

19.25 The Relationship Between Conservation and Trade

RECALLING Resolution 18.13 and Recommendation 18.20 adopted at the 18th Session of the IUCN General Assembly;

NOTING the need to address the interface between international trade and environmental protection, including through the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT);

APPRECIATING that the GATT Working Group on Environmental Measures and International Trade established in 1971 met for the first time in 1992;

NOTING the calls from various quarters to begin negotiation of a so-called "Green Round" of GATT, to address this interface between international trade and environmental protection, and that efforts to reform GATT in accordance with environmental principles may begin imminently;

NOTING also concerns that GATT provisions could seriously threaten trade restrictions for the protection of endangered species and marine mammals; and could also threaten tight pesticide, residue, toxic and other pollution controls in several countries; and that many other environmental protection measures could be at risk through conflict with GATT;

ACKNOWLEDGING the work already underway to address environmental protection concerns *in* other international economic fora;

AFFIRMING that all international trade agreements should pay due regard to the principles of *Caring for the Earth*, by establishing clear undertakings to pursue sustainable development and international equity, and by institutionalizing the participation of governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals involved in sustainable development issues, as appropriate, in future negotiations and by exploring the use of environmental impact assessment procedures with respect to trade agreements;

NOTING in particular the widespread impact on the world's economy and the environment of subsidies for agricultural production and export;

ACUTELY CONSCIOUS that UNEP figures show that 20 per cent of the world's population receives about 80 per cent of the world's income and that distorted patterns of trade may reinforce this inequality;

The General Assembly of IUCN - The World Conservation Union, at its 19th Session in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 17-26 January 1994:

1. URGES all governments, and especially State members of IUCN:
 - (a) to ensure that future multilateral trade negotiations, whether carried out within the framework of GATT or elsewhere, are fully supportive of and not at odds with the protection of the environment and the enhancement of sustainable development;

- (b) to ensure that all "harmonisation" of environmental standards and other provisions are not used to avoid, diminish or dismantle environmental protection measures but rather to enhance such protection;
 - (c) to endorse a programme of work on the environment for GATT that results in modifications of the international trade system including, *inter alia*, environmental reform of existing GATT articles and dispute settlement procedures;
 - (d) to strongly support and encourage the creation of a permanent Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development as part of the World Trade Organization (WTO);
 - (e) to endorse the creation of a WTO Committee and an environmental reform work programme, along with provisions assuring public participation in the process and a timetable for adoption by GATT Parties of recommended reforms of the international trade system, as part of the April 1994 GATT Ministerial Declaration on the Uruguay Round;
 - (f) to address without delay the underlying reasons for, and dynamics of, the relationship between trade and income and wealth inequalities;
2. REQUESTS the Director General, in coordination with the Commission on Environmental Law and all other IUCN Commissions and in consultation with members, to appoint an interdisciplinary working group of economists, lawyers and specialists in trade, conservation and sustainable development;
 3. REQUESTS the Working Group to analyse existing international trade agreements and initiatives, and to prepare timely recommendations for approval by Council in 1994;
 4. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, to allocate funding and personnel for this purpose;
 5. REQUESTS the Director General and the Chairs of the Commission on Environmental Law and other interested IUCN Commissions to ensure that the recommendations of the Working Group, after their approval by Council, are presented in the appropriate fora;
 6. REQUESTS the Director General to convey the present Recommendation to the GATT Parties.

Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegation of the State member Norway indicated that had there been a vote, the delegation would have abstained.

