

104 Safeguarding biodiversity and human rights in energy transition mineral governance

ACKNOWLEDGING that a just and sustainable energy transition requires integrating climate action with biodiversity protection and Indigenous peoples' and Local communities' (IPLCs) rights;

CONSIDERING that the global shift to renewable energy and decarbonisation has significantly increased the demand for energy transition minerals, such as lithium, nickel, copper and bauxite;

CONCERNED that poorly regulated mining for these minerals drives biodiversity loss and habitat destruction, including of IUCN Red-Listed species, water insecurity and pollution, and violations of IPLC rights, disproportionately affecting critical rainforests, wetlands and protected areas;

ALSO CONCERNED that such mining may cause the severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment, exacerbate climate vulnerability, and affect women and other vulnerable groups via social, economic and environmental inequalities;

MINDFUL of the fact that over 50% of energy transition minerals are located on or near IPLC land;

APPRECIATING United Nations Environment Assembly Resolution 6/5 (UNEP/EA.6/Res.5) *Environmental aspects of minerals and metals* and the 2024 UN Principles to Guide Critical Energy Transition Minerals Towards Equity and Justice, prioritising environmental protection, human rights and equitable benefits for all stakeholders;

REAFFIRMING that the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change emphasise the need to halt biodiversity loss and recognise the critical role of forests, wetlands and biodiversity in combating climate change;

NOTING that healthy ecosystems, including protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), are vital for climate resilience and planetary security;

STRESSING that the participation and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) of IPLCs, including the right to say no, are fundamental for equitable and responsible resource management; and

RECALLING Resolution 7.121 *Reducing the impacts of the mining industry on biodiversity* (Marseille, 2020) urging precautionary approaches to minimise mining impacts on ecosystems:

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General to:

- a. develop, with the technical expertise from the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy and IUCN Members, and share guidance on responsible energy transition mineral governance, including best practices for safeguards, no-go zones and IPLC engagement; and
- b. facilitate collaboration among governments, companies, IPLCs and civil society organisations to advance these objectives; and

2. CALLS on governments to:

- a. promote reduced energy and mineral consumption, and circular economy principles to reduce reliance on primary extraction;
- b. ensure socially and ecologically sound mineral governance, respecting and strengthening national policies to protect ecosystems, water resources, biodiversity and IPLC rights;
- c. designate and enforce no-go zones for mining in ecologically or culturally significant areas, like World Heritage and Ramsar Sites, Key Biodiversity Areas, Indigenous territories, sacred sites,

protected areas, deep sea, watersheds and other areas vital for biodiversity, carbon storage or IPLC well-being;

d. expand the network of protected areas, including OECMs, designating these as no-go zones for mining;

e. foster meaningful participation of IPLCs, including women and youth, respecting their rights, including FPIC and the right to say no;

f. implement the recommendations contained within the 2024 UN Principles to Guide Critical Energy Transition Minerals Towards Equity and Justice to ensure fairness and justice across the transition mineral value chains; and

g. ensure that mining practices, including post-mining rehabilitation, comply with highest human rights and environmental standards.