

18.51 Protection of Mount Nimba, Guinea

RECALLING that both the Reserve naturelle integrate des Monts Nimba of Guinea and the Reserve naturelle integrate des Monts Nimba of Côte d'Ivoire are protected as Strict Nature Reserves/Biosphere Reserves, and are listed as having "outstanding natural value" under the World Heritage Convention, by virtue of containing unique, rare, or superlative natural features and being habitats where populations of rare or endangered species of plants and animals still survive;

CONCERNED at proposals to extend exploitation of the rich iron ore deposits of the Nimba Massif from the existing mines in Liberia into the hitherto untouched forest areas in Guinea;

ALARMED that mining of iron ore on the Nimba Massif within the World Heritage Site will threaten the integrity of this site of international importance;

CONSIDERING that States Parties to the World Heritage Convention under Article 6.3 undertake "... not to take any deliberate measures which might damage directly or indirectly the cultural and natural heritage ... situated in the territory of other States Parties ...", and given the concern of the international conservation community to halt mining activities in protected areas, and notably mining exploitation in protected areas in developing countries, which is mainly to the profit of industrial countries;

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General to contact the government authorities of Guinea expressing IUCN's concern that measures be taken to protect the natural resources of the Nimba Massif Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage Site;
2. URGES the government authorities of Guinea:
 - a. to resist pressures to allow mining and all other activities which threaten the natural integrity of the area, and in particular, not to allow the iron ore mining project to go ahead;
 - b. to set in train a plan for the development of the region which guarantees the protection of the site;
3. REQUESTS the Director General to contact the government authorities of France, Japan and the USA to ask them to consider, given the exceptional character of the situation:
 - a. contributing to bringing into operation the plan referred to above;
 - b. giving support to the World Heritage Fund and thus ensuring the financing of a management regime which would safeguard the integrity of the World Heritage Site and Biosphere Reserve, taking account in particular of the needs of local peoples, and providing long-lasting benefits through, for example, protection of hydrological functions and other forest benefits.

Note: This recommendation was adopted by consensus. The French State Member delegation stated that had there been a vote, the delegation would have abstained.

