

**Memorandum of Understanding  
Between  
the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law  
and the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests**

**I. Preamble**

**The IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law at Gland, Switzerland (hereafter called “WCEL”) and the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests at New York, USA (hereafter called the “UNFF Secretariat”):**

**Recalling** the UNFF Secretariat’s role in facilitating the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (Forest Instrument) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 62/98 on 17 December 2007, that offers an integrated framework for national action and international cooperation to implement sustainable forest management (SFM);

**Recalling** the Resolution of the 11<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Forum on Forests adopted by the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 22 July 2015 extending the International Agreement on Forests to 2030;

**Further recalling** United Nations General Assembly Resolution 71/285 of 27 April 2017 on the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests 2017-2030 providing for a shared vision and mission for sustainable forest management across the United Nations system;

**Also considering** that the UNFF Secretariat carries out a range of activities on implementation of the UN Forest Instrument for the protection of forests as fundamental to ecological security, and serves as the Secretariat for the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, facilitates UNFF inter-sessional activities, expert group meetings, country-led initiatives, and national reporting;

**Recalling** that WCEL’s mission is to assure the integrity and conserve the diversity of Nature through the promotion of ethical, legal, and institutional concepts and instruments that advance environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability and to strengthen the capacity of governments, the judiciary, prosecutors, and other stakeholders as they develop and implement environmental law;

**Convinced** of the economic, environmental, and social significance of the conservation and sustainable management, use, and trade of forest resources in contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals;

**Acknowledging** the opportunities for WCEL and the UNFF Secretariat to cooperate under the Collaborative Partnership on Forests in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Forest Goals of the United Nations Strategic Plan for Forests, especially SDG 16 calling on States to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to

justice, and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels,” and GFG 6 on enhancing cooperation, coordination, coherence, and synergies on forest-related issues at all levels;

**Affirming** the fundamental role that the environmental rule of law serves in constituting the framework for sustainable forest stewardship and the conservation of biological diversity; and

**Also convinced** that the development and strengthening of the cooperation between WCEL and the UNFF Secretariat in matters of common interest in environmental law and sustainable development matters, especially related to legal aspects of the protection of forests, would be of mutual benefit to both Organizations and bring about better coordination and effective implementation of their respective objectives;

**Have reached the following understanding:**

## **II. Objective**

The objective of the Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter “MoU”) is to build a framework between WCEL and the UNFF Secretariat to promote cooperation and collaboration in matters of common interest relating to their purposes and functions, and particularly in the interest of strengthening legal aspects of the protection of global forests; and

The key purpose of the MoU is for WCEL and the UNFF Secretariat to collaborate, along with other Partners, on projects including the investigation, preparation, and dissemination of forest best-practice legal systems, including a “Model Forest Act” in order to inform the drafting and updating of forest legislation globally.

## **III. Focus of Legal Cooperation on Forests and Native Flora**

Based on the WCEL and UNFF Secretariat programmes of work, available resources, and rules regarding disclosure of information, the scope of cooperation may include:

- a. Working together to exchange relevant information and documents, including survey and study results, position papers, policy reports, and reports of important meetings and seminars;
- b. Utilizing opportunities to keep the organizations informed of current, planned, and potential activities and events of mutual interest for the purpose of identifying further areas in which cooperation between them may prove desirable; and
- c. Working together as appropriate to assist in the development and implementation of such activities that would primarily include areas such as:
  - Investigation, preparation, and dissemination of a “Model Forest Act”;

- Joint training programme on environmental law and forests, particularly for governments, legislators, management agencies, judges, prosecutors, academic scholars, and other stakeholders;
- Joint studies and cooperation for the implementation of specific programs or projects relating to matters of common concern; and
- Periodic seminars, workshops, and training programmes on areas of common interest for the realization of shared objectives;

These areas of cooperation may be modified or extended by mutual consent as and when it is deemed necessary.

#### **IV. Resource Mobilization**

- a. WCEL and the UNFF Secretariat will regularly consult to determine the availability of resources required for implementing the activities under this MoU and the most equitable way of meeting such expenses, including through joint fundraising campaigns.
- b. Any minor and ordinary expenditure relating to the implementation of this MoU shall be borne by the respective parties to the MoU.
- c. If the cooperation proposed by one of the Parties to the other in accordance with this MoU entails expenditure beyond minor and ordinary expenditures, consultations shall be held between the WCEL Chair and the UNFF Director to determine the availability of resources required, the most equitable way of meeting such expenditure and, if resources are not readily available, the most appropriate ways to obtain the necessary resources.

#### **V. Implementation of the MoU**

The WCEL Chair and the UNFF Director may enter into supplementary arrangements for the implementation of this MoU by exchange of letters that would become part of this MoU.

#### **VI. Modification of the MoU**

The present MoU may be modified in writing by mutual consent by the WCEL Chair and the UNFF Director.

#### **VIII. Termination of the MoU**

Either Party may terminate this MoU, subject to six months' written notice. If one of the Parties decides to terminate this MoU, the obligations previously entered into through projects being implemented under this MoU shall not be affected thereby.

## **IX. Entry into Force**

This MoU shall enter into force upon signature of the Chair of WCEL and the Director of the UNFF Secretariat.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the undersigned, the Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law and the Director of the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat agree to this Memorandum of Understanding.

Done in duplicate in English in \_\_\_\_\_, on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

Both originals are equally authentic.

For the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law

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Professor Antonio Herman Benjamin  
Chair

For the UN Forum on Forests Secretariat

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Dr. Manoel Sobral Filho  
Director