

WCC-2016-Res-064-EN

Strengthening cross-sector partnerships to recognise the contributions of nature to health, well-being and quality of life

RECALLING Resolution 5.039 *Healthy parks healthy people* (Jeju, 2012), which recommends that IUCN and its Members should adopt the 'Healthy Parks Healthy People' approach and work in close co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other global bodies to strive for a healthy planet and healthy humanity;

MINDFUL that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development includes targets to address non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health, and to provide safe, inclusive and accessible green and public spaces, and recognises in SDG 3 the importance of ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the 'Promise of Sydney', adopted by the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress, states that "nature is essential, and that ecosystems and their variety of life fully support our existence, cultural and spiritual identity, economies and well-being";

RECALLING that Stream 3 'Improving Health and Wellbeing: Healthy Parks Healthy People' of the 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress demonstrated the significant evidence and increasing diversity of policies and practices that connect healthy ecosystems with human health and wellbeing;

DEEPLY CONCERNED about the increased prevalence worldwide of NCDs, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes, and mental illness, with the WHO estimating that 50 million people were suffering from dementia in 2015 and 14 million people between the ages of 30 and 70 were dying annually from NCDs;

RECOGNISING that recent 'state of knowledge' scientific reviews on the connections between nature and human health, and between climate change and human health, have each highlighted that policies encouraging nature-based solutions can play a significant role in reducing the global increase in NCDs, as well as climate-sensitive disease and the risks of disease transmission between wildlife and people;

NOTING that the 'Salzburg Challenge for Nature, Health and a New Generation', calls upon "all sectors and stakeholders to accelerate regional and global action for nature-based solutions to help communities and cities flourish and advance health and dignity for all people";

RECOGNISING that places, including urban areas, with a rich natural heritage improve physical and mental health and spiritual well-being, and can increase the appreciation of nature including by the elderly;

RECOGNISING that we have enough evidence to lead change, as we know that nature can play a significant role in reducing the global increase in NCDs, such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes, as well as mental illnesses, such as dementia, depression and anxiety;

FURTHER RECOGNISING the growth of the state of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services, for example through the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the development of standards and frameworks for natural capital accounting and valuation of benefits including the UN system of environmental economic accounts; and

NOTING that there is currently a limited number of consistent metrics and measures for valuing the health and well-being benefits from nature;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

1. REQUESTS the Director General to work in collaboration with the World Health Organisation to develop global and regional programmes that advance the value of nature, including parks and protected areas, for health and well-being benefits;

2. URGES the Director General to establish suitable mechanisms to bring together Members, Commissions and the Secretariat to develop policies, programmes and cross-sectoral partnerships on the connection between healthy ecosystems and natural heritage and community health and well-being, including economic, social and cultural well-being;
3. CALLS ON Members to consider further recognising and quantifying the extent of benefits for human health and well-being provided by nature and apply this information to inform cost- benefit assessments for increased investment in the management of ecosystems and natural heritage, including parks, protected areas and natural spaces within urban areas;
4. ALSO CALLS ON Members to contribute to improving methods for quantifying the benefits of nature (more specifically parks, protected areas and natural spaces within urban areas) for human health and well-being, including the development of more consistent global accounting standards for this purpose;
5. RECOMMENDS that Members actively seek interdisciplinary partnerships and alliances with the health sector and local and regional communities to develop programmes of nature-based solutions to prevent and treat non-communicable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, mental illness and dementia, as well as to encourage the appropriate use of parks and protected areas for improving cultural and spiritual well-being and social connection;
6. CALLS ON Members to continue to build the evidence base for quantifying the benefits of nature for human health and well-being and encourages Members to build cross-sector partnerships to measure the effectiveness of nature-based health programmes; and
7. WELCOMES IUCN's leadership in recognising and communicating the initiatives and co-benefits from connecting nature and human health and well-being, and integrating these initiatives as part of national and international policies regarding public health and 'nature based solutions'.