

Draft motions to be submitted by SEO/BirdLife to the IUCN World Congress

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01 - Promoting the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in nature conservation

Preamble

RECOGNISING that the United Nations Human Rights Council, through Resolution 48/13 of 2021, and the United Nations General Assembly, through Resolution 76/300 of 2022, have recognised the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as a universal human right;

EMPHASISING that this right is closely linked to nature conservation, as healthy ecosystems are fundamental to human life, climate change mitigation and the preservation of biodiversity;

APPLAUDING the global initiatives "1 Planet 1 Right" by BirdLife International and the one undertaken by the Global Coalition of Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, Social Movements and Local Communities for the Universal Recognition of the Human Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment that earned it the United Nations Human Rights Award in 2023

RECALLING IUCN resolutions, such as Resolution 081 of the 2016 World Conservation Congress on the right of humanity to a healthy environment and Resolution 115 of 2020 on the protection of environmental defenders, which reflect the organisation's commitment to human rights and nature;

NOTING that there are still no specific guidelines within IUCN to guide its members on how to integrate this right into their conservation policies, actions and strategies;

COMMITTING to promote and implement this right at all levels of IUCN and among its members, as part of its leadership in protecting human rights and biodiversity.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

- 1. To IUCN and its internal bodies:**
 - a. Develop guidelines that explain how nature conservation contributes to the fulfilment of the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
 - b. Include this right as a cross-cutting theme in IUCN's policies and programmes, linking it to its priority areas for action.
- 2. To Member States and partner organisations:**
 - a. Adopt this right as a basis for strengthening conservation policies that ensure equitable access to the benefits of a healthy environment.
 - b. Promote educational and awareness-raising campaigns to inform citizens about this right and its connection to biodiversity.
- 3. To the international community:**
 - a. Foster strategic partnerships between the environmental and human rights sectors to maximise the impact of this right.
 - b. Facilitate the exchange of best practices on how conservation policies can ensure universal enjoyment of this right.

02 - Promoting social inclusion and universal accessibility in IUCN practices and in the management of natural areas and green spaces

Preamble

RECOGNISING that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) establishes the obligation to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities on an equal basis, including ensuring their access to facilities and services in all areas of life;

EMPHASISING that the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (UNDIS, 2019) provides a comprehensive framework for mainstreaming disability inclusion across all pillars of the UN's work, including sustainable development, human rights and general well-being, which can extend to considering their participation in environmental action;

RECALLING that the European Union's Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030 and the European Act on Accessibility have established measures to remove barriers in products, services and environments, thus facilitating equal access for all people, which can also be applied to public and natural spaces;

UNDERLINING that, in addition to protected areas, urban and peri-urban parks and green spaces are recognised as fundamental spaces for physical and mental well-being, especially for people with disabilities, representing immediate and frequent access to nature;

RECOGNISING that, in addition to physical and social barriers, many people with disabilities face internal limitations, such as perceptions of difficulty or lack of adequate information, which reduce their participation in nature-related activities and their enjoyment of natural environments;

COMMITTING to ensure that the principles of social inclusion and universal accessibility are reflected in all IUCN policies, resolutions and actions, serving as a model for its members and partners.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

- 1. To IUCN and its internal bodies:**
 - a. Ensure that their documents, digital platforms and communication materials are accessible, including adapted fonts, captions and descriptions for people with visual, hearing and cognitive disabilities.
 - b. Provide regular training on inclusion and accessibility, based on international standards, such as the UN Strategy for Disability Inclusion.
- 2. To Member States and partner organisations:**
 - a. Adapt urban and peri-urban protected areas, parks and green spaces, with accessible infrastructure such as trails, inclusive signage and adequate services.
 - b. Promote programmes that highlight the therapeutic benefits of nature for people

with disabilities, and design campaigns to remove internal barriers, providing clear and accessible information.

3. To the international community:

a. Strengthen alliances with organisations specialising in accessibility, developing joint projects that broaden social inclusion in conservation.

b. Incorporate specific indicators in reports and assessments of accessibility in natural and IUCN-funded environments.

