

## Darwin Call to Action

*30 September 2023*

The need for ecological restoration has never been more evident or imperative. Across the globe, the catastrophic droughts, floods, and fires of 2023 are stark reminders that climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecological degradation harm both people and the planet. While these events have affected us all, marginalized groups – Indigenous Peoples, women and youth – continue to lose the most from the destruction of ecosystems.

Ecological restoration, a powerful subset of ecosystem restoration, contributes to the transformative change we need to heal the planet and ourselves through the recovery of ecological integrity, biodiversity, and human health and wellbeing.

The theme of SER2023, the 10th World Conference on Ecological Restoration: Nature and People as One: Celebrating and Restoring Connection, elevates ecological restoration as a mechanism to re-establish a healthy, balanced connection, emphasizing the urgent need to scale up effective, standards-based restoration programs worldwide.

Welcomed by the Larrakia people to Darwin, Australia, 1000 knowledge holders from more than 80 countries gathered as a global community. We listened carefully to the diversity of voices and values. Layers of meaning were revealed, reinforcing interdependence and strengthening resilience. The SER2023 delegates commit to enabling, scaling up, and supporting restoration by:

- Recognizing and securing the rights of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, and underrepresented people to their land, territories, knowledge, and resources, and elevating their leadership and roles as agents of change at all stages of restoration.
- Inspiring all of society to embrace ecological restoration as a priority for reducing risk and rebuilding in the wake of climate disasters, strengthening community resilience, restoring health and wellbeing, and recovering vital ecosystems services.
- Encouraging governments to realign policies and funding to proactively support inclusive, participatory ecological restoration.
- Urging the global business community to give back more than they take across their entire value chains, not just by reducing negative impacts, but by investing in the restoration of degraded ecosystems to support long-term business sustainability

Ecological restoration renews reciprocity and restores balance with nature to address today's escalating planetary crises. The delegates of SER2023 issue this urgent call to action: we must seize the opportunity of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration to reconnect people and nature and deliver restoration on a global scale to ensure a healthy, livable planet for current and future generations.

Signed by:

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