WCC-2016-Rec-104-EN
Integrating autochthonous forest genetic diversity into protected area conservation objectives

RECALLING the three interdependent components of biodiversity: genetic diversity, species diversity and ecosystem diversity;

NOTING that the conservation of genetic diversity is not sufficiently taken into account in forest conservation programmes;

REGRETTING that rather, in many countries, long-term conservation programmes involve only forest genetic resources of species of economic interest;

ALSO RECALLING the priorities of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources*, adopted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Conference at its 38th session in June 2013, notably on the *in situ* conservation goals for forest genetic resources;

RECOGNISING the importance, for the medium and long term, of a dynamic conservation of genetic diversity, which favours the adaptive capacities and evolution of forests in the face of environmental changes;

ALSO RECOGNISING that the genetic diversity of trees is a key component in forest biodiversity and that, in part, it determines the functioning of the other components of the biodiversity of forest ecosystems;

RECOGNISING the role of the genetic biodiversity of trees in the resilience and adaptation of forest ecosystems to the direct and indirect effects of climate change; and

FINALLY RECOGNISING the need to set up networks of organisations and institutions that will focus on important forest species with added value for food, trade, industrial benefits (medicine, aromatic plants, etc.), the environmental characteristics and the control of climate change at national, regional and international levels;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

ASKS the States, governmental and non-governmental organisations involved in nature conservation to:

a. promote the taking into account of autochthonous forest genetic diversity conservation at all levels of action (local, national, global);

b. improve the integration of the conservation of autochthonous forest genetic diversity into the conservation goals for protected areas, in order to:

i. take this key component of forest biodiversity fully into account; and

ii. reinforce the resilience and adaptation of forest ecosystems to the direct and indirect effects of climate change;

c. recognise a protected area protection status (Category IV) corresponding to the conservation units of forest genetic diversity selected within the framework of national and/or international programmes, as a result of:

i. their contribution to an *in situ* conservation network representative of the genetic variability of forest species; and

ii. the existence of *in situ* management measures, established in a management document, aimed at maintaining the genetic diversity of the species involved and to favour their adaptation to environmental changes;

d. encourage and facilitate the creation, expansion, monitoring and documentation of genetic resources both *ex situ* and close to the sites, through seed banks, orchards, provenance trials and other *in vivo* collections of different trees; and

e. work in coordination with the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation, Sustainable Use and Development of Forest Genetic Resources* (GPA-FGR) of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO).