

**WCC-2016-Res-077-EN**  
**Environmental courts and tribunals**

NOTING that environmental courts and tribunals may ensure the fair, consistent, and effective settlement of cases concerning the environment;

FURTHER NOTING that environmental courts and tribunals may be in a good position to safeguard the most treasured environments in the world through work aimed at informed, efficient, and consistent application of environmental laws;

FURTHER NOTING that additional training for jurists presiding over environmental courts and tribunals increases effective decision making by providing specialisation in this technical and complex field of law;

WELCOMING the dramatic increase in the creation of environmental courts and tribunals around the world in recent years, now numbering over 1,000 and flourishing in 44 countries;

RECOGNISING the commencement of the Hawai'i State Environmental Court in 2015, which established the second statewide environmental court in the United States;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that during the 1992 Earth Summit 178 governments signed the Rio Declaration affirming the principle that environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens;

NOTING that Resolution 5.129 *Courts and access to justice* (Jeju, 2012) called upon States to establish an autonomous international judicial institute on the environment, to coordinate the efforts and principles of national judiciaries and other related administrative authorities on the environment; and

ACKNOWLEDGING the environmental crisis we are facing on a global, regional, national, and local scale and the increased need for strong environmental governance in all countries;

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General of IUCN to work in coordination with the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) to compile a framework of best practices for creating environmental courts and tribunals that can be useful in some legal cultures and political situations, and transmit that framework to State Members for their consideration;
2. INVITES State Members to consider establishing, as appropriate and consistent with their domestic legal systems, their own environmental courts and to provide them with sufficient authority to promote transparency, inclusiveness, and accountability to obtain a more efficient and consistent application of environmental law; and
3. FURTHER INVITES State Members to take appropriate measures to facilitate access to their environmental courts and tribunals, with the goal of working towards environmental justice.