

## 19.97 Strategy to Protect the Arctic Environment

RECOGNIZING the grave threats posed to the Arctic by the transport by rivers, air and ocean currents of heavy metals, organochlorines (including PCBs) and radionuclides into and through the Arctic environment from industrialized areas;

UNDERSTANDING that these contaminants are being taken up into the food chain by Arctic biota and may be leading to declines in reproductive success and populations;

RECOGNIZING the possible health threat and loss of use of wildlife resources to the indigenous peoples of the Arctic;

AWARE of the potential for greatly increased and inadequately controlled industrialization (including marine transport) in the Arctic;

MINDFUL that the Arctic is the homeland of indigenous peoples whose culture and quality of life depends on a healthy environment and sustainable use of wild resources;

WELCOMING the ongoing work by Arctic nations to implement the Arctic Environmental Protection Strategy, but foreseeing the need for stronger cooperative measures to protect the Arctic environment and ensure that future development is environmentally sound;

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

1. ENCOURAGES the Arctic governments to develop new national and international instruments to address the full range of environmental problems facing the Arctic, while respecting the particular social, cultural, economic and political circumstances of the Arctic's indigenous peoples; such instruments could be used:
  - to establish a "regional seas" type of agreement in the Arctic Ocean to control land-based sources of pollution;
  - to provide for prior environmental analysis of proposed industrial development;
  - to adopt strict guidelines to manage and control offshore development and other activities which could harm the Arctic environment;
  - to encourage Arctic nations to establish protected areas for marine and terrestrial habitats that are representative, unique or especially vulnerable;
  - to establish international reserves in transboundary areas, such as the Bering Sea and the northern Yukon- Alaska border;
  - to provide co-management and, when needed conservation plans, of shared wildlife popula-

tions;

- to establish an Arctic Council to promote cooperation in the Arctic, coordinate implementation of existing Conventions and new legal instruments, and guide sustainable developments that could have environmentally adverse transboundary effects;

2. URGES the Arctic nations to implement within the Arctic region the Geneva Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, the Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals and other applicable legal instruments as they enter into force.

*Note. The phrase "the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals" was added to the last paragraph of this Recommendation at the request of the delegation of the State member Germany. This change was opposed by some delegations, including that of the State member United States and the NGO member Center for Marine Conservation (USA), but was subsequently adopted by a show of hands. The Recommendation was then adopted by consensus. The delegation for the State member Denmark indicated that had there been a vote, the delegation would not have voted for the Recommendation, since the Bonn Convention cannot be implemented as far as Greenland is concerned due to the territorial exclusion of Greenland in the instrument of ratification by Denmark; nor could the delegation have voted against, because Denmark is a Party to the Bonn Convention.*

