

19.91 Protection of the Coastal and Marine Environment of the North East Atlantic

AWARE that the diversity and productivity of the marine and coastal environment of the North East Atlantic is a vital component of self-sustaining systems of local, regional and international significance and is an integral part of the natural and cultural heritage of the world;

CONCERNED at the continuing direct and indirect impact of human activities resulting in pollution, degradation and loss of coastal and marine habitats and wildlife of the North East Atlantic;

CONCERNED that protection of the marine environment still lags far behind that of the terrestrial environment;

RECALLING the commitments within Agenda 21 (paragraph 17.7) for coastal States to maintain the biological diversity and productivity of marine species and habitats under national jurisdiction, including through the establishment and management of protected areas;

RECOGNIZING the importance attached to marine protected areas by the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas, 1992) and in the development of the IUCN Action Plan for Protected Areas in Europe;

RECALLING Resolution 17.38 of the 17th Session of the General Assembly on the protection of the coastal and marine environment worldwide, which recommended the establishment and operation of effective mechanisms to manage in an integrated way all human activities which have impacts on coastal and marine environments;

RECOGNIZING the initiatives taken in other marine regions to establish marine protected areas, in particular:

- the Protocol on Specially Protected Areas to the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution, 1976;
- the 1992 revision of the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area, obliging Contracting Parties to conserve natural habitats and biological diversity and to protect natural processes;
- the Protocol concerning Protected Areas and Wild Fauna and Flora to the Convention for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Eastern African Region, 1985;

RECALLING that the Declaration of the Ministerial Meeting of the Oslo and Paris Commissions invites Contracting Parties to consider, either individually or jointly, the establishment of specially protected areas;

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

1. URGES Contracting Parties and observer bodies to the Convention for the Protection of the North East Atlantic:
 - (a) to take all appropriate measures to conserve natural habitats and biological diversity and to protect ecological processes in the North East Atlantic;
 - (b) to ensure that any use of natural resources within the North East Atlantic area is ecologically sustainable;
 - (c) to consider an instrument containing appropriate guidelines, criteria and a comprehensive work programme to establish a system of specially protected areas within the North East Atlantic areas, including the North Sea;
2. CALLS UPON the Parts Commission, the Oslo Commission, the European Commission and Parliament, the North Sea Ministers Conference, and IUCN members in the region to aid and support this process;
3. REQUESTS the Director General of IUCN, within available resources, to provide support from IUCN for this process.

