

19.16 IUCN's Work in Europe

RECALLING IUCN Recommendation 18.10 of the 18th Session of the General Assembly, concerning European Cooperation for Sustainable Development, and in particular the request that the Director General strengthen the Union's network for cooperation throughout Europe and carry out an effective programme of European activities;

BELIEVING that an active IUCN Programme in Europe is an essential part of the worldwide action in response to the UN Conference on Environment and Development, especially Chapter 15 of Agenda 21 (The Conservation of Biological Diversity) and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and that the actions in *Caring for the Earth* need to be implemented within Europe;

WELCOMING the decisions taken at the European Environment Ministers Meeting at Dobris Castle, near Prague, Czechoslovakia, in 1991, and in Luzern, Switzerland, in 1993;

AWARE of the scale of the problems requiring urgent action in the countries of central and eastern Europe in the context of their transitional economies;

NOTING that, in the framework of the economic changes taking place in these countries, it should be possible to take account of the interest in conserving biological diversity, particularly through the establishment of protected areas on land that was previously collectively-owned but that, for that purpose, urgent action should be taken before their re-privatization;

AWARE that questions concerning the safeguarding of biological diversity—although recognized as priority matters in the "Environmental Action Plan" for central and eastern European countries, adopted by the Second European Environment Ministers Meeting at Luzern—might not receive sufficient legal, financial and staff resources and might not be adequately integrated in sectoral policies;

SUPPORTING the work of the Council of Europe in the area of nature conservation, as endorsed by Environment Ministers at their Second Meeting in Luzern, and in particular its plans for a European Nature Conservation Year in 1995;

WELCOMING the initiative of the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas in preparing an IUCN Action Plan for Protected Areas in Europe as a follow-up to the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas, 1992);

WELCOMING the outcome of the conference held at Maastricht, the Netherlands, in November 1993 on "Conserving Europe's Natural Heritage: Towards a European Ecological Network";

NOTING with appreciation the actions already taken

to develop the Programme of the Union, especially in central and eastern Europe;

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

Conservation of Biological Diversity

1. INVITES national governments in western Europe and the European Union, as well as other industrialized countries, multilateral organizations and finance agencies (the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), etc.) to assist the countries of central and eastern Europe in their urgent task of protecting and ensuring environmentally-sound management of biological diversity, drawing on the principles and mechanisms established by the Second European Environment Ministers Meeting at Luzern;
2. CALLS more particularly upon the Council of Europe to continue and strengthen its activities as a body responsible for the conservation of biological diversity in the preparations for the Third European Environment Ministers Meeting, scheduled to be held in Bulgaria in 1995;

IUCN's Regional Programme for Europe

3. ENDORSES the objectives of the European Programme set out in General Assembly Paper GA/19/94/9;
4. REQUESTS in particular all members of IUCN to support IUCN activities in central and eastern Europe through additional non-project-related financial contributions so that this Programme can enhance its advisory role, particularly through an increase in the number of its regional agencies, the establishment of cooperative networks and the strengthening of lead agencies in the region;
5. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources:
 - (a) to pursue further and fuller cooperation between IUCN members in eastern and central Europe and those in western Europe;
 - (b) to include within IUCN's European Programme support for existing and planned collaborative ventures by IUCN members in Europe, such as those to identify and protect important areas for birds and plants.
 - (c) to promote collaboration between IUCN and the Council of Europe with regard to nature conservation activities, particularly in the planning and implementation of the European Nature Conservation Year 1995;
 - (d) to support the preparation of a pan-European

strategy for conservation of biological and landscape diversity incorporating the development of a pan-European ecological network;

- (e) in collaboration with WWF, through the joint programme of the TRAFFIC network, to give increased consideration to wildlife trade problems in central and eastern Europe;

Action Plan for Protected Areas in Europe

6. SUPPORTS the objective of the Action Plan for Protected Areas in Europe to build on and strengthen the commitment of national, regional and local authorities to the conservation of bio diversity through their protected area systems,
7. LOOKS FORWARD TO the final version of the Action Plan after all due consultation with all interested parties:
 - (a) URGES governments and others to respond constructively to the recommendations made in the final version of the Plan;
 - (b) CALLS UPON IUCN members in Europe to help finance the completion of the Plan and implementation of agreed priority projects in the Plan, and to encourage other funding bodies operating in Europe to support these;
 - (c) REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, to ensure that IUCN promotes and monitors implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with proposals in the Plan;
 - (d) INVITES IUCN members in Europe to participate in the launch of the Plan, which will take place in a number of locations around Europe later in 1994;
 - (e) REQUESTS the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas to develop a similar Action Plan for protected areas as soon as possible for those eastern parts of Europe not covered by the existing Plan.