

WCC-2016-Rec-108-EN

Financing for biodiversity projects in the European Union's outermost regions and overseas countries and territories

RECALLING that the European Union's outermost regions (ORs) and overseas countries and territories (OCTs) are home to over 70% of European biodiversity;

NOTING that funding for protecting the biodiversity of ORs and OCTs remains insufficient;

STRESSING that there is still no dedicated financial mechanism, only different financing arrangements, which are hard for all the local stakeholders to access;

CONCERNED at the insufficient level of mobilisation of funding for the promotion of biodiversity in the financial models of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014–2020;

BEARING IN MIND the decision of the European Parliament and on the commitment of the European Commission and of its Directorate-General for the Environment for funding for the 'BEST' Preparatory Action (voluntary scheme for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in the Territories of the Union's outermost regions and overseas countries and territories);

CONGRATULATING the European Commission and its Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development for having launched the BEST Programme 2.0 in order to extend the BEST initiative to OCTs), whilst waiting for the creation of a permanent financing mechanism for biodiversity and climate change in EU ORs and OCTs;

STRESSING the importance of the shared running of the BEST 2.0 Programme with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional Policy in order to ensure that the ORs benefit from the same financing opportunities;

BEARING IN MIND the commitment of the 'Message from Guadeloupe', from the International Conference on Biodiversity and Climate Change (Guadeloupe, 2014), on constituting a group bringing together the stakeholders involved so as to set up a permanent partnership dedicated to these issues in the ORs and OCTs

BEARING IN MIND the conclusions of the Council of the European Union on the mid-term review of the European Union Biodiversity Strategy, which invites the European Commission and the Member States to progress mobilisation of resources for biodiversity in ORs and OCTs; and

RECALLING IUCN's proposals regarding the financing of the future European mechanism;

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

ASKS the European Commission, the EU Member States and the Group arising from the Guadeloupe Conference responsible for setting up the voluntary partnership to:

- a. study all methods and options for the financing, governance and steering of a permanent European partnership for biodiversity and climate change, common to all ORs and OCTs;
- b. set up this permanent partnership for biodiversity and climate change in ORs and OCTs as soon as possible, by providing it with sufficient funding and by capitalising on the experience gained in the BEST Preparatory Action and the BEST 2.0 Programme;
- c. implement a system for the monitoring and assessment of progress made by the permanent partnership for biodiversity and climate change in ORs and OCTs;
- d. revise the application criteria and conditions in order to facilitate access by ORs and OCTs to EU funding for biodiversity, include LIFE+ and Horizon 2020;
- e. take biodiversity into account in mid-term reviews of the European Structural and Investment Funds 2014–2020 financial models; and

f. facilitate in general the emergence of innovative partnerships and financing for biodiversity in ORs and OCTs.

State and agency Members of the United States abstained during the vote on this motion for reasons given in the U.S. General Statement on the IUCN Motions Process.