

047 Promotion of strategic and spatial planning of electric grids to minimise impacts on nature

RECOGNISING that the transition to a decarbonised economy requires massive electrification, leading to a significant increase in electrical infrastructure, including thousands of kilometres of new transmission and distribution lines;

NOTING that poor planning of power lines poses a significant threat to nature, particularly to birds and other species, because of collisions, electrocutions, and habitat fragmentation, especially in areas of high biodiversity, key migratory routes, as well as large-scale geological structures (folds and faults) or smaller-scale geological outcrops considered as geological heritage;

RECALLING IUCN Resolution 6.098 *Preventing electrocution and collision impacts of power infrastructure on birds* (Hawai'i, 2016), which urges the adoption of measures to prevent the impacts of electrical infrastructure on birds, and recalling other relevant Resolutions that promote sustainability in energy development;

INSPIRED by examples of strategic planning and tools such as ecological sensitivity maps, which have proven effective in identifying critical areas and guiding decisions towards solutions that minimise environmental impacts;

UNDERLINING the need for an integrated and proactive approach that prioritises strategic spatial planning, modernisation of existing infrastructure, decentralisation of energy generation, and the shared use of existing linear corridors, such as railway tracks and roads; and

COMMITTING to promoting strict environmental criteria for the financing of electrical projects, ensuring that new infrastructures are planned and developed sustainably;

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

1. CALLS ON the Director General, with the support of Commissions to:

- a. lead the creation of global criteria for planning and evaluating electrical infrastructure with regional development banks; and
- b. promote the exchange of best practices between governments and energy companies;

2. ASKS IUCN State Members and other governments to:

- a. adopt strategic spatial planning that uses ecological sensitivity maps to identify and protect exclusion zones, such as areas of high biodiversity, migratory routes, nocturnal species habitats, and geological heritage sites;
- b. promote the modernisation of existing infrastructure to increase capacity and reduce the need for new power lines;
- c. incentivise decentralised energy generation through renewable projects in urban and industrial areas; and
- d. establish regulations prioritising the shared use of linear corridors for power lines;

3. REQUESTS power companies and developers to:

- a. finance strategic planning studies to minimise the environmental impact of new infrastructure, including sensitivity mapping;

[b. incorporate certified anti-collision devices and prioritize certified structural designs of power poles' crossbars to ensure that a sufficient safety distance exists between the bird's perching area and the live areas to permanently prevent electrocutions in all new projects and in all reforms of existing

power lines versus solutions based on using isolation materials that tend to reduce their effectivity when these materials are deteriorated or moved from its intended position;] and

c. conduct regular monitoring of avian collisions at power lines and record and publish data on collisions; and

4. INVITES multilateral financing organisations to:

a. apply strict environmental criteria for approving infrastructure projects, ensuring compliance with mitigation measures and strategic planning; and

b. collaborate with IUCN to develop international guidelines to assess electrical infrastructure projects with a conservation-based approach.