

19.41 Armed Conflict and the Environment

RECOGNIZING the severely detrimental effects of international and non-international armed conflict on wildlife and critical habitats as witnessed in recent conflicts;

ACKNOWLEDGING the recommendations of the Workshop on Armed Conflict at the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas, 1992);

NOTING with appreciation the work of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) and International Council on Environmental Law (ICEL) on the responsibility of all nations to protect the environment in times of armed conflict, in particular the Final Report of Legal Experts on "Law Concerning the Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict" (Munich, 1991), and the Final Report on "Protection of Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites in Times of Armed Conflict," (Amsterdam, 1992);

RECALLING the Report of the International Committee of The Red Cross on "Protection of the Environment in Times of Armed Conflict" to the 48th Session of the UN General Assembly, which recommends, in part, that "the first step in ensuring protection of natural and cultural sites might be to draw up maps identifying them; and that IUCN and UNESCO could undertake this task";

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General and CEL, within available resources, to:
 - (a) continue to develop and advocate statements regarding the existing obligations of all States under international law to protect the environment in times of conflict;
 - (b) include in these statements the need for measures:
 - (i) to prevent intentional attacks on the environment, or the manipulation of natural processes causing environmental damage;
 - (ii) to prevent the inevitable destruction and damage that armed conflict generates, and the potentially serious damage from dangerous forces and potentially dangerous sites (such as oil wells);
 - (iii) for emergency pollution control;
 - (iv) to avoid damage to World Heritage Sites, national parks, protected areas and other critical habitats;
 - (v) to protect or rescue wild species in zoological gardens or wildlife parks;
 - (vi) to prohibit the use of methods or means of warfare that cause long-term and severe damage to the natural environments;
2. INVITES CEL and the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas to prepare proposals for publishing maps, sufficiently detailed to specify location of cultural and natural sites, and for providing these maps to military and civilian authorities worldwide;
3. REQUESTS the Director General to bring the Final Reports of IUCN's CEL Expert Groups, and any future statements, to the attention of the Secretary General of the United Nations and all governments.