

IUCN statement 2 COFO28

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Session: ‘Strengthening actions to address wildfires through the Global Fire Management Hub and FAO’s work on integrated fire management’

Submitted: 25.09.2026

Thank you Chair, distinguished delegates,

IUCN welcomes the progress of the Global Fire Management Hub and FAO’s efforts to advance integrated fire management at global, regional and national levels.

We particularly welcome the recognition that effective fire management must bridge science, policy, communities and practice, and recognize the leadership and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. As a member of the Community-based Fire Management Working Group, IUCN looks forward to contributing to this effort.

We would particularly emphasize the need to better integrate Integrated Fire Management principles into ecosystem restoration planning. As countries scale up ambitious restoration commitments, we need to ensure that restored landscapes are resilient future wildfire risk.

Acknowledging that globally the majority of wildfire ignitions are human-caused, we recognize that fire is not only a threat: **it in some cases it can be a critical ecological process in ecosystems**. Integrated fire management therefore needs to distinguish between destructive fires and ecologically appropriate fire regimes, including the use of traditional and Indigenous fire knowledge and practices where appropriate.

This approach is strongly aligned with IUCN’s new mandate from the 2025 World Conservation Congress. Resolution 141, **“Mobilise urgent action to prevent and combat wildland fires,”** which explicitly welcomes the Global Fire Management Hub and calls for stronger cooperation, capacity, early warning, data and context-appropriate fire management.

IUCN encourages stronger integration of integrated fire management into restoration policies, programmes and financing, so that our investments in restoring ecosystems also build long-term resilience to wildfires.

We look forward to working with FAO and partners through the Fire Hub to connect restoration, biodiversity conservation, community-based approaches and fire resilience in practice.

Thank you.