

Conserving and protecting coral reefs through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

NOTING that coral reefs are found in more than 100 countries, cover only 0.2% of the sea floor, but support at least 25% of marine species and underpin the wellbeing, food and economic security of hundreds of millions of people;

FURTHER NOTING the unique vulnerability of coral reefs to anthropogenic impacts, including global threats from climate change and ocean acidification, as well as local impacts from land-based and maritime pollution, overfishing and destructive fishing practices;

CONCERNED that global assessments have found that live coral cover has declined by almost 50% since 1870, and that this decline is accelerating;

FURTHER CONCERNED that Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have not achieved Aichi Target 10, which seeks to maintain the “integrity and functioning” of coral reefs, and that the 6th Global Environment Outlook (GEO-6) report advised governments to prepare for the decline and possible collapse of coral-reef ecosystems;

WELCOMING the efforts of CBD Parties and other stakeholders, including the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) in developing a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, within the context of the 2050 vision, that considers coral reefs;

RECALLING Recommendation 6.106 *Cooperation for the conservation and protection of coral reefs worldwide* (Hawai'i, 2016) which asks states to “develop and strengthen international, regional and national initiatives on the conservation of coral reefs...,” as well as Resolution UNEP/EA.4/RES.13 *Sustainable coral reefs management* adopted by the 4th session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-4, Nairobi, 2019), which calls for “...enhanced streamlining and coordination of the numerous international policy instruments” related to coral-reef conservation; and

WELCOMING the commitment of G7 Environment Ministers and IUCN Government Members to “continue strengthening the conservation/protection of coral reefs...,” and to promote and contribute to the work on the development of “a new coral reef target as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework”;

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

1. CALLS ON IUCN Members, government agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations to:

a. explicitly recognise and incorporate the unique contribution of coral reefs in efforts to achieve existing international goals, including the CBD Aichi Targets, the Paris Climate Agreement and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and to strengthen regional and global cooperation in this regard;

b. work towards the prominent inclusion of coral-reef ecosystems in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, noting this may be as a measurable, outcome-based 2030 target, as well as in the monitoring frameworks or any other elements of the framework, and to prioritise coral-reef integrity and functioning, including the provision of ecosystem services;

c. engage in ICRI's Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, including through participation in regional networks and the application of indicators and best practice identified through the Network, to strengthen local and global monitoring capacity; and

d. encourage and support the identification of financing mechanisms for coral-reef ecosystems, to support remedial measures, monitor coral reef status, improve governance mechanisms, and implement resilience-based management for coral reefs with a view to achieving relevant global goals; and

2. REQUESTS the Director General and Secretariat, to promote all elements of paragraph 1 above, and most urgently paragraph 1b, in IUCN's provision of advice to CBD Parties relevant to the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.