By Aimable Twahirwa;

KIGALI: The IUCN Africa Protected Areas Congress Patrons, His Excellency Mahamadou Issoufou, Former President of Niger and His Excellency Hailemariam Desalegn, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, met with the Youth for an intergenerational dialogue on Day 3 of the Congress.

During the dialogue, the youth delegates challenged the two African leaders to champion youth inclusion and engagement in biodiversity conservation through funding of youth programs, dialogue and involvement in decision making at all levels.



Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia, Hailemariam Desalegn (Left) and the Former President of Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou

The former Heads of State applauded the youth for actively taking up roles in conservation and acknowledged that, ‘the Africa we want starts with the youth,

should be defined by the youth and shaped by the youth.’ In addition, they emphasized that no development agenda in Africa can be successful without youth being at the center.

The session concluded with the youth highlighting their tasks of the APAC Patrons including :

– Meaningful inclusion of an APAC Youth seat on the APAC Steering Committee

– That the APAC Youth delegates are recognized by their respective governments as being part of the APAC Youth delegation and ensure partnership and engagement

– Inclusion of a Youth Seat on the Pan-African Conservation Trust Fund and,

– Recognition of Youth as capacity builders and work with them in co-creation, co-planning, co-implementation, co-management and benefit sharing. (END)