

## 17.50 CONSERVATION OF THE GIANT PANDA

RECOGNIZING that the Giant Panda (*Ailuropoda melanoleiica*) is endemic to the People's Republic of China, and has been a species of great interest to biological science for over a century;

APPRECIATING that the Government of the People's Republic of China has devoted much attention and considerable financial resources to the conservation of the Giant Panda;

NOTING that the Giant Panda is a species that is unusually well known to the peoples of the world, and, through use of its image by the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), has come to symbolize to governments and peoples of the world, the universal need for wildlife conservation;

UNDERSTANDING that there may be less than 1000 of these animals in the wild and 100 in captivity, which are critically low numbers for survival of the species;

RESOLVING that every effort should be made to keep the Giant Panda from extinction;

The General Assembly of IUCN, at its 17th Session in San Jose, Costa Rica, 1-10 February 1988:

1. COMMENDS the Government of the People's Republic of China for passing wildlife laws and regulations that protect the Giant Panda and for the establishment of reserves to maintain the Giant Panda's natural environment.
2. STRONGLY ENCOURAGES the Government of the People's Republic of China to respond to increasing world-wide concern for the survival of the Giant Panda by adopting a comprehensive conservation plan for the species and fully implementing that plan as quickly as possible, including full utilization of the scientific, technical and educational resources of institutes and universities of the People's Republic of China.
3. SPECIFICALLY RECOMMENDS adoption of a long-term strategic and tactical conservation plan for the Giant Panda.
4. CALLS UPON all agencies and individuals in the People's Republic of China to cooperate in such a conservation plan, preferably under a single directorate so that actions can be coordinated and controlled to best effect in securing the Giant Panda in its natural environment and in ensuring that any animals held in captivity contribute to the maintenance and perpetuation of the Giant Panda population as a whole.
5. URGES authorities of the People's Republic of China to provide for the early rehabilitation to the wild of pandas rescued from temporarily or permanently degraded habitats.
6. FURTHER URGES that all organizations and institutions now holding Giant Pandas cooperate fully to incorporate these animals in an international programme for captive propagation and that the free interchange of captive specimens for this purpose be facilitated by all governmental and intergovernmental agencies concerned.
7. RECOMMENDS that the effects of other activities involving Giant Pandas that may not directly contribute to the conservation of the species, especially temporary exhibitions, be investigated by the appropriate authorities and scientists of the People's Republic of China, in consultation with international conservation groups and the zoo associations of several countries, and that until the issues involved in these matters are resolved, careful consideration be given before further loan agreements are made.
8. FURTHER RECOMMENDS that, in consideration of the low population numbers of the species, scientists and governmental authorities of the People's Republic of China specifically consider the proposition that any exhibition of Giant Pandas should only be adjunct to and completely compatible with an international captive breeding programme for the species; and that such exhibits should be designed for the education of people about the biology and conservation of the Giant Panda; and that any revenues specially

generated from exhibitions should be devoted to support specific aspects of the conservation plan for the species and accounted for in keeping with this goal.

9. ACKNOWLEDGES AND APPLAUDS the efforts of WWF, Wildlife Conservation International, New York Zoological Society, Zoological Society of London, and others in assisting in the conservation of the Giant Panda by lending expertise and giving financial support to colleagues and agencies of the People's Republic of China.
10. AGREES to stand ready, within the resources available, with its member organizations and WWF, to assist responsible authorities in the People's Republic of China in the implementation of a comprehensive conservation plan for the Giant Panda, including design and execution of needed research, advice on park and reserve management, coordination of captive breeding programmes, establishment and management of an international studbook and development of popular education projects.