

1.42 Collaborative Management for Conservation

RECALLING Resolution 19.1 of the 19th Session of the General Assembly on the Strategy of IUCN – The World Conservation Union, and Resolution 19.23 on the Importance of Community-based Approaches;

NOTING that the building of partnerships is one of the great strengths of IUCN;

RECOGNIZING that the effective management of resources involves measures that acknowledge the rights and aspirations of different cultures and the conditions of different environments, and are specific to each of them;

UNDERSTANDING that many individuals and institutions have a stake in how natural resources are managed and need to be involved in decisions affecting such management and that the concerns of those who depend on using natural resources in traditional ways necessary for meeting their basic needs should have special weight in decisions affecting them;

CONSIDERING that, in the context of current transformations of the role and responsibilities of the State, there are strong pragmatic reasons for designing new institutional arrangements and involving civil society in the long-term stewardship of natural resources and public domains;

CONCERNED that powerful changes, such as the globalization of trade and finance, the weakening of local resource management institutions, the loss of valuable local and traditional knowledge and practices, and the currently extensive dynamics of population (including movement of environmental refugees), can lead towards the degradation of natural resources and irreplaceable loss of biodiversity;

CONCERNED that in areas subjected to ecological degradation the consequences are most rapidly and severely felt by the poor and vulnerable sectors of society, in particular women and children;

DEFINING collaborative management (also referred to as co-management, or joint, participatory or multi-stakeholder management) as a partnership in which government agencies, local communities and resource users, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders negotiate, as appropriate to each context, the authority and responsibility for the management of a specific area or set of resources;

CONSIDERING that such partnership involves an agreement on the functions, rights and responsibilities of each party, building upon the complementarity of their knowledge, skills, practices and resources;

REAFFIRMING the value of participatory democratic processes through which people are fully informed about the legislation, policies and rules of concern to them and directly involved in the decisions and actions that affect them;

RECOGNIZING that collaborative management can provide effective means to deal with complex interests and relationships, and with conflicts; that it can promote the participation of groups and communities which are frequently marginalized in conventional resource management and development processes, and that it can contribute to the broad objectives of participatory democracy and participatory development;

NOTING also that collaborative management can promote the use of indigenous and local knowledge and skills, as well as further the protection and enhancement of the rights of indigenous peoples as well as minorities and disenfranchised groups;

EMPHASIZING that management partnerships may provide effective incentives for local resource users to contribute to conservation initiatives;

AWARE that the success of management partnerships requires a supportive social, political, legal, administrative, economic and technical framework, and that results depend more on evolving processes than on the application of fixed rules;

CONFIRMING that, while successful and instructive cases of collaborative management agreements exist in different regions, this management option is still poorly understood and its potential benefits are still largely untapped;

The World Conservation Congress at its 1st Session in Montreal, Canada, 14–23 October 1996:

1. URGES all members and components of IUCN to develop a greater understanding of collaborative management processes through the analysis of present and past experiences and lessons learned from them;

2. URGES all IUCN members and partners to give due consideration to the approaches and methods of collaborative management, and to their application in all stages of resource conservation and management;
3. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, Commissions, Councillors and members of IUCN to endorse, actively support and participate in the development and implementation of a Collaborative Management for Conservation Programme in the next triennium. The Programme should:
 - a) review and analyse existing knowledge and experiences in collaborative management in various regions and ecosystems; at different levels (e.g. local, regional, multi-country); in various societies (e.g. sedentary, nomadic, indigenous); under various land-tenure conditions (e.g. protected area, public land, communal, private); and from different points of view (e.g. those of governments, NGOs, local communities, indigenous peoples, gender and socio-economic groups);
 - b) share such knowledge and experience among IUCN members and partners concerned with collaborative management approaches while fostering active communication among them;
 - c) enhance the capacity of IUCN members to understand and effectively engage in collaborative management approaches;
 - d) identify collaborative management “observation sites” in each region where “learning by doing” processes can be undertaken and followed;
 - e) assist IUCN regional networks to identify and evaluate existing policies supporting or hindering collaborative management approaches and, if needed, to develop policy recommendations appropriate to the circumstances of each region;
 - f) strengthen cooperation and exchange among regions, commissions and programme initiatives, such as on sustainable use and community forestry;
 - g) inform and advise ongoing international fora and conventions on global environmental policy on the above matters;
 - h) be monitored and evaluated and prepare recommendations before the next World Conservation Congress for future action by IUCN.

Note. The use of the term “indigenous peoples” in this Recommendation shall not be construed as having any implications as regards the rights which may attach to that term in international law.