

8.011 Delivering harmonised accountability and means of implementation for international forest protection goals

ACKNOWLEDGING that preserving the ecological integrity of all forest biomes through preventing deforestation and forest degradation including that driven by forest crime is critical to the achievement of biodiversity and climate targets, as well as for human well-being;

RECOGNISING that different frameworks have been developed to measure and monitor different issues related to forests, at different scales, and for different purposes;

ACKNOWLEDGING that in reporting under the same framework or standard there often remain inconsistencies in approaches to defining, monitoring, and reporting on forest degradation and associated terms and metrics, particularly among parties with differing forest biomes and national circumstances;

STRESSING the value of continuous improvement in measurement, monitoring and reporting, with the aim of enhancing transparency and fully meeting relevant standards and methodologies;

RECOGNISING the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as set out in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and international rights law, over lands, territories and resources for their cultures, survival and livelihoods, according to national legislation;

RECOGNISING FURTHER that harmonised accountability on forest protection must be considered in light of differences in national capacities;

WELCOMING Decision 16/22 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognising that conserving, protecting and restoring biodiversity and ecosystem integrity is necessary for climate mitigation and adaptation;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the IUCN policy outlining the importance to climate and biodiversity of primary forests in all biomes;

ALSO WELCOMING the first global stocktake under the Paris Agreement (Decision 1/CMA.5) emphasising the importance of conserving, protecting and restoring nature and ecosystems to achieving the Paris Agreement temperature goal, including through enhanced efforts towards halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030;

CONCERNED that the Forest Declaration Assessment 2024 finds that deforestation and degradation rates are trending too high to meet the 2030 goal to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation;

RECOGNISING ALSO the value of global consistency in accountability under each relevant framework or standard related to deforestation and forest degradation, including in the application of monitoring and reporting methodologies and definitions, and the need for comprehensive and transparent forest carbon accounting;

FURTHER NOTING the need to increase financial support from all sources for developing countries and Indigenous Peoples and local communities in delivering forest protection and restoration;

FURTHER WELCOMING the 2023 African Ministerial Conference on the Environment's support for a framework to drive progress and promote greater equity between forest protection standards; and

RECALLING relevant IUCN Resolutions and outcome documents, including Resolution 7.127 *Strengthening the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe and facilitating their restoration where possible* (Marseille, 2020), emphasising the importance of the protection of primary and old-growth forests in Europe, and Resolution 7.108 *Deforestation and agricultural commodity supply chains* (Marseille, 2020);

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. CALLS ON the Director General and relevant IUCN Commissions including the Climate Action Commission (CAC) to work with authoritative bodies to conduct an analysis by the end of 2026 of inconsistencies in monitoring and reporting under relevant forest-related frameworks and standards, including in the application of definitions and methodologies with a particular focus on the data sets that are relevant to monitoring and reporting progress on halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030;

2. ALSO CALLS ON the Director General and Commissions to provide, where relevant, technical support and to promote and support the participatory advancement and implementation of harmonised accountability under relevant forest-related frameworks and standards through processes to improve or enhance, where necessary, the application of definitions and methodologies, including through the recognition and integration of community-led forest monitoring systems and the validation of community-generated data;

3. URGES State Members to consider the analysis of inconsistencies between countries in the definitions and the application of methodologies under specific frameworks and standards, and their implications for harmonised monitoring and reporting, and the potential to advance:

a. agreed and consistently applied definitions and understandings of terms and indicators under frameworks and standards related to forest monitoring and reporting, where such agreement and commonality does not currently exist, derived from the latest scientific understandings, including traditional knowledge;

b. guidance on how to improve monitoring and reporting on metrics such as primary forest loss, common criteria and tools for data collection that reflect relevant metrics and indicators to enhance and align reporting across Conventions, and recommendations for accessing financial support and technology development and sharing with developing countries, on mutually agreed terms;

c. guidance on best practices to enhance and align countries' reporting under forest-related standards and frameworks and to enable cross-national comparability globally; and

d. recognition of community-collected data, and the provision of financial, technical and technological support to Indigenous Peoples and local communities to the extent possible to ensure their full and harmonised participation in all stages of data collection, validation, analysis and use where appropriate; and

4. ENCOURAGES IUCN and its Members to promote and advance these objectives and to actively support improved and consistent forest measurement, monitoring and reporting, including rapid uptake of harmonised definitions and methodologies under relevant frameworks and standards.