

### **1.3 Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, now called the World Commission on Protected Areas**

RECALLING Resolution 19.2 of the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly, on the role of the IUCN Commissions, which, *inter alia*, called for the strengthening of the Commissions as important agents in the pursuit of the IUCN Mission;

WELCOMING the accord reached at the Commission “summit” at Sonloup, Switzerland, in February 1995, and especially the agreement which emerged from that meeting about the need for closer working between all parts of IUCN;

RECALLING also Resolution 19.4 of the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly, on National Parks and Protected Areas, which, *inter alia*, called for the development of a strategic plan for the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA);

NOTING that the CNPPA strategic plan was adopted earlier this year after a process of extensive consultation among Commission members and partners;

NOTING also the report of the Chair of CNPPA on the Commission’s work over the past triennium, and that this report emphasizes the increased cooperation between CNPPA and other commissions and IUCN partners;

TAKING ACCOUNT of the findings of the in-depth review of CNPPA undertaken for the World Conservation Congress in accordance with the terms of Resolution 19.2 (4(d));

TAKING SPECIAL NOTE of the central role accorded to protected areas in the Convention on Biological Diversity, especially through the preparation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans which incorporate protected area systems plans;

NOTING with appreciation the action of the Director General in ensuring an increased level of staff and financial support for the Commission during the first two years of the triennium;

BELIEVING that CNPPA should be one of the principal means by which IUCN should contribute to implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other programmes;

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

1. DECIDES that the Commission shall henceforth be named The World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA);
2. ENDORSES the Strategic Plan of WCPA as a programmatic means to promote appropriate action and coordination by IUCN and the protected areas community with the goal to:
  - “promote the establishment and management of a worldwide, representative network of terrestrial and marine protected areas as an integral contribution to IUCN’s mission”;
  - and WCPA’s vision to establish itself as:
    - “the world’s recognized source of guidance, support and expertise on protected areas”;
3. WELCOMES in particular:
  - a) the target audiences and objectives of the plan;
  - b) the activities set out at global, regional and national levels, as follows:

- i) global: development of world “best practice” protected areas guidelines; development of a worldwide park collaboration programme (PARKSHARE); support for the collection, management, dissemination and application of protected areas information, including collaboration with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in the establishment of the Protected Areas Resource Centre (PARC) and the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS), support for global conventions and initiatives; the implementation of the global theme programmes on marine and mountain protected areas; and the organization of the 10-year World Parks Congress;
    - ii) regional: development and implementation of WCPA regional programmes and action plans, both to strengthen protected areas systems in the regions and to reinforce the work of WCPA at the regional level; and also support through such programmes and plans for regional conventions and for the environmental activities of regional inter-governmental and non-governmental institutions;
    - iii) national: formalization of a WCPA review and evaluation service, and provision of selective advice on national systems planning;
  - c) the programme for implementation, including: the development of WCPA membership; the strengthening of the Commission’s structure; the development of partnerships within and beyond IUCN, including through the establishment of a Protected Areas Round Table with WCPA’s principal global partners; the marketing of the strategy and the completion and implementation of a communications strategy for WCPA; and the arrangements for monitoring and review of progress;
4. WELCOMES also:
- a) the action of the Commission in working closely with IUCN members at regional level and in developing closer links and joint activities with the Regional and Country Offices of IUCN;
  - b) the steps taken to collaborate more closely with other Commissions, for example with the Species Survival Commission (SSC) in the development of BCIS and the establishment of National Biodiversity Groups in some countries in South America, and with SSC and the Commission on Ecosystem Management in collaborating in a meeting with IUCN’s members in the North Africa/Middle East region;
5. URGES the Chair of WCPA and the Director General, within available resources, to build on those connections in the further development of both WCPA’s programme and the Regional and Country Office programmes, in particular through the development of regional action plans for protected areas, and the appointment of staff in the Regional and Country Offices to work closely with WCPA;
6. STRONGLY SUPPORTS the Chair of WCPA in establishing a fund-raising initiative to help provide the finance needed to implement the strategic plan;
7. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources to ensure:
- a) that WCPA is invited to play a full part in developing and implementing the biodiversity programme of the Union;
  - b) that funding for the Commission’s Operation Fund should, as soon as possible, be made commensurate with the minimum required for the effective operation of WCPA as a functioning network.