

15/9. RENEWABLE ENERGY

RECOGNIZING that development of indigenous renewable energy sources, particularly in developing countries, is important in supporting human populations and in combatting poverty by improving social and economic standards;

RECOGNIZING that many nations are heavily dependent on non-renewable resources which are being rapidly depleted; and that renewable energy resources must play an increasingly important role in the global supply of energy;

AWARE that renewable energy development activities, both in developing and developed nations, may have advantages from an environmental standpoint over alternative sources of energy; CONCERNED, however, that if renewable energy development activities do not take relevant ecological and other conservation factors into account, there could be resultant losses of renewable natural living resources and ecological degradation with long-term detrimental impacts;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that one of the aims of the World Conservation Strategy is to promote the sustainable use of natural living resources and recalling that the Strategy emphasizes that living resource conservation is essential for the development and efficient expansion of environmentally benign forms of energy; NOTING FURTHER the increasing worldwide interest in renewable forms of energy such as that from biomass, sun, water and wind, an interest evidenced by the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy;

The General Assembly of IUCN, at its 15th Session in Christchurch, New Zealand, 11-23 October 1981:

WELCOMES the continuing interest in renewable sources of energy;

ENCOURAGES the promotion of energy strategies and conservation measures to facilitate a rational transition to sustainable use of renewable energy sources;

DRAWS the attention of national and international energy development agencies to the fact that the harnessing of some renewable forms of energy may not be benign in the effects on the natural environment, for example by interfering with free-flowing rivers or clearing tropical rain forests; and

URGES national and international agencies to ensure that the environmental impact of any energy developments are assessed before decisions are taken to proceed and, when such decisions are taken, that these developments take account of the need to ensure that their design and implementation give adequate attention to ecological processes, living resources and landscape.