

1.100 Mining in the Fly River Catchment, Papua New Guinea

NOTING that the General Assembly of IUCN at its 18th and 19th Sessions passed Recommendations 18.63 and 19.79 that sought to mitigate and remedy the serious environmental, social and health problems associated with the Ok Tedi Mine;

ALSO NOTING that Recommendation 18.21 of the 18th Session called on all governments to ensure that companies follow environmental practices that are not at a lower standard than in the country of primary incorporation;

WELCOMING the agreement reached between BHP, the Government of Papua New Guinea and landowners affected by the Ok Tedi Mine, that BHP will compensate landowners for the environmental and social impacts caused by the operation of the mine and will construct waste-handling facilities to prevent further despoliation of the Fly River and its environs;

REAFFIRMING its concern regarding the unsustainable mining practices adopted in this region;

SUPPORTING calls for compliance of transnational corporations with environmental standards applying in their State of principal incorporation;

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

1. URGES BHP, Ok Tedi Mining and the Government of Papua New Guinea to adopt the highest possible standards in the design and construction of the proposed waste-handling facilities and ensure full public consultation during the processes of design, construction and operation;
2. CALLS UPON BHP and Ok Tedi Mining Limited to make public all data available to them concerning the environmental effects of the mine;
3. REQUESTS the Government of Papua New Guinea to ensure that the design, construction and operating arrangements for the proposed waste-handling facilities are subject to an independent audit by a recognized international panel of experts relevant to the field;
4. REQUESTS the Director General to contact the Government of Papua New Guinea, BHP and Ok Tedi urging the parties to reach early agreement on the above actions and, within available resources, offering to facilitate the recommended review.

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.