03 - Promoting collaborative marine spatial planning and vulnerability mapping for sustainable offshore wind energy development

Preamble

RECOGNISING that offshore wind energy is a key technology for accelerating the energy transition to decarbonised economies, with significant potential to mitigate the impacts of climate change;

NOTING that seabirds, such as shearwaters, albatrosses and terns, face significant risks from inappropriate siting of offshore wind farms, such as collisions and loss of essential breeding and feeding habitats;

RECALLING IUCN resolutions such as WCC 2020 Res 112 and WCC 2012 Res 075, which call for ecosystem-based marine spatial planning and biodiversity protection in marine areas;

CONFIRMING interest in the implementation effective of the guidelines and other technical documents developed by IUCN and in initiatives such as 'GINGR' on the development of renewable energies respectful of biodiversity conservation;

INSPIRED by initiatives such as BirdLife International's sensitivity maps, which provide key information for directing human activities away from areas of high ecological vulnerability, and which can serve as the basis for national and regional marine spatial planning strategies;

UNDERLINING that the development of vulnerability maps requires detailed information on the distribution and use of the sea by seabirds and other sensitive species, which should be collected and funded in collaboration with the public and private sectors;

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

- 1. To the Member States:**
 - a. Develop as a matter of priority marine spatial planning plans in their jurisdictional waters, based on an ecosystem approach, that identify and protect areas of high vulnerability for marine biodiversity.
 - b. Coordinate with other States to develop vulnerability mapping at regional level, such as in the Mediterranean and the European Atlantic, ensuring common, coherent and effective planning in international and transboundary seas.
- 2. To offshore wind energy developers:**
 - a. Fund and collaborate in studies that improve and update knowledge on the distribution and patterns of sea use by seabirds and other sensitive species, using this data to inform their projects and avoid areas of greatest vulnerability for the species involved.
 - b. Apply vulnerability mapping methodologies based on scientific principles, such as those developed by BirdLife International, to minimise risks to biodiversity before, during and after the development of offshore wind projects.

3. To IUCN:

- a. Work with BirdLife International and other relevant organisations to promote the creation of marine vulnerability maps, using proven methodologies to guide spatial planning and minimise risks to seabirds and sensitive ecosystems.

4. International marine governance fora, such as the Barcelona Convention and the OSPAR Convention:

- a. Promote cooperation between States to develop regional vulnerability maps and ensure that these guide the sustainable development of marine renewable energies in their areas of competence.

04 - Promoting strategic and spatial planning of electricity grids to minimise impacts on biodiversity

Preamble

RECOGNISING that the transition to a decarbonised economy requires massive electrification, which will entail a significant increase in electricity infrastructure, including thousands of kilometres of new transmission and distribution lines;

NOTING that power lines represent a major threat to biodiversity, in particular to birds and other species, due to collisions, electrocutions and landscape fragmentation, especially in areas of high biodiversity or key migratory routes;

RECALLING IUCN WCC 2016 Rec 098, which calls for measures to prevent impacts of electricity infrastructure on birds, and other relevant resolutions promoting sustainability in energy development;

INSPIRED by examples of strategic planning and tools such as ecological sensitivity maps, which have proven to be effective in identifying critical areas and guiding decisions towards solutions that minimise environmental impacts;

UNDERLINING the need for an integrated and proactive approach that prioritises strategic spatial planning, modernisation of existing infrastructure, decentralisation of energy generation and shared use of existing linear corridors such as railways and roads;

COMMITTING to promote strict environmental criteria for the financing of electricity projects, ensuring that new infrastructure is planned and developed in a sustainable manner.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

1. To the Member States:

- a. Adopt strategic spatial planning approaches that integrate ecological sensitivity mapping to identify and protect no-go areas, such as areas of high biodiversity, key migratory routes and habitats of nocturnal species.
- b. Promote the repowering and upgrading of existing electricity infrastructure to increase capacity and reduce the need for new power lines.
- c. Encourage the decentralisation of energy generation through the massive development of renewable energy on urban land, industrial sites and infrastructure such as car parks and rail corridors.
- d. Establish regulations that prioritise the shared use of existing linear corridors, such as railways and roads, for the installation of power lines.
- e. Promote the reduction of electricity consumption and encourage greater efficiency in its use, in order to avoid the installation of new grid connection infrastructures

