

8.105 Promotion of social inclusion and universal accessibility in IUCN practices and in the management of natural areas, parks and green spaces

RECOGNISING that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) establishes the obligation to promote, protect and ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities on an equal basis, including ensuring their access to spaces and services in all areas of life;

EMPHASISING that the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy (2019) constitutes a comprehensive framework for incorporating disability inclusion into all pillars of United Nations work, including sustainable development, human rights and general well-being, which can be extended to consider their participation in environmental action;

RECALLING that the European Union Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2030, and the European Accessibility Act, have established measures to remove barriers in products, services and environments, thereby facilitating equal access for all persons, which can also be applied to public and natural spaces;

UNDERLINING that, in addition to protected areas, urban and peri-urban parks and green spaces are recognised as essential spaces for physical and mental well-being, especially for persons with disabilities, representing an immediate and frequent form of access to nature;

RECOGNISING ALSO that, in addition to physical and social barriers, many persons with disabilities may face significant challenges in obtaining, processing and acquiring information, which are exacerbated by environments predominantly designed for persons without disabilities, thereby reducing their participation in nature-related activities and their enjoyment of natural environments; and

COMMITTING to ensuring that the principles of social inclusion and universal accessibility are reflected in all IUCN policies, resolutions and actions, serving as a model for its Members and partners;

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

1. REQUESTS IUCN and its internal bodies to:

- a. ensure that its documents, digital platforms and communication materials are accessible, including adapted fonts, subtitles and descriptions for persons with visual, hearing and cognitive disabilities;
- b. provide regular training on inclusion and accessibility based on international standards, such as the United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy; and
- c. directly involve persons with disabilities in designing IUCN's access to nature initiatives to ensure their perspectives and viewpoints are incorporated;

2. ENCOURAGES IUCN State Members and associated organisations to:

- a. adapt protected areas, parks, and urban and peri-urban green spaces with accessible infrastructure such as trails, inclusive signage and appropriate services, where feasible and where they do not compromise the conservation objectives of the site; and
- b. promote programmes that highlight the therapeutic benefits of nature for all people, particularly those with disabilities, and design campaigns to remove internal barriers by providing clear and accessible information; and

3. REQUESTS the international community to:

- a. strengthen alliances with organisations specialised in accessibility by developing joint projects that expand social inclusion in conservation; and

b. incorporate specific accessibility indicators for natural environments in reports and assessments funded by IUCN.