

Promotion Brief: IUCN Motion 131



Protecting the Sápmi Forest: safeguarding biodiversity and Indigenous livelihoods

OBJECTIVE:

To galvanize support among IUCN members leading up to and during the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025 (October 9–15, 2025) for Motion 131, which calls for halting the destruction of old-growth Boreal Forest in the Sápmi region (which occupies most of northern Scandinavia) and elevates the role of Sámi traditional knowledge and leadership in sustainable forest stewardship. This motion calls for banning the destruction of the old growth forest, secure Indigenous lifeways, and uphold free, prior and informed consent.

Key Motion Messaging:

- **Boreal urgency:** Sweden's old-growth Boreal Forests are disappearing at a rate faster than the Amazon—putting biodiversity, climate stability, and Sámi culture at risk.
- **Sámi stewardship:** Sámi knowledge and practices, especially reindeer herding, are crucial to preserving Boreal ecosystems. Motion 131 centers the Sámi's leadership in conservation solutions.
- **Justice and consent:** This motion reaffirms Indigenous Peoples' right to free, prior and informed consent in all decisions affecting their territories.
- **From consumption to restoration:** Motion 131 prioritizes long-term habitat restoration led by Sámi communities over short-term, consumption-driven forestry practices.
- **Global relevance:** The Boreal Forest stores more carbon than tropical rainforests—its protection is vital for global climate resilience.
- **Cultural survival is ecological survival:** Traditional cultures consist of valuable institutions, such as reindeer herding. Preserving these cultures preserves the institutions that protect ecosystems. Sámi livelihoods and cultural continuity are intertwined with old-growth forest protection.

Motion Background

Motion 131 was born out of global collaboration and Indigenous-led vision. It emerged directly from **Resolution 12 of the 12th World Wilderness Congress (WILD12)** - Protecting the Sámi Forest: Safeguarding Biodiversity and Indigenous Livelihoods. This resolution was passed by **25 Sámi leaders and over 700 delegates** from around the world during the 12th World Wilderness Congress, the world's longest-running, public, international conservation forum convened by [WILD.org](https://wild.org) since 1976.

Motion 131 now advances to the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, carrying forward the momentum of WILD12 to call for protecting Indigenous lifeways, banning old growth destruction in Sápmi, and elevating Sámi traditional knowledge and conservation stewardship efforts.

Quotes

“Many don’t realize that Sámi reindeer herders are probably the most effective and dedicated protectors of old growth trees because their herds depend on them for their survival. By defending and empowering Sámi lifeways we are leveraging existing knowledge and expertise to mount a more effective defense of the forest and Earth’s climate.” - **Amy Lewis, Managing Director of Policy & Campaigns, WILD.org**

“Protecting indigenous Sámi rights means safeguarding the heart of Sápmi and honouring a way of life deeply connected to the land. When we fight for our rights, we stand for the right of all indigenous peoples to live with dignity, respect, and sovereignty.” - **Johanna Nilsson, Director of WILD Sápmi, WILD.org**

Platforms & Networks to Share With

First and foremost, **your professional networks**. This is arguably one of the most valuable ways to amplify the reach and importance of Motion 131.

Email Newsletters and WhatsApp/Signal Groups | LinkedIn (Professional calls-to-action) | Other Social Media channels

Accounts to Tag & Suggested Hashtags

WILD.org	IUCN World Conservation Congress	Hashtags
 @wildfoundation @wildfoundation	 @iucn_congress	#BorealForest #SapmiForest #Sapmi
 The WILD Foundation	 @iucn.org	#Motion131 #IUCN #IUCNcongress
 @wildfoundation @wild_foundation	 IUCN	#WCC2025
 @wildfoundation @wild_foundation	 @IUCN	
 @wildfoundation @wild_foundation		

Amplification Tips

- Drop the motion into email updates and organizational newsletters
- Feature it in podcast intros, livestreams, or panel shoutouts
- Ask aligned orgs to repost or co-share content
- Pin a [Motion 131](#) post across platforms
- Schedule reminder posts leading up to the Congress

INFORMATION LIBRARY

- [Motion 131 - FINAL Version](#)
- [IUCN WCC Motion 131 webpage](#)
- [Original Motion](#) submitting by [WILD.org](#)
- [Protecting the Sápmi Forest: Safeguarding Biodiversity and Indigenous Livelihoods](#)
- [Sweden has vast ‘old growth’ forests – but they are being chopped down faster than the Amazon](#) (Ahlström, Canadell - The Conversation)
- [United Nations Economic Commission for Europe: Boreal Forest and Climate Change, From Impacts to Adaptation \(Policy Brief\)](#)