2. To electricity utilities and project developers:

- a. Finance strategic planning studies that minimise the environmental impacts of

- new electricity infrastructures, including ecological sensitivity maps.
- b. Incorporate innovative technologies such as anti-collision devices and approved designs to prevent electrocution in all new infrastructure.

3. **To multilateral funding agencies:**

- a. Incorporate specific environmental criteria for the approval of electricity infrastructure projects, ensuring that they meet strict environmental standards and prioritise mitigation measures and strategic planning.
- b. Collaborate with IUCN to develop international guidelines for assessing electricity infrastructure projects, encouraging a biodiversity conservation approach.

4. **To IUCN:**

- a. Lead the creation of international criteria for the planning and assessment of electricity infrastructure, in collaboration with multilateral funding agencies such as the Regional Development Banks (IDB, ADB, ADB, ADB, etc.).
- b. Promote the exchange of experiences and best practices between Member States and energy companies to ensure a comprehensive and coherent approach towards sustainable development of electricity infrastructures.

05 - Promotion of national social participation bodies for the implementation of the Global Framework for Biodiversity

Preamble

RECOGNISING that public participation and access to environmental information are fundamental pillars for the effective implementation of environmental policies, as set out in the Aarhus Convention in Europe and the Escazú Agreement in Latin America and the Caribbean, both examples of multilateral cooperation in these fields;

UNDERLINING that the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework requires strong national plans to achieve its objectives, including the active participation of stakeholders, especially nature conservation organisations;

RECALLING that Article 14 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) calls on Parties to assess and mitigate the environmental and social impacts of their policies and programmes;

ENCOURAGED by positive experiences of participation in other international initiatives, such as the citizen monitoring programmes promoted by IUCN and other multilateral bodies;

CONCERNED by the lack of institutionalised participatory mechanisms in many countries, which limits the capacity of civil society organisations to contribute effectively to the development, monitoring and evaluation of national biodiversity plans;

Operative part

The IUCN World Conservation Congress at its 31st Session requests:

1. To the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):

- Establish or strengthen national social participation bodies that include key nature conservation organisations, indigenous communities, local communities and other relevant stakeholders to contribute to the development, monitoring and evaluation of national biodiversity plans under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Ensure that these bodies are supported by legal frameworks that protect access to information and promote effective public participation, drawing on the principles of the Aarhus Convention and the Escazu Agreement.

2. To regions that do not yet have multilateral agreements on access to information and public participation:

- Promote the development of agreements similar to the Aarhus Convention or the Escazu Agreement, which recognise and protect environmental participation rights in local and regional contexts.

3. To IUCN:

- Collaborate with the CBD to develop international guidelines to guide States in the establishment and management of national bodies for social participation in the field of biodiversity.
- Support training and capacity building of civil society organisations to participate effectively in these bodies, ensuring representativeness and equity.

4. To multilateral agencies and international donors:

- Provide financial and technical resources to support the establishment and functioning of these national participatory bodies, ensuring their long-term sustainability.

06 - Promotion of sustainable tourism models to protect biodiversity and natural resources in areas with high tourism pressure

Preamble

RECOGNISING that mass tourism puts significant pressure on ecosystems, especially in marine protected areas, habitats of vulnerable species and mountainous areas, affecting their capacity to sustain biodiversity and essential ecosystem services;

EMPHASIZING that sustainable tourism can contribute to biodiversity conservation, local economic development and social well-being, as outlined in IUCN Resolutions 6.060 (2016), 1.32 (1996) and 130 (2020), as well as in the UN General Assembly resolution on the promotion of ecotourism;

NOTING that mass tourism often exceeds the environmental carrying capacity of protected areas, contributing to environmental degradation, resource depletion and increased conflict between local communities and visitors;

