

## **15. The grey seals (*Halichoerus grypus*)**

*RECOGNIZING* that the wildlife management practices of the Government of the United Kingdom have enabled the British population of grey seals so to increase that it now comprises half of the world population of this species;

*RECOGNIZING FURTHER* that this is one of the world's rarer seals, and one that has been depleted in many parts of its range outside the UK;

*AWARE* that inshore fisheries in Scotland have declined in recent years, and that seal numbers have been blamed for adversely affecting commercial fisheries;

*CONVINCED* that the decline in inshore fisheries is in part due to commercial overfishing;

*CONCERNED* that the UK Government is planning to reduce grey seal numbers in Scotland by 50% over the next six years, a cull that it proposes to start during October 1978;

**The General Assembly of IUCN**, at its 14th Session, Ashkhabad, USSR, 26 September -5 October 1978;

**URGES** the Government of the United Kingdom to suspend any cull of grey seals in Orkney, North Rona, and the Western Isles until adequate data on the impact of grey seals on fish stocks, and the role of grey seals in their ecosystems, are available;

**RECOMMENDS** that stronger conservation measures be introduced to prevent further overfishing of the inshore fish stocks in British waters; and

**REQUESTS** that a copy of the management plan which prescribes the present cull be supplied to IUCN for evaluation.