

## **072 Recognising the Model Forest Act to enhance forest protection, conservation, restoration and sustainable management of forests**

RECOGNISING that forests are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems on Earth, providing critical support for the world's flora, fauna and fungi, as well as for the cultural, economic, environmental and social foundations of human societies;

ALARMED by continuing deforestation and forest degradation, especially in primary forests, which endangers the future health and well-being of humankind and threatens the existence of innumerable species;

MINDFUL of the urgency of addressing global climate change and the need to rapidly reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;

UNDERSTANDING that economic and social development and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing components of sustainable forest management;

RECALLING the values and commitments reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 13 (Climate Action), 15 (Life on Land), 16 (Peace, Justice and strong Institutions), and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals);

FURTHER RECALLING Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) to protect, effectively conserve and manage at least 30% of terrestrial areas by 2030;

AFFIRMING the United Nations Forest Instrument (2016), which recognises the multiple benefits of forests and their contribution to sustainable development and poverty eradication;

RECOGNISING the importance of the environmental rule of law in forest protection and management;

NOTING the legal disconnect between outdated forest legal frameworks and modern environmental principles and scientific advancements; and

ACKNOWLEDGING the work of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) Model Forest Act Task Force in its creation of the Model Forest Act (MFA);

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

1. WELCOMES the development of the MFA as an innovative blueprint for policymakers and other stakeholders in designing modern legal frameworks for forest governance;
2. ENDORSES the MFA's interdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder, and evidence-informed approach to designing model legislative text that can be applied and tailored to country-specific contexts;
3. REQUESTS the Director General to facilitate knowledge sharing and capacity-building related to the MFA among IUCN networks;
4. REQUESTS the IUCN Council to provide support for the dissemination and promotion of the MFA;
5. REQUESTS WCEL to study the implementation and effectiveness of the MFA in various national contexts;
6. ENCOURAGES all States to consider adopting or adapting the MFA in their national legal systems to strengthen forest protection, conservation, restoration and sustainable management;
7. CALLS ON States to ensure that their forest governance frameworks address emerging challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss and water insecurity, while keeping pace with scientific and technological advancements, and develop mechanisms for coordination, monitoring and enforcement; and

8. URGES States to incorporate key principles of the MFA, including the intrinsic value of forests, ecosystem-based approaches, and the rights of Indigenous peoples and Local communities.