

## **092 Promoting free evolution and the tools to sustain it**

RECALLING, in accordance with the World Charter for Nature, the Earth Charter and the Initiative for Biosphere Ethics, the values of existence, memory and future of living things;

COMMITTED to the United Nations CBD COP15 and the European Union Nature Restoration Law, which have promoted the ambition of conserving and restoring 30% of land;

RECALLING that human activities are responsible for climate change and the erosion of biodiversity;

UNDERLINING the fundamental role of spontaneous ecological processes in carbon storage functions and in combating climate change;

RECALLING humanity's dependence on ecosystem services (food, water, security of property and people);

CONSIDERING that a free-evolving area is a place where ecological processes are spontaneous and unhindered by human activities;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that human societies have diverse representations of nature, free evolution can be understood differently from one culture to another;

UNDERLINING that free evolution constitutes an opportunity for a reaffirmation of the relationship between humans and their environment based on respect for living things;

CONSIDERING that large, freely evolving areas contain greater heterogeneity and greater genetic, species, and ecosystem diversity;

RECALLING that small, freely evolving areas in contexts of high human pressure have an important role as reservoirs of biodiversity;

NOTING that the promotion of free evolution is a tool for raising awareness of nature, through wonder as much as through science, and can contribute to improving the relationship between humans and non-humans; and

RECALLING that freely evolving areas are opportunities for the development of a local economy, respectful of nature and populations;

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

1. CALLS ON the Director General and Commissions to draft guidelines for international recognition of free-evolving areas;

2. INVITES IUCN Members to:

a. propose free evolution as a management principle in all types of areas;

b. grant protected status and/or recognition to freely evolving areas;

c. implement awareness-raising actions among a wide range of audiences in order to initiate a change in the way they view nature in its free evolution; and

d. encourage governance synergies between freely evolving areas and surrounding territories in order to support co-benefits between natural processes and environmental management for human activities; and

3. ASKS States and communities to:

a. encourage the creation of large, freely evolving natural areas;

b. consider, after scientific advice, any operation that could accelerate the restoration of ecological processes;

c. support domestic and urban uses that allow the development of spontaneous nature in the immediate vicinity of human societies;

d. develop any tool ensuring the sustainability of free evolution; and

e. encourage all economic development initiatives based on the promotion, knowledge and respect of wild nature that would contribute to the creation of new socio-economic opportunities available to local populations and stakeholders.