

## **1.8 Strengthening IUCN's Activities in Central and Eastern Europe**

RECALLING the decision of IUCN to decentralize its operations to the level best suited to carry out the Mission of the Union;

RECALLING also Resolution 19.13 of the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly, on an increased IUCN presence and influence in South America, which states: "as a general criterion, that IUCN should invest, through programmes and projects in the region, an amount of funds at least equivalent to what it collects as membership dues from the members in the region";

NOTING the decision of IUCN to devolve responsibility to the regional and national level of the secretariat;

AWARE that working with the members, the Commissions, the National Committees and Regional Councillors requires adequate resources;

WELCOMING the recommendations of the European Members Meeting (Bristol, July 1995) and the result of the independent review of the European Programme which stressed the role of IUCN offices at the national level and their function of working with membership;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the proposed realignment in the functions of the IUCN structures in Europe at the national level away from project management and towards communications, advocacy and membership;

CONSIDERING that strong independent and highly regarded IUCN offices have developed in five countries of Central and Eastern Europe (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic, Russian Federation);

FURTHER CONSIDERING that the long-term value of such IUCN offices is symbiotically linked to the actions of the Union in the region;

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources:
  - a) to provide financial support to maintain existing IUCN offices and increase coordination at national level among Central and Eastern European countries;
  - b) to provide training and expertise transfer in areas such as communications, membership relations, strengthen advocacy by national environmental NGOs and fund-raising to enable the IUCN offices at the national level to implement the Mission of the Union and seek financial security;
2. REQUESTS IUCN members in West European countries to actively cooperate with members in Central and East Europe to strengthen them and to support important IUCN programmes in the region.