

041 Developing a policy on geoengineering

RECOGNISING the urgency of the climate crisis, the continuing rise in atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases and the collective failure globally to halt the growth in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;

RECOGNISING ALSO that deliberate, large-scale interventions in the Earth's natural systems to counteract climate change or mitigate its effects (geoengineering) are being or may be proposed or implemented by government or non-government actors, within or beyond national jurisdictions;

CONCERNED that geoengineering interventions are likely to have significant impacts on, and consequences for, biodiversity, ecological functioning and ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration;

ALARMED by the lack of consistent, rigorous, science-based policy or regulatory frameworks that consider the ethical, social and environmental risks and impacts of potential geoengineering interventions, their merits, and whether the risks of inaction outweigh the risks of implementing the intervention;

CONCERNED ALSO that there is no policy, regulatory or governance framework that consistently and specifically addresses risk and impact assessment of geoengineering proposals beyond and within national jurisdictions, on land, in the ocean or in space;

FURTHER CONCERNED that geoengineering interventions could be proposed and employed as a means of, or otherwise have the effect of, lowering or delaying ambition to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, or employed to deliberately or inadvertently support the continued use of fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gas emissions;

NOTING that these issues and concerns have been raised in many international fora including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Tribunal for Law of the Sea (ITLOS), the London Convention and others, and stressing the need for precaution and science-informed approaches; and

WELCOMING the inclusive and participatory process adopted for the development of a draft policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation, IUCN Resolution 7.123 *Towards development of an IUCN policy on synthetic biology in relation to nature conservation* (Marseille, 2020);

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General and IUCN Council to develop a draft IUCN policy on geoengineering for consideration and approval by Members well before the World Conservation Congress in 2029, drawing on the inclusive and participatory approach developed by Council to implement the policy development mandate in Resolution 7.123, the principles and lessons from that process, decisions related to geoengineering in the CBD, UNFCCC, ITLOS, the London Convention and other relevant international fora, and ensuring that the draft policy specifically excludes geoengineering as any form of offset against continued extraction and use of fossil fuels;
2. INVITES IUCN Members to contribute to and support the draft policy development process; and
3. URGES, in the interim, all governments to adhere to decisions of the Conference of the Parties of the CBD on geoengineering, and to collectively avoid overshooting the temperature rise targets agreed to under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, particularly cautioning against the deployment, by State or non-State actors, of any unproven, untested and unregulated geoengineering technologies to reach net-zero emission goals.