

**International cooperation on marine pollution from sunken vessels**

RECOGNISING that the pollution of our oceans is a global problem, which threatens marine species and their ecosystems;

NOTING that there are more than 8,500 potentially polluting sunken vessels around the world, with more than 22 billion gallons of fuel on board, most of which date from World War II, and that because of years of erosion the issue of fuel leakage is no longer 'if' but instead 'when' it will happen;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that pollution from wrecks is a lesser-known but important issue that threatens the stability and livelihood of our oceans and marine ecosystems;

UNSETTLED about the immediate environmental threat that, as sunken vessels continue to deteriorate, fuel and other dangerous chemicals will begin and continue to spill into our oceans;

CONCERNED that a majority of the efforts for removing fuel have been reactive once a leak is reported, whereas the oceans and the environment deserve and require a proactive approach to this threat; and

ACKNOWLEDGING that several countries have made efforts to document and maintain databases to track these wrecks, including Estonia, Finland and Sweden, with the wreck registers and risk assessment work done in the Sunken Wreck Environmental Risk Assessment (SWERA) project;

**The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2020, at its session in Marseille, France:**

1. ENCOURAGES the Director General to explore a collaboration with Members with a view to producing a toolkit to evaluate the threat of oil pollution from shipwrecks and to identify possible solutions; and
2. CALLS ON State and Government Agency Members to continue to develop and share innovative tools and best practices for pollutant removal from sunken ships having oil or packaged dangerous goods on board.