

1.103 Cape York Peninsula, Australia

RECOGNIZING the globally significant natural and cultural heritage values of the 14 million hectare Cape York Peninsula in tropical north-eastern Australia including outstanding biodiversity, more than 1500 km of pristine coastline and the cultural heritage of the resident indigenous peoples;

RECOGNIZING the generally high level of integrity of the natural ecosystems on Cape York;

AWARE of the current Cape York Peninsula Land Use Strategy (CYPLUS), a major regional land-use planning project funded and supported by the Australian and Queensland Governments;

AWARE of the successful dispute resolution process resulting in an historic agreement (The Cape York Agreement) between the Cape York Land Council, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC – Australian indigenous peoples’ governing organization), the Cattlemen’s Union, the Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation;

NOTING that the Cape York Agreement includes, *inter alia*, an agreement to nomination of a major proportion of the 14 million hectares of Cape York as World Heritage;

RECOGNIZING the potential for a major indigenous peoples’ protected area to be established on Cape York, possibly of World Heritage significance;

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

1. CONGRATULATES the Cape York Land Council, ATSIC, the Cattlemen’s Union, the Wilderness Society and the Australian Conservation Foundation on their historic Cape York Agreement announced in 1996;
2. CONGRATULATES the Australian Government on its expressed support for the Cape York Agreement, including proposed funding for the priority acquisition of lands of highest conservation value;
3. URGES all parties to the Cape York Agreement, and the Australian and Queensland Governments, to:
 - a) move expeditiously to implement the Cape York Agreement including delineation of areas for assessment for World Heritage values;
 - b) complete as a priority the CYPLUS land-use planning process.

Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegations of the State members Australia, Norway, Sweden and United States indicated that had there been a vote they would have abstained. 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 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.