

**WCC-2020-Res-085-EN**  
**Rewilding**

CONCERNED that human activities are increasingly altering key processes important to the productivity and diversity of Earth's ecosystems;

RECALLING the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the need to "achieve a land degradation-neutral world" (SDG Target 15.3) and "healthy and productive oceans" (SDG Target 14.2);

FURTHER RECALLING the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and recognising the critical role that healthy ecosystems play in defending against climate change and sustaining other ecosystem services;

NOTING the emergence of rewilding as a new, cost-effective approach to enhancing biodiversity, connectivity, ecological resilience and ecosystem service delivery;

AWARE that there are different uses and interpretations of the word 'rewilding', including by the public and donors;

ADDITIONALLY AWARE that indiscriminate reforestation, and other inappropriately planned restoration efforts, have often caused the loss of natural, biological, geological, and cultural heritage;

FURTHER NOTING that rewilding and restoring are related concepts that both have a place in ecosystem stewardship;

ACKNOWLEDGING that rewilding places emphasis on ecosystem functionality over species composition, promotes unpredictability in ecosystem dynamic trajectory and uses a variety of management actions that can include taxonomic substitutions;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that rewilding can be complementary to, and not a replacement for, other activities and efforts towards the conservation of biodiversity;

WELCOMING efforts by governments, conservation agencies and other partners to rewild in certain parts of the world and to develop evidence-based guidance;

AWARE that large rewilding initiatives have emerged, and are emerging, in certain areas across the world, and have gained great practical experience and generated lessons learned that should be used and considered in implementing this motion;

MINDFUL OF the challenges associated with developing a generally accepted definition, approach and set of indicators for rewilding initiatives to measure and report on success;

AWARE OF the achievements of the Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) Rewilding Task Force, as well as IUCN guidelines and policies produced by the Species Survival Commission's (SSC) thematic Specialist Groups covering issues of related relevance, including the *Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations* and *Guidelines for the Prevention of Biodiversity Loss Caused by Alien Invasive Species*; and

FURTHER STRESSING the need to consider ecological, economic and societal issues in the development of rewilding initiatives and to engage all relevant stakeholders from the onset;

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

1. CALLS ON the Director General, in consultation with CEM and SSC, to establish with urgency an interdisciplinary and cross-Commission working group involving diverse representatives from the Secretariat, Commissions (including relevant thematic Specialist Groups), Members, the CEM Rewilding Task Force (and any successor body), rewilding practitioners and other relevant experts to:

a. agree, based on the work of the CEM Rewilding Task Force, a clear definition and understanding of rewilding, including adopting rewilding principles, and to work with the CEM Rewilding Task Force, SSC Specialist Groups on Conservation Translocation, Invasive Species, Wildlife Health, and Conservation Genetics, as well as the IUCN Sustainable Use and Livelihoods Specialist Group (SULi), to develop parameters and guidelines for applying rewilding approaches that reflect the need for careful assessment of the relative risks and rewards to ecosystems and local communities affected by land-use changes; and

b. submit to Council an evidence-based IUCN Policy on rewilding, appropriately cross-linked to existing IUCN policy on ecosystem restoration, to guide the Director General, Commissions, Members and other agencies on best practice;

2. ENCOURAGES the Director General, Commissions and Members to use this Policy to promote rigorously planned and participatory rewilding approaches as a way to reinstate or enhance ecosystem function(s) and viable species populations;

3. CALLS ON governments and civil society, with Members taking the lead, to incorporate rewilding into strategies and measures that encourage innovation and learning from on-the-ground activities, and to ensure that rewilding initiatives do not impact negatively any component of the environment, avoiding – amongst other impacts – the deterioration and destruction of geological and cultural heritage caused by inappropriate reforestation efforts;

4. STRESSES the need for adherence to IUCN's *Guidelines for Reintroductions and Other Conservation Translocations* in rewilding initiatives; and

5. CALLS ON governments, donor countries and financial institutions, private funders and businesses to recognise and support rewilding as a cross-societal approach and nature-based solution to achieving sustainable development.