

18.16 Recognition of the Role of Indigenous Communities

RECOGNIZING that the indigenous communities of the world frequently live in harmony with their environment and have a special stake in its continued survival;

AWARE that many of these communities possess special knowledge regarding the management and biological diversity of their environment;

CONSIDERING that many of these communities live in habitats that are of local, national and international importance;

RECOGNIZING that this pool of wisdom could be lost forever if not protected as a common heritage;

The General Assembly of IUCN—The World Conservation Union, at its 18th Session in Perth, Australia, 28 November-5 December 1990:

1. REQUESTS that the Union's documents in general include specific recognition of the role of indigenous communities, and in particular their women, in the management of their environmental resources, and of the roles they may be called upon to play in National Conservation Strategies and projects sponsored by IUCN;
2. CALLS UPON aid agencies, all members of IUCN and other organizations to recognize the rights of these communities to participate in the formulation of policies and projects affecting their environment;
3. CALLS UPON IUCN and its Director General to make every effort to raise and allocate funds to facilitate the development of environmental strategies and policies for indigenous communities;
4. REQUESTS that IUCN establish an Inter-Commission Task Force to deal with issues especially relevant to indigenous peoples and to make sure that indigenous concerns are incorporated in the overall work of IUCN and its Commissions.