RECOGNISING that diversification, regulation and awareness-raising strategies can reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems and promote sustainable alternatives that benefit both biodiversity and local communities;

COMMITTING to encourage the adoption of sustainable tourism practices based on principles of conservation, community participation and respect for the carrying capacity of ecosystems.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

- 1. To IUCN and its internal bodies:**
 - a. Develop guidelines on environmental carrying capacity assessment for protected areas and other sensitive areas, providing tools to establish clear limits to tourism activity.
 - b. Promote the adoption of international standards, such as the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria (GSTC), to guide local and national policies on sustainable tourism.
- 2. To Member States and partner organisations:**
 - a. Regulate tourism activities in fragile ecosystems, including the management of cruise ships, vehicles and access to beaches and protected areas.
 - b. Diversify tourism supply by promoting ecotourism, agro-tourism and cultural activities that generate local benefits and reduce pressure on areas of high ecological vulnerability.
- 3. To the international community:**
 - a. Launch awareness campaigns on responsible tourism, targeting both tourists and residents, highlighting the importance of conserving biodiversity.
 - b. Encourage the exchange of experiences and good practices in sustainable tourism, promoting partnerships between the public, private and community sectors.

07 - Global strategy for the restoration of natural darkness: protection of key habitats and mitigation of light pollution

Preamble

RECOGNISING that light pollution is a growing threat that disrupts natural cycles of light and darkness, with serious impacts on biodiversity, especially on nocturnal species such as migratory birds and bats;

NOTING that artificial light interferes with the orientation of migratory birds, increasing the risk of fatal collisions and attracting them to urban environments, and that bats have their hunting patterns and behaviour altered, affecting their role as insect controllers and pollinators;

EMPHASISING that IUCN Resolution WCC-2020-Res-124 recognises light pollution as a global environmental problem, but does not specifically address the restoration of natural darkness or the specific measures needed to protect key habitats and migratory routes;

INSPIRED by successful projects such as STARRY-MED, Life Natura@night or LuMinAves that have implemented effective measures to protect nocturnal biodiversity by reducing light pollution in sensitive areas of the Mediterranean and Atlantic;

UNDERLINING the importance of restoring natural darkness as a key component of global conservation strategies and as a direct benefit to ecosystems and human well-being;

COMMITTING to lead a global and proactive approach to mitigate the impacts of light pollution on sensitive ecosystems and promote the restoration of natural darkness.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

1. To IUCN:

- a. Promote the development of a global strategy for the restoration of natural darkness, which can be addressed within the framework of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), underlining its relevance to the conservation of birds, bats and nocturnal migratory insects.
- b. Urge IUCN Commissions to explore how the restoration of natural darkness can be integrated into their remit, considering its impact on nocturnal biodiversity and sensitive ecosystems.

2. To Member States and partner organisations:

- a. Develop and implement national strategies for the restoration of natural darkness that identify critical habitats, flyways and sensitive areas for nocturnal species, including migratory birds, bats and insects.
- b. Establish light pollution exclusion zones in priority areas for nocturnal biodiversity, ensuring the protection of migratory routes and key habitats.
- c. Encourage the development and adoption of technical standards for adaptive lighting in sensitive ecosystems, including technologies such as reduced-spectrum lighting and programmed-off systems, minimising the impact on nocturnal wildlife.

3. To the international community:

- a. Collaborate in the design and adoption of a global strategy for the restoration of natural darkness, encouraging cooperation between countries, international organisations and local communities.
- b. Promote the exchange of best practices and technical expertise to facilitate the implementation of these strategies on a global scale.

