

18.47 Migratory Bird Conservation in the Western Hemisphere

RECOGNIZING that migratory birds provide important aesthetic, economic, recreational and other benefits;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that migration patterns are indicative of healthy and functioning ecosystems;

AWARE that migratory birds are a unique indicator of the overall health of the environment of the Western Hemisphere, as their life cycles depend on habitats in North America, Middle America, the Caribbean and South America, and that non-game migratory birds provide important economic benefits valued in millions of dollars to agriculture, recreation and to the quality of life;

FURTHER AWARE that the Platte River of North America and other major wetland migrational stopovers have deteriorated due to water development undertaken without due regard to the needs of migratory birds, which are a resource shared among the nations of the Western Hemisphere;

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

1. CALLS UPON the national and local governments of the region to carry out an integrated and comprehensive programme to conserve migratory birds within their borders, including habitat conservation and research measures, and to develop appropriate domestic and international policies regarding land-use, water rights, pesticides and economic activities which directly or indirectly affect migratory birds;
2. FURTHER CALLS UPON development assistance agencies and multilateral lending institutions to encourage policies that promote the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats;
3. RECOMMENDS that the importation and use of DDT and other persistent pesticides should be banned in the region;
4. FURTHER RECOMMENDS that a public education programme be launched which calls attention to the effects of habitat fragmentation, chemical use, loss of forests, wetlands and other natural habitats on migratory birds, and which promotes the conservation of forests and other critical habitats on both public and private lands;
5. URGES that the adhering parties adopt a protocol to the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere (Western Hemisphere Convention) that would commit them to the conservation and wise management of all migratory birds;
6. FURTHER URGES that the appropriate national regulatory agencies, including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission of the United States, in re-licensing existing water projects on the Platte River, make allowances for the needs of migratory birds that are dependent upon critical wetland habitats throughout the Western Hemisphere.