

WCC-2020-Res-130-EN

Strengthening sustainable tourism's role in biodiversity conservation and community resilience

CELEBRATING the value of wildlife and nature-based tourism in supporting communities around the world and its important role in biodiversity conservation, conservation funding, environmental literacy and spiritual and cultural uses of nature;

CONCERNED for the communities and countries reliant on nature-based tourism operations, whose health and livelihoods have been severely impacted by the pandemic;

EMPATHETIC to the welfare crisis communities face due to the pandemic and economic loss from the halt of tourism, which has increased habitat encroachment, poaching, illegal wildlife trade and unregulated harvesting, and thereby created greater risk for zoonotic disease transmission;

RECOGNISING that more effective implementation of sustainable nature-based tourism strategies and benefit-sharing programmes is an integral part of community recovery to strengthen resilience during future adverse events and to build a more sustainable future for people and wildlife;

CONSIDERING the efforts of the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), World Bank, World Economic Forum, World Trade and Tourism Council (WTTC), and IUCN Member organisations to develop programmes that support sustainable nature-based tourism in the aftermath of this pandemic crisis;

NOTING Resolution 6.060 *Improving standards in ecotourism* (Hawai'i, 2016) and previous resolutions by the UN General Assembly and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) reminding us of the significant contributions of nature-based tourism to the protection of biodiversity and the added benefits to community development and poverty eradication;

DETERMINED to use this pivotal moment to help governments, businesses and NGOs establish better global awareness about the loss of biodiversity, the vulnerability of communities that rely on tourism and the positive opportunities sustainable tourism can facilitate;

ENCOURAGED that the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) has established a COVID-19 Task Force and Call for Action to support Rescue, Recovery and Rebuilding protected and conserved areas; and

RECOGNISING that IUCN can provide urgent help for vulnerable communities and endangered species by building more capacity and actions for sustainable nature-based tourism and calling on its Members to support private-sector partnerships that bolster recovery and resilience beyond protected areas;

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

1. CALLS on the Director General to commit dedicated attention for nature-based tourism by:

a. including Sustainable Tourism as a topic; and

b. integrating nature-based tourism events and activities into future Congresses and IUCN conferences;

2. CALLS on the Commissions to consider creating an inter-commission working group focused on sustainable tourism's role in biodiversity conservation and community resilience;

3. URGES the WCPA COVID Task Force, in collaboration with other Specialist Groups and Task Forces, to strengthen its Call to Action for Rescue, Recovery and Rebuilding by:

a. producing memoranda for equitable benefit-sharing programmes and emergency strategies for communities and protected areas reliant on nature-based tourism; and

b. developing resources to support local, equal-access outdoor recreation and wildlife tourism programmes in developing countries to increase opportunities for natural heritage experiences that improve health, well-being and conservation values; and

4. CALLS ON Members and affiliates to:

a. support development of diversified sustainable livelihood activities, skill-training programmes and alternative protein-sourcing markets in tourism-dependent communities to bolster community resilience against current and future adverse events;

b. establish enterprise-based partnerships to incorporate conservation and biodiversity monitoring across the tourism supply chain; and

c. establish more sustainable financing campaigns, including endowment funds, to support key biodiversity assets during tourism industry recessions.