

## 1.87 Spanish Network of National Parks

RECOGNIZING that in 1916 Spain incorporated into its legal framework the national parks policy initiated during the last third of the 19th Century in some other countries, protecting some of its most outstanding natural assets;

CONSIDERING that, since that time, there have been innumerable changes and a long process marked by the existence of four national laws serving as successive frameworks for Spain's National Parks policy;

CONSIDERING that Act No. 4/89 of 27 March 1989 on the conservation of natural areas and wild flora and fauna set up the current State National Parks Network, which includes the national parks existing at this moment;

VIEWING as highly positive the fact that Spain currently has a consolidated network whose management is guided essentially by the main aim of the National Parks, namely the conservation of their natural and cultural values;

CONSIDERING that in this way Spain's National Parks satisfactorily meet the most demanding international criteria in regard to the protection and management of such areas;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that under Category II of the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories approved at the IVth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas (Caracas , Venezuela, 1992), national parks are to be designated areas for the protection of the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations;

CONSIDERING that in addition Spain's National Parks are recognized by various international bodies (World Heritage, UNESCO-MAB (Man and the Biosphere), the European Diploma, etc.) and that they amply comply with the criteria laid down for Category II of the IUCN Protected Area Management Categories, which is a guarantee of their assets and state of conservation;

CONSIDERING that an appeal was made at this Congress and in the Caracas Declaration for the development of mechanisms for involving all sectors of society, and especially long-settled local populations, actively in the planning, establishment and management of protected areas;

CONSIDERING that the important process of decentralization undertaken by Spain in the last two decades has been bringing closer to the citizens many processes of decision-making in the legislative and administrative fields and that this is a process which has not been completed and which also includes the management of natural resources and, specifically, that of protected natural areas including the National Parks;

EXPRESSING APPRECIATION at the important work of the Autonomous Communities for the conservation and management of natural resources;

AGREEING on the need to express the sincere hope that the Spanish State Network of National Parks will continue in the future to retain the high natural value which characterizes it and that its management will continue to take account of ecological interests and protection of the biological diversity of its components' natural systems beyond any other type of more immediate interest which may negatively interfere with the former;

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

1. RECOMMENDS that the management of the national parks of Spain be carried out jointly by the National Government and the Regional Governments, taking into account the general interests of the nation and those of the local populations and authorities;
2. REQUESTS the Director General to draw to the attention of the responsible authorities in Spain, and to other IUCN members in Spain, the desirability of ensuring that any legal reforms promote:
  - a) a sound, coherent and high quality network of national parks in Spain as Category II protected areas;
  - b) adherence to the management objectives and standards recommended for Category II protected areas in IUCN's *Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories*, so as to ensure their long-term survival.

*Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegation of the State member Germany indicated that it had not participated in discussion of the Recommendation nor would it have participated in any voting. The*

*delegations of the State members Norway, Sweden and United States indicated that had there been a vote they would have abstained.*