

053 Inscription of the Forest of Fontainebleau on the UNESCO World Heritage List

RECALLING the exemplary periurban location of the Forest of Fontainebleau, on the outskirts of Paris, where 20% of the French population lives;

RECALLING that it was in the Forest of Fontainebleau that the first nature reserve in the world was created in 1853;

RECALLING that it was in Fontainebleau, on 5 October 1948, that the International Union for the Protection of Nature was established, which would become the International Union for Conservation of Nature in 1956;

SUPPORTING the fact that the cultural enhancement of rare and threatened ecological environments is important, and often necessary, but should not be at the expense of the ecological qualities of these environments;

RECALLING that over-frequentation by tourists or excessive disturbance or trampling can cause significant losses for biodiversity conservation;

RECALLING the interest and need to combine different measures of varying scope, because each of these measures has specific objectives and relies on specific means;

RECALLING that Fontainebleau and its forest are listed within several United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) protection and enhancement areas: the inscription of the Palace and Park of Fontainebleau on the World Heritage List in 1981, and the creation of the Fontainebleau-Gâtinais Biosphere Reserve in 1998;

STRESSING that, whilst these international designations enhance the value of these areas, they also attract populations seeking leisure activities or a high-quality living environment;

AWARE of the need of urban populations to have quality natural areas close to their homes, particularly following the COVID-19 crisis; and

RECALLING that in the 2021 evaluation of the nomination for the extension of the Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other European Regions, IUCN noted that the Forest of Fontainebleau could potentially be considered in relation to the possible extension of the existing property, the "Palace and Park of Fontainebleau";

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

1. ASKS local authorities and the State to actively commit to the various protection and enhancement zones of the Domaine de Fontainebleau – including, in particular, the Fontainebleau-Gâtinais Biosphere Reserve – by providing technical and financial support for initiatives that reconcile human development, biodiversity preservation and response to environmental challenges;

2. ENCOURAGES the stakeholders to develop an exemplary situation for the management and conservation of natural areas located on the outskirts of major conurbations, by implementing an ambitious policy of renaturation and defragmentation of the forest;

3. ENCOURAGES stakeholders to balance the attractiveness brought by the designation of the Domaine de Fontainebleau as a UNESCO World Heritage Site by strengthening or extending areas of strict protection in and around the forest, and by implementing a nature-friendly tourism management strategy; and

4. SUPPORTS the efforts of all stakeholders to strengthen the protection of the Domaine de Fontainebleau.

Note: The adoption of this decision by IUCN Members is without prejudice to IUCN's role as independent technical evaluator of natural properties nominated for inclusion on the World Heritage List.