



## **PUBLIC STATEMENT**

### **ACT, LWF, and WCC:**

## **A Call to Action for Biodiversity and Climate Justice at COP16**

**October 2024**

As part of COP16 in Cali, churches and faith-based organizations recognize that biodiversity loss has reached alarming levels, driven by an extractivist economic system and worsened by the impacts of climate change.

The ACT Alliance, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), and the World Council of Churches (WCC) reaffirm our commitment to play an essential role in protecting biodiversity and the health of the planet. We understand the urgent need to act in the face of the climate crisis that is devastating our ecosystems. We believe that promoting just relationships requires ethical and constructive dialogue between the natural, social, and theological sciences, as well as traditional knowledge and wisdom. Each area of knowledge contributes to our collective reflection on what it means to be human and how we should act to safeguard the peace and well-being of all creatures, for both this generation and those to come.

In this regard, the protection of biodiversity must be an unwavering priority for governments, emphasizing its central role in tackling environmental and climate challenges and fostering peace. This commitment must align with respect for the rights of Indigenous peoples, youth, women and girls in all their diversity, and historically marginalized communities, using a human rights-based approach. These communities not only experience firsthand the consequences of climate change but are also stewards of biodiversity. Their leadership is crucial to preserving life on our planet. We urge governments to ensure inclusive dialogue that facilitates the effective participation of all stakeholders. Only in this way can fair and sustainable solutions for the well-being of our common home be developed.

Limiting global warming to 1.5°C is critical, as climate change is not only a major cause of biodiversity loss but also exacerbates this crisis. Achieving this goal requires the fair and equitable elimination of fossil fuel use, as they are one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions. Only through a transition to renewable and sustainable energy sources, combined with firm policies and global commitments to align financial flows with the Paris Agreement, can we effectively mitigate climate change effects and protect biodiversity.

Furthermore, mobilizing the necessary resources to address the nature and climate crises demands political leadership and action, particularly from developed countries. Increasing financing to tackle these two global environmental crises is vital. The ability to meet commitments under the Paris Agreement and the Global Biodiversity Framework will depend directly on the provision and mobilization of financial flows.

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Additionally, it is crucial that all governments present their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), ensuring that these are not isolated documents but are effectively linked to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). Such synergies are essential for a coherent and efficient approach to both climate action and biodiversity protection.

Finally, as churches and faith-based organizations, we promote the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity and call for an urgent restructuring of power relations, the recognition of the rights of nature, and the transformation of the current extractivist economic model, which has contributed to biodiversity degradation and further exacerbated the climate crisis. A new social pact is imperative to address the root causes of the destruction we are witnessing.

**This COP16 must lead to concrete actions to restore our relationship with nature—actions for ourselves, for the other species with whom we share the planet, and for future generations. This is our turn. Now is our time.**