

**Urgent measures to safeguard the globally important Atewa Forest, Ghana**

AWARE that the Atewa Forest in the Eastern Region of Ghana is one of the most important places in West Africa for biodiversity conservation, being a rare example of ‘upland evergreen’ forest, with over 100 species listed in the Threatened or Near Threatened categories of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species;

NOTING that at least two species in Atewa are Critically Endangered, and a further two are likely to become so when assessed, and that one plant species, two butterflies and one frog are endemic to Atewa;

EMPHASISING that Atewa is a critical water source, housing the headwaters of the Birim, Densu and Ayensu Rivers, which provide water to local communities as well as to millions of people downstream, including in Accra;

APPRECIATING the establishment of a Forest Reserve at Atewa in 1926 and its formal protection by the government of Ghana in the decades following independence;

ALARMED that in June 2019, in the absence of an environmental impact assessment, the Ghanaian authorities started clearing access roads to the summit of the Atewa Forest to allow test-drilling for bauxite;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that strip mining for bauxite would irrecoverably damage the Atewa Forest, resulting in species extinctions and highly degraded water sources;

RECOGNISING the strong opposition from communities around Atewa, and from Ghanaian civil society, to mining in Atewa Forest;

AWARE that both Ghanaian and international companies are involved in the development of bauxite mining at Atewa;

ALSO AWARE of the potential contribution that the aluminium industry could make to Ghana, while noting that mining bauxite at Atewa is not critical to this industry;

APPRECIATIVE of the commitment of His Excellency The President of the Republic of Ghana to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); and

STRESSING that mining bauxite in the Atewa Forest is fundamentally inconsistent with international commitments;

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

1. URGES the Government of Ghana to:

a. immediately and permanently halt all mining-related operations and other destructive activities in Atewa Forest; and

b. establish a national park over the entirety of Atewa Forest to ensure its conservation in perpetuity;

2. URGES the donor community to provide the financial assistance needed to build a world-class protected area in the Atewa Forest, as well as for supporting green developments within the landscape;

In the event that the Government of Ghana does not implement the provisions of the first operative paragraph:

3. STRONGLY REQUESTS all companies in the mining sector not to participate in any mining activities in or near Atewa Forest and all companies using aluminium to ensure that no aluminium from Atewa Forest enters their supply chains;

4. REQUESTS the Aluminium Stewardship Initiative to assist companies to ensure that aluminium from Atewa does not enter their supply chains and urge their member companies not to become involved in mining activities in or near the Atewa Forest;

5. URGES all financial institutions to ensure that they provide no finance in any form for any mining or other destructive activities in or near Atewa Forest; and

6. REQUESTS the Director General, in view of the extreme urgency of the situation in the Atewa Forest, to provide a special report to the next session of the World Conservation Congress on the implementation of this Resolution.