

1.110 Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

RECALLING Recommendations 17.52, 17.53, 18.75 and 19.95, and Resolutions 15.40, 16.8, 18.74 and 19.96 of the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th Session of the General Assembly of IUCN;

NOTING with concern that a number of these Recommendations and Resolutions have not been fully implemented;

RECOGNIZING that Antarctica has many internationally significant values; it is a critically important ecosystem and plays an important role in influencing global climate and oceanic circulation; it is important for monitoring and other research which provide greater understanding of the natural environment and ecological processes, including those modified by human activity; it has great value as the world's largest remaining wilderness area; and it has significant intrinsic and inspirational values;

NOTING that the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, adopted by the Antarctic Treaty Parties in Madrid, Spain, in October 1991, commits Parties to the comprehensive protection of the Antarctic environment and dependent and associated ecosystems, designates Antarctica as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science and, *inter alia*, prohibits any activity relating to mineral resources other than scientific research;

CONGRATULATING the Governments of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, India, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and Uruguay, who have ratified the Protocol on Environmental Protection;

CONSCIOUS that all Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties who signed the Protocol in Madrid must ratify it before it can take effect;

AWARE that conservation measures in the Subantarctic must be strengthened;

EMPHASIZING the importance of the conservation of the ecosystems of the circum-Antarctic seas, and the need to ensure that any use of their living resources is sustainable;

REMEMBERING that IUCN has had a long involvement with Antarctic conservation activities, and during the 1994–1996 triennium established an Antarctic Advisory Committee which ensured that IUCN had an effective voice at various Antarctic fora, and held a workshop on cumulative impacts of human presence in Antarctica;

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

1. CALLS UPON Japan and Russia to ratify urgently the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty;
2. URGES all States Party to the Antarctic Treaty to:
 - a) enact without delay the necessary national legislation to ensure domestic implementation of the provisions of the Protocol;
 - b) ensure that their domestic law provides the necessary jurisdiction over their nationals for acts committed in Antarctica contrary to the Antarctic Treaty and the Environmental Protocol;
 - c) establish the Committee for Environmental Protection at the forthcoming XXI Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) in Christchurch, New Zealand;
 - d) make greater efforts towards the prompt completion, adoption and implementation of a Liability Annex pursuant to Article 16 of the Protocol on Environmental Protection, and applying to all activities in the area covered by the Protocol which might result in damage to the Antarctic environment;
 - e) rescind the decision that experts cannot be invited and to invite IUCN to provide expert advice and participate in the meetings of the group of legal experts which is negotiating the Liability Annex to the Protocol;
 - f) redouble their efforts to resolve urgently the remaining disagreements over the location of an Antarctic Treaty Secretariat since the current impasse is detrimental to the implementation of the Antarctic Treaty, the Environmental Protocol and the effective protection of the Antarctic environment;

- g) endorse in principle the conclusions and relevant recommendations of the IUCN International Workshop on Cumulative Impacts at the Christchurch ATCM;
3. CALLS UPON all Parties to the Antarctic Treaty and all others active in Antarctica to pay particular attention to:
 - a) minimizing environmental impacts, including direct, indirect and cumulative impacts;
 - b) establishing and safeguarding a comprehensive network of protected areas, including adequate representation of the principal habitats and the biological diversity of the Antarctic region;
 - c) preventing the deposition of wastes and facilitating the removal of wastes which have already been deposited;
 - d) establishing and enforcing stringent regulations governing the conduct of all persons visiting Antarctica, whether scientists, logistic and other support personnel or tourists;
 4. URGES the Governments concerned to adopt all necessary measures to ensure the conservation of Subantarctic island ecosystems, especially the production and implementation of management plans, the eradication, where practicable, of alien species and the reduction of the incidental mortality of seabirds using the islands, especially albatrosses, from long-line fisheries;
 5. CALLS UPON Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources to take all steps necessary to conserve the marine ecosystems and component species of the Southern Ocean;
 6. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources;
 - a) to ensure that IUCN activities during the 1996–1999 triennium focus on maximizing the Union’s contribution to more effective conservation efforts in the Antarctic and Subantarctic, and in particular on topics which draw on the core competencies of IUCN in relation to environmental law, protected areas and species conservation;
 - b) to encourage ratification and implementation of the Antarctic Environmental Protocol and the completion, ratification and implementation of the annex on liability;
 - c) to ensure effective contributions from IUCN to relevant Antarctic and Subantarctic fora including *inter alia* the meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties;
 - d) to ensure effective collaboration with IUCN members with expertise in this region;
 - e) to strengthen and consolidate the Antarctic Advisory Committee of IUCN and provide it with an adequate funding base and funded secretariat support;
 7. RECOMMENDS that the Antarctic Advisory Committee of IUCN should:
 - a) develop and promulgate policy advice on Antarctic conservation, with particular emphasis on:
 - i) **ratification and implementation of the Protocol;**
 - ii) development and implementation of a Liability Annex to the Protocol;
 - iii) input to the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, and especially its work on ecosystem management;
 - b) contribute to public awareness, through seminars and technical sessions relevant to Antarctic and Subantarctic conservation, including on biodiversity, and publications relevant to Antarctic and Subantarctic conservation;
 - c) follow through on recommendations from the three Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)/IUCN workshops on Antarctic conservation, policy and protection, and from the IUCN Workshop on Cumulative Impacts in Antarctica;

- d) develop effective collaboration with IUCN members with expertise in this region;
8. CALLS UPON IUCN members to mobilize resources to enable this Recommendation to be implemented.

Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. The delegations of the State members Norway and United Kingdom 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.