100 Integrating the preservation and recovery of wildlife and plant species into the creation and restoration of buildings

CONSIDERING that soil artificialisation and urban sprawl are among the main causes of biodiversity loss;

RECALLING that many species use cavities for reproduction and shelter, and that these cavities are found in trees or rocks in natural environments, whereas in urban or periurban environments all crevices in the built heritage can be used to complete all or part of the biological cycle, from cracks to less confined spaces;

AWARE that new or renovated buildings often leave few opportunities for species to settle and contribute to the destruction of resting or breeding sites;

CONCERNED about the frequent lack of consideration for these factors in development, renovation, restoration and construction work, which is expanding rapidly in order to achieve the objectives of reducing energy costs and increasing user comfort, favouring smooth, airtight constructions that are unfavourable to many species, some of which are exclusively dependent on buildings;

NOTING that actors in the building industry still rarely involve ecologists in their projects, despite recognising the difficulties encountered in taking biodiversity issues into account;

FURTHER NOTING that, despite the need to acquire more knowledge on the subject, any creation or modification of habitats without prior assessment, such as the installation of thermal insulation or shelters, may result in the creation of ecological traps that may trap individuals or attract them to unsuitable or even detrimental habitats; and

HIGHLIGHTING the fact that construction and renovation needs are not necessarily incompatible with biodiversity preservation and the coexistence of humans and other species, if projects are designed to include dedicated arrangements for flora and fauna and by assessing the impacts through the implementation of long-term monitoring;

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

1. URGES the Director General, Commissions, Members and States to:

a. improve research and the sharing of knowledge on the impacts of different types of construction, materials and products on species and their habitats, as well as on developments adapted to those species dependent on buildings, taking into account their specific ecological characteristics;

b. encourage collaboration between stakeholders in the building and biodiversity sectors at all stages of projects, from design to post-construction monitoring, in order to implement solutions that reconcile technical requirements and the needs of the species involved;

c. consider guidelines and a method for taking species into account at each stage of building construction, renovation and demolition projects, including the systematic establishment of initial diagnostics, the proposal of solutions adapted to species, and the implementation of monitoring and evaluation of the work carried out; and

d. support the training of those involved in the construction industry on the challenges of reconciling biodiversity and buildings, as well as raising awareness among elected representatives, government departments and users via a dedicated platform; and

2. ENCOURAGES the States to adopt strict regulations or guidelines, promoting the recognition and development of building labels and certifications that take biodiversity into account and put forward concrete solutions.