

8.121 Increasing the participation of subnational governments across and through the Union

RECOGNISING the introduction of a new category for local and subnational governments in the IUCN membership, thereby recognising the crucial role these governments play in creating a sustainable future and achieving the mission of protecting and restoring biodiversity;

CONSIDERING Decision 7.138 *Including subnational governments in IUCN's membership* (Marseille, 2020) to include subnational authorities in the structure of IUCN;

RECALLING that subnational authorities now join IUCN with a full voice, enabling them to propose and debate motions and influence the global conservation agenda;

WELCOMING the growing involvement of subnational governments in international biodiversity bodies, such as the Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) or the Subnational Working Group of the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People;

NOTING CBD Decision 15/12 on the engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to strengthen the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, affirming the decisive role of subnational authorities in achieving its targets;

RECALLING that the Marseille Manifesto reaffirms the crucial role of local action as a lever for change that complements national and international measures;

ACKNOWLEDGING the essential role of subnational authorities in the implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans, as well as in the planning, protection, restoration, management and enhancement of territories; and

CONSIDERING that the international community will not be able to fully achieve its biodiversity commitments without greater involvement of subnational authorities in its actions;

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

1. CALLS ON the Director General, the Council, Commissions and IUCN Member organisations to design and implement a strategy aimed at embedding subnational government perspectives and inclusion in all of the activities of IUCN, in collaboration and building on the expertise of Members in this category; and

2. REQUESTS the IUCN Council to continue to support initiatives aimed at integrating subnational authorities into IUCN and facilitate their engagement in achieving conservation and sustainable development objectives, specifically by:

a. facilitating the membership of subnational authorities in IUCN, in accordance with established procedures for potential Members;

b. encouraging the involvement of subnational authorities in implementing IUCN initiatives at the subnational level;

c. facilitating and promoting partnerships between different IUCN Member categories to ensure coherence in actions supporting biodiversity;

d. supporting the engagement of subnational authorities in achieving international conservation and sustainable development goals;

e. promoting the participation of subnational authorities in IUCN expert Commissions and working groups; and

f. promoting the participation of subnational authorities in national, regional and interregional committees.