

1.71 Climate Change

RECALLING Recommendation 18.22 from the 18th Session of the IUCN General Assembly;

AWARE of the Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change that stated:

“The balance of evidence, from changes in global mean surface air temperature and from changes in geographical, seasonal and vertical patterns of atmospheric temperature, suggests a discernible human influence on global climate”;

NOTING the report of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies that 1995 was the warmest year on record since 1866;

AWARE that the flora and fauna of many protected areas in the world will be put under special stress and in some cases could be faced with extinction, and that species in many other places may face a similar fate;

NOTING that the “best estimate” of the second assessment models project an increase in sea-level of about 50 cm from the present to the year 2100;

CONCERNED about the impact of sea-level rise on low-lying, small island states and other low-lying coastal areas;

NOTING that the second assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change indicates that immediate stabilization of concentration of carbon dioxide at its present levels could be only through an immediate reduction in emissions of 50–70 per cent and further reductions thereafter;

FURTHER NOTING that the stabilization of methane (CH₄) and nitrogen oxide (N₂O) concentrations at today’s levels would involve reductions in anthropogenic emissions of 8 per cent and more than 50 per cent respectively;

AWARE that the Framework Convention on Climate Change has been signed by more than 160 countries and ratified by over 130 countries;

NOTING the commitment by developed countries in the Framework Convention on Climate Change to aim to return carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000;

NOTING the resolution of the European Parliament to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 20 per cent below 1990 emission levels by 2005;

NOTING the draft Protocol to the Framework Convention on Climate Change proposed by the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS);

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

1. CALLS on all developed countries to take measures to meet their aims to return greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000;
2. CALLS on the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change to negotiate a legally binding protocol or another legal instrument which contains a realistic and verifiable emissions target, as well as a time schedule to reduce emissions, at the third Conference of the Parties.

Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegations of the State members Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and United States indicated that had there been a vote they would have abstained, in the case of Switzerland because they could not accept Operative Paragraph 1 and in the case of Norway and United States so as not to influence negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.