

079 Regulating financing mechanisms based on biodiversity [credits] [certificates] and guarantee positive effects on nature

RECALLING that Target 19 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) calls for the mobilisation of USD 200 billion annually by 2030, and that it explicitly mentions biodiversity credits as a potential solution for financing and achieving the target;

RECALLING ALSO that Target 2 of the KMGBF calls for the restoration of 30% of degraded terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems by 2030, and that Target 3 calls for the conservation of at least 30% of terrestrial, inland water, coastal and marine areas, in particular areas of great importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services;

AWARE of the urgent need to reconcile the development of economic activities with the protection of biodiversity, and the challenges of valuing nature and ecosystem services;

WELCOMING the growing recognition by economic stakeholders of the existence and future values of biodiversity, and the interdependence between humans and nature;

CONCERNED about the risks of 'greenwashing' as illustrated by the numerous controversies on the integrity of credits on the voluntary carbon market;

CONCERNED ALSO that Indigenous peoples [and] [as well as] [L][l]ocal communities, who are often the stewards of nature dependent on ecosystems, are not sufficiently involved in designing mechanisms to finance the protection of nature, nor in the fair sharing of their benefits, leading to additional pressures and/or inappropriate projects;

FURTHER RECALLING the adoption of IUCN Resolution 6.059 *IUCN Policy on Biodiversity Offsets* (Hawai'i, 2016) and in particular that biodiversity offsets must never be used to circumvent responsibilities to avoid and minimise damage to biodiversity, or to justify projects that would never otherwise be created;

AWARE ALSO of the growing interest expressed by private economic actors to support the ecological transition, including through supporting financing mechanisms that guarantee confidence and impact; and

CONSIDERING that, if well designed, biodiversity [credits] [certificates] could contribute to increasing private finance for nature [particularly when aligned with the principles of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), as recognised by IUCN];

[WELCOMING the "High Level Principles to Guide the Biodiversity Credit Market" produced in an inclusive consultation process by the Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA);]

[ACKNOWLEDGING the need to work with Indigenous peoples in support of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;]

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

[1.]CALLS ON States to put in place legal frameworks based on biodiversity [credits] [certificates] mechanisms that:

- a. produce a robust and transparent evaluation of biodiversity gains;
- b. demonstrate efforts to ensure that positive impacts are sustained in the long term, and contribute to the KMGBF targets and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans;
- c. [are fit for different scales, [including smallholder and community-based initiatives,] contributing to ecological transition, [and] conservation and/or restoration of [both remarkable and ordinary] [priority] biodiversity [in particular];]

[are fit for different scales, contributing to ecological transition, and conservation and/or restoration of both priority and of the wider countryside biodiversity;]

d. are not used as biodiversity offsets nor as substitutes for existing financing mechanisms;

e. involve multi-stakeholder governance for locally-rooted projects, that ensures a clear distinction between the roles of project developer, certifier and investor;

f. fully take into account Indigenous peoples [and] [as well as] [where relevant] [I][L]ocal communities by:

i. [involving them] [ensuring there is an opportunity for them to be involved] in the design and implementation of biodiversity [credits] [certificates] projects;

ii. respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples including the right to free, prior and informed consent [as appropriate] [as provided in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples]; and

iii. ensuring a fair distribution of benefits;

g. avoid speculation, multiplication of intermediaries and liquidity of biodiversity [credits] [certificates] into secondary markets; and

h. include external verification and certification [that incorporates participatory monitoring approaches and local knowledge systems] to ensure the “fairness” of economic actors’ contributions to the KMGBF through biodiversity [credits] [certificates] that:

i. are complementary [and additional] to ambitious corporate strategies for biodiversity;

ii. are consistent with implementation territories; and

iii. prevent claims of direct equivalence between biodiversity loss and certified biodiversity gains.

[2. URGES all stakeholders to consider endorsing the High Level Principles for High Integrity Biodiversity Credits developed by the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits, BCA and World Economic Forum, and the recommendations of the Framework of the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits, as appropriate;]