

145 Reaffirming IUCN's commitment to multilateralism and global cooperation

RECALLING the UN Charter and the fundamental aims of multilateralism to address global challenges collectively for a more peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world;

APPRECIATING the leadership role of IUCN in the creation and success of key multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) including but not limited to the Convention on Wetlands (1971), the World Heritage Convention (1972), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1974), the Convention on Migratory Species (1979), the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1994);

AFFIRMING that multilateral cooperation is essential to addressing global biodiversity, climate and health challenges and that MEAs have been critical to making collective progress and have yielded important successes, including halting the destruction of the ozone layer and preventing species extinction, among others;

RECOGNISING ALSO that environmental challenges are interlinked with wider systemic dynamics and do not arise in isolation, and that MEAs form part of the broader global system of international law and policy;

CONCERNED about the apparent breakdown of multilateral processes and waning commitment or retreat by some States with respect to important MEAs, including those related to climate change, plastic pollution, conserving biodiversity, protecting the ocean and others;

TROUBLED by the recent movement towards isolationism by some States, including some wealthy States that bear a significant portion of the responsibility for addressing the biodiversity, climate and health crises, and the abrupt withdrawal of significant sources of financial support for conservation and sustainable, equitable development;

ALSO CONCERNED by the growth of support for authoritarianism, hegemony, and xenophobia in some States and regions and their negative impacts on nature, health and vulnerable communities;

ALARMED by recent incidences of displacement, hunger, famine, violent conflict and disease, and by environmental degradation, extreme weather, ecosystem decline and other impacts associated with our failure to reverse dangerous trends in ecological and climate conditions;

CONCERNED by an apparent retreat from science and science-based decision-making, and the spread of misinformation about the biodiversity, health and climate crises through traditional and social media;

ACKNOWLEDGING findings by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and other authoritative scientific bodies that transformative change is necessary to address the biodiversity and climate crises, and that four principles can guide transformative change towards global sustainability: (a) equity and justice; (b) pluralism and inclusion; (c) respectful and reciprocal human-nature relationships; and (d) adaptive learning and action;

NOTING that, with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) and Agenda for Sustainable Development target date of 2030 approaching, all indications are that we are moving in the wrong direction and will fail to meet any of our shared biodiversity, climate and sustainable development commitments; and

AGREEING that the preamble of the IUCN Statutes, which states: "the increasing impoverishment of natural resources will inevitably result in a lowering of human standards of living but that this trend need not be irreversible provided that people fully come to recognise their close dependence upon these resources and to the recognition of the need to preserve and manage them in a way that is conducive to the peace, progress and prosperity of humanity," applies now, perhaps more than ever before;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, UAE:

1. AFFIRMS, as One IUCN, its deep and ongoing commitment to multilateralism and global cooperation to address the biodiversity, climate, and health crises that threaten the very future of humanity;
2. CALLS ON the IUCN Director General and Council, in collaboration with Members and relevant Commissions, to urgently conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact that the withdrawal of countries from MEAs, global processes, forums and funding mechanisms is having and will have on the mission of IUCN, including efforts to achieve globally-agreed biodiversity, climate, health and development goals, along with recommendations on necessary short-term actions to fill gaps and to long-term actions to build resilience to such withdrawals and related unilateral actions;
3. URGES all State members to recommit themselves to multilateralism and global cooperation by:
 - a. Reviewing IUCN's analysis and taking action to address the identified impacts via short-term actions to fill gaps and long-term actions to build resilience from such withdrawals and related unilateral actions;
 - b. Ratifying and implementing all MEAs and climate related agreements, in some cases rejoining such efforts, in the spirit of renewed compromise and cooperation;
 - c. Taking urgent action to resolve controversies and end violent conflicts peacefully, and denouncing violence, to avoid catastrophic consequences for peoples and communities and the ecosystems upon which they rely;
 - d. Reaching out to States that have withdrawn or may be considering withdrawal from multilateral agreements, forums, and agendas, with open hearts and minds and inviting those States to rejoin the global community;
 - e. Affirming or reaffirming commitments to human rights including rights to a clean, healthy environment; thriving, abundant species; and to healthy, vibrant ecosystems, supporting safe, sustainable and equitable development for all people; and
 - f. Adopting or strengthening State commitments to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP); and
4. CALLS ON all IUCN State, non-governmental and Indigenous peoples Members to work with States as they engage or reengage in multilateral forums, agreements, and global processes with a renewed sense of determination to bring about the future we want and deserve as fellow citizens of Earth.