

19.4 National Parks and Protected Areas

RECALLING the importance of the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas, Venezuela, February 1992) and the central role played by the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA) in planning that event;

RECALLING that the Caracas Action Plan (CAP) recognizes the crucial and growing importance of both terrestrial and marine protected areas, especially their key role in conserving biological diversity, and urges an array of actions at the national and international level to ensure their better planning and management;

RECALLING also the recommendations of the Caracas Congress, especially Recommendation 21 which called for: an immediate action programme to follow up the Congress to be presented to major donors; the continued development and extension of the IUCN programme to accommodate the many initiatives stimulated through the Caracas Congress; and the provision of increased support to the CNPPA constituency through IUCN Regional and Country Offices so that this Commission is better able to promote the Caracas Action Plan and its recommendations;

RECOGNIZING the long track record of effectiveness of CNPPA, the strong endorsement given to its work during the recent review of the IUCN Commissions, that IUCN's expertise in protected areas is based largely on the work of CNPPA, and that IUCN is—and should remain—the leading world authority in protected areas through impartial and technically rigorous work;

AWARE of the recommendations in the Strategy of IUCN on the need for increased decentralization of IUCN's programmes;

ALSO NOTING that

- Agenda 21, in Chapters 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 17, specifically recognizes the value of protected areas in the pursuit of sustainable development;
- the Convention on Biological Diversity calls on contracting parties to develop systems of protected areas, and in other ways to support the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity (Article 8);
- *Caring for the Earth* (Action 4.9) and the *Global Biodiversity Strategy* (Chapter VIII) both recognize the importance of developing and maintaining protected areas with international support;

and that these developments call for CNPPA to adapt to a changing international situation;

NOTING with satisfaction the moves already taken by CNPPA to develop new directions in the light of this changed international situation, most notably the current process of developing a strategic plan for the Commission as a contribution to the overall Strategy of IUCN;

NOTING also the increasingly close working relationship between CNPPA and SSC;

FURTHER NOTING Recommendation 17 from the Caracas Congress on Protected Area Categories, Management Effectiveness and Threats;

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

1. RESOLVES that the Protected Areas Programme of IUCN should properly reflect the new understanding of the role and importance of protected areas which is set out in the Caracas Action Plan, and should be designed to lead to the realization of the aims of that Plan;
2. REQUESTS the Council and the Director General, within available resources, to:
 - (a) give priority within the Protected Areas Programme to strengthening and developing the protected areas activities of IUCN at regional and national levels to help secure the global aims of the Caracas Action Plan, which may include support for the preparation of regional action plans and/or national system plans;
 - (b) ensure that other elements of the IUCN Programme are in accord with the aims of the Caracas Action Plan and help to support and implement it;
 - (c) ensure that IUCN, in fundraising activities, and in the advice it may give funding agencies, seeks to secure the resources to enable IUCN's

network of protected areas experts to function effectively at both global and regional levels;

- (d) within the resources available, give increased support to developing the expert network on protected areas of IUCN, especially through the work of the Regional and Country Offices of IUCN who should work closely with the CNPPA network;
- (e) encourage members of IUCN to take an active part in implementing the Caracas Action Plan in their own countries; and
- (f) invite members of IUCN to consider how they might assist the work of CNPPA, in particular through the provision of institutional support for regional, thematic and, where appropriate, national CNPPA groups, increased support for the operation of key programmes and the secondment of staff to support the Protected Areas Programme;

3. REQUESTS the Chair of CNPPA to:

- (a) guide the process of developing the CNPPA strategic plan to completion as soon as possible, after the consultation with key interested parties;
- (b) report to the 20th Session of the General Assembly on progress on the implementation of the strategic plan; and
- (c) with the SSC Chair, increase cooperative efforts between the two Commissions to work with other Commissions and relevant IUCN programmes to advance the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and to develop methods for inter-Commissional cooperation for biodiversity conservation at regional and national levels;

4. NOTES and ENDORSES the following revised international system of categories of protected areas according to their management objectives, (which will be explained in greater detail in a forthcoming IUCN publication), adopted by CNPPA and the IUCN Council in accordance with Recommendation 17 of the Caracas Congress:

- I Strict Nature Reserve/Wilderness Area: Protected area managed mainly for science or wilderness protection;
- II National Park: Protected area managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation;
- III Natural Monument: Protected area managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features;
- IV Habitat Species Management Area: Protected

area managed mainly for conservation through management intervention;

V Protected Landscape/Seascape: Protected area managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation;

VI Managed Resource Protected Area: Protected area managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems;

5. URGES all governments to consider the relevance of these categories to national legislation;
6. ENCOURAGES CNPPA to develop guidance on the application of these categories at the regional level;
7. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, and working with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre, urgently to develop and apply a system for monitoring management effectiveness and threats to protected areas for application by management authorities.

Note. This Resolution was adopted by consensus. A proposal to add a further operative sub-paragraph 3(b) on indigenous people was defeated by a show of hands.