

069 Core human rights principles for private conservation organisations and funders

RECOGNISING that the biodiversity crisis is also a crisis of human rights, as the degradation of ecosystems undermines the ability of peoples, individuals and communities to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

NOTING that conservation efforts are deeply intertwined with human rights and that efforts to conserve nature must recognise the rights and contributions of those whose ways of life contribute to its protection and sustainable use; in particular the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in UNDRIP, Afro-descendants, peasants, youth and women and girls should also be prioritised;

ACKNOWLEDGING the persistent human rights violations and abuses linked to many conservation initiatives, including the creation and management of protected areas, which disproportionately affect Indigenous peoples and Local communities, as well as people who may be in vulnerable situations and marginalised groups, especially women and girls, disabled persons and youth; and
HIGHLIGHTING that the adoption of a human rights-based approach is one of the means of implementing the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

COMMENDING the development of the Core Human Rights Principles for Private Conservation Organisations and Funders through a collaborative and inclusive process overseen by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and involving Indigenous peoples and other rights holders, relevant stakeholders, conservation organisations, funders and experts;

RECALLING that previous Resolutions and Recommendations of the IUCN World Conservation Congress affirm IUCN's long-standing commitment to rights-based approaches in conservation and the recognition of the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in UNDRIP and other rights holders, and their roles in managing and conserving nature;

STRESSING that adherence to these principles fosters a rights-based, gender-responsive and sustainable approach to conservation, which benefits the planet and all humanity; and

EMPHASISING the urgent need for private conservation organisations and funders to ensure a rights-based approach to conservation, integrating the norms and standards of human rights into their operations and partnerships, including and especially the rights of Indigenous peoples as set out in UNDRIP to self-determination, land, territories and resources and free prior and informed consent, as appropriate;

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

1. NOTES the Core Human Rights Principles for Private Conservation Organisations and Funders as a key component of IUCN's commitment to rights-based conservation;
2. REQUESTS the Director General to develop a policy, guidance and/or strategy in collaboration with UNEP and Members to ensure that the Principles are observed with broad and inclusive participation;
3. ALSO REQUESTS the Director General to establish, in collaboration with rights holders and relevant stakeholders, capacity-building programmes on human rights for private conservation organisations, including training on the Principles, to ensure their effective implementation and to foster a deeper understanding of human rights in conservation work;
4. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director General to report on the progress made in implementing the Principles at the next IUCN World Conservation Congress;
5. ALSO REQUESTS the Director General to ensure that rights-based approaches and human rights training extend to climate adaptation initiatives undertaken or financed by private conservation actors, to safeguard the rights, knowledge systems and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples, Local communities and other affected rights holders in the context of climate change;

6. FURTHER REQUESTS the Director General to promote recognition of workers' rights as part of a rights-based approach in private conservation and climate adaptation efforts, including the responsibility of businesses to provide safe and climate-resilient working conditions for all staff, in line with internationally recognised human rights standards;

7. ENCOURAGES all Members to implement the Principles, as part of their responsibility to apply rights-based approaches to conservation;

8. CALLS ON Members to respect, defend and uphold human rights principles, to undertake consistent human rights due diligence prior to, and at all stages of, their engagement in projects they undertake, and CALLS ON States to uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including their free, prior and informed consent, as appropriate; and

9. REQUESTS National Committees to engage Members, raise awareness and build capacity to adopt and implement a human rights-based approach in their work and programmes.