments including under biodiversity-related treaties and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to conserve and restore coastal ecosystems, as distinct from marine and freshwater, and the Nature-based Solutions and other services that they provide, including blue carbon storage and climate mitigation and adaptation, embedding it as an implementation and monitoring mechanism of the IUCN 2030 Strategic Vision and Programme, bridging, complementing and strengthening its Regenerative Blue Economy and Water Stewardship and Security global transformations;

b. actively participate in preparation of the State of the World's Coastal Ecosystems Report and in the Call to Action and dissemination of the World Coastal Ecosystem Conservation Toolkit;

c. promote their application through capacity building, awareness raising and resource mobilisation; and

d. encourage international designation of coastal wetlands, e.g. as World Heritage Sites and Wetlands of International Importance; and

2. ENCOURAGES Governments, Members and stakeholders, taking into account differentiated national implementation approaches, according to institutional, geographic and legal contexts, to:

a. develop and use the WCF for synergistic evidence-based implementation and monitoring of relevant IUCN transformation areas and multilateral commitments to improve coastal ecosystem protection, sustainable management and restoration;

b. join the Partnership Initiative to help implement priority actions and Call to Action;

c. share successes and seek collaborative approaches and strengthened capacity to address challenges; and

d. provide legal and policy frameworks, including biodiversity-inclusive spatial plans, to enable dissemination and scaling up of successes.