

## 1.108 Conservation of the Bering Sea Ecosystem

AWARE that the Bering Sea, its islands and surrounding shores form a semi-enclosed sea shared by Russia and USA and that this sea is one of the world's most productive and diverse marine ecosystems;

REMEMBERING that at one time it produced 5 per cent of the world's supply of fish;

INFORMED that over-exploitation of its resources is threatening its continued productivity and has caused severe declines in many populations of fish, seabirds and marine mammals;

RECOGNIZING the importance of these resources to the economy of both maritime States and to the subsistence lifestyle of the indigenous peoples on both the Alaskan and Russian coasts;

NOTING the Convention on the Conservation and Management of Pollock Resources in the Central Bering Sea;

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

CALLS UPON the Governments of the Russian Federation and USA, in collaboration with other relevant authorities and indigenous communities, to enter into agreement on the conservation of the Bering Sea to:

- a) promote conservation of all living marine resources;
- b) ensure that such resources are managed compatibly and cooperatively by each side within its jurisdiction so as to conserve the Bering Sea as a single ecosystem;
- c) foster collaborative research, incorporating the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples.

*Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegation of the State member United States expressed its understanding that the word "agreement" in the Operative Paragraph neither means nor implies any consultative process or formal agreement. The delegation indicated that had there been a vote the delegation would have abstained. The delegation of the State member Norway indicated that had there been a vote the delegation would have abstained.*

*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.*