

specify all the required prevention and mitigation standards and measures so as to reduce the negative impact of this project in all its phases of development (planning, marking out, building, operation, maintenance, *inter alia*). The study should present a thorough account of the

## 19.66 Opening of the Tapon del Darién

CONSIDERING that no current, adequate environmental impact studies have yet been undertaken for the opening of the Tapon del Darien;

AWARE that the invaluable biological, ecological, cultural, economic, medicinal and other resources of the forest area known as Darien have been recognized in a World Heritage Site, a biosphere reserve and a national park;

CONCERNED that the management and protection of natural resources in the Darien have not yet provided adequately for the management of biological diversity and maintenance of the ecological integrity of the area;

CONSIDERING that the unique indigenous people of Darien and Choco would suffer an immediate and severe impact from the opening of the Tapon del Darien;

RECOGNIZING that the proposed opening of the Darien-Choco road with inadequate planning and preparation to counter its negative effects will affect not only Panama and Colombia, but also the other Latin-American countries and the world;

CONCERNED that the processes of colonization and environmental destruction caused by the construction of roads in nearby areas of Panama and Colombia have already been demonstrated to be of such magnitude that they invariably aggravate local marginalization and poverty in the short term;

CONSIDERING that it is a priority for humankind to guarantee the conservation of the Darien natural areas, given their unique biodiversity and the vital processes that take place in them, as well as their role in ultimately maintaining life on earth;

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

1. ENDORSES fully the position of those organizations that are opposed to the opening of the Tapon del Darien;
2. REQUESTS all IUCN members to adopt this call and to act in solidarity against the construction of the proposed road;
3. FURTHER REQUESTS them to support the appeal to those governments and financial agencies involved, to carry out a detailed public study on environmental impact with the cooperation of national and international non-governmental organizations and other governmental and academic bodies. Such a study should objectively evaluate the feasibility (from various perspectives—cultural, social, technical, ecological, economic, etc.) of implementing such a road-building project. It should consider alternatives to the construction of the road, and in the event of opting for it, should

commitments that governments, financial agencies, building and licensing companies, where applicable, and other organizations involved, have to make in order to enforce all suggested standards of prevention and mitigation. It should also propose the follow-up mechanisms and procedures of these commitments in full so as to guarantee that all sectors of society participate in them;

4. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources:
  - (a) to request the Governments and financial agencies concerned to reconsider the construction of a road through the Tapon del Darien;
  - (b) to work with IUCN National Committees in Panama and Colombia to organize a public forum in which the controversial road-building project through the Tapon de Darien would be discussed and analyzed, thereby allowing both the participation of the international community and supporting the transparency of the consultation on the project;
  - (c) to work with IUCN National Committees in Panama and Colombia to study alternatives to the proposed road, including an open-skies policy and ferry service between Caribbean and Pacific ports of both Panama and Colombia.

*Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegations of the State members Norway and Oman indicated that had there been a vote, they would have abstained.*