08 - Management and restoration of areas affected by monoculture eucalyptus plantations in regions outside their natural distribution

Preamble

RECOGNIZING that several species of the genus *Eucalyptus* have been identified as invasive alien species of global concern according to the IUCN criteria (2000), due to their adverse impacts on biodiversity, soil quality, water resources and increased risk of forest fires

NOTING that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation highlight the need to manage and restore ecosystems affected by invasive alien species, including monocultures of non-native species;

HIGHLIGHTING IUCN resolutions, such as Resolution WCC 2020 Res 004 on invasive species, which underlines the importance of taking measures to prevent and manage the impacts of species outside their natural distribution, and Resolution WCC 2020 Res 077, which addresses the effects of timber plantations on biodiversity;

RECOGNISING the need to develop sustainable and restorative approaches to address the environmental, social and economic impacts associated with these monocultures and to ensure the resilience of affected ecosystems;

COMMITTING to promote sustainable alternatives that reduce pressure on fragile ecosystems and improve the livelihoods of local communities.

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

- 1. To IUCN and its internal bodies:**
 - a. Develop guidelines for the sustainable management and ecological restoration of areas affected by eucalyptus monocultures, prioritising the recovery of native forests.
 - b. Promote research to assess the ecological impacts of eucalyptus monocultures on biodiversity, the hydrological cycle and soil fertility, with emphasis on regions outside their natural range.
- 2. To Member States and partner organisations:**
 - a. Implement regulations that limit the expansion of eucalyptus monocultures in sensitive areas, such as degraded soils, watersheds and habitats of high biodiversity.
 - b. Promote diversified forestry models and agroforestry systems that combine economic productivity with environmental conservation.
- 3. To the international community:**
 - a. Facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices on the restoration of areas degraded by monocultures.
 - b. Support awareness-raising and training programmes for local communities, resource managers and forest companies, highlighting the importance of sustainable management and the risks associated with eucalyptus monocultures.

09 - Promoting co-existence between human activities and protected species in Europe

Preamble

RECOGNISING that the wolf (*Canis lupus*) and other protected species, such as cormorants and other fish-eating birds, play a crucial role in the functionality of ecosystems, contributing to biodiversity and the health of natural environments;

NOTING that the interaction between these species and human activities such as livestock, agriculture and fisheries has led to conflicts, often exacerbated by negative perceptions and the lack of effective coexistence programmes;

RECALLING that the EU Habitats Directive and the Bern Convention provide a sound legal framework for the protection of these species, but that in practice the implementation of coexistence measures is uneven and limited;

INSPIRED by successful initiatives such as the Eurasian Multiple Carnivore Species Action Plan developed under the auspices of CMS, which demonstrates that it is possible to reconcile the conservation of large carnivores with human activities;

NOTING that IUCN Resolutions, including WCC-2020-Res-115 and WCC-2016-Res-068, already address general aspects of human-wildlife conflict, but do not develop specific strategies for strengthening coexistence in Europe;

UNDERLINING the importance of promoting international cooperation and exchange of best practices to proactively address these conflicts and ensure the conservation of these species;

Operative part

The IUCN General Assembly, at its 31st World Congress, requests:

1. **To the European Union and its Member States:** a. Maintain and strengthen the current level of protection for wolves and other protected species, ensuring that policy and regulatory decisions are based on sound scientific evidence. b. Develop and implement national and transboundary coexistence programmes that include conflict prevention measures, such as fair economic compensation, adapted infrastructures, and community awareness. c. Integrate into existing regulatory frameworks the existing legal frameworks for wolf and other protected species. Develop and implement national and transboundary coexistence programmes that include conflict prevention measures, such as fair economic compensation, adapted infrastructure, and community awareness raising. c. Integrate into existing regulatory frameworks the principle of "active coexistence", promoting economic incentives for affected sectors that adopt practices compatible with the conservation of these species.
2. **To IUCN:** a. Promote a specific strategy for coexistence between human activities and protected species in Europe, developing technical guidelines based on international best practice. b. Support research on the impact of human activities on protected species and on the design of innovative coexistence measures. c.

Facilitate the exchange of experiences among members and regions to replicate successful models of coexistence.

3. **To Member States and international agencies:** a. Increase efforts to raise awareness among rural communities of the ecological and economic benefits of living with protected species. b. Promote public-private partnerships to fund infrastructure and technologies that reduce the impacts of human-wildlife conflict.