

1.20 Biological Diversity and Forests

RECALLING recent reports by FAO, the UN Economic Commission for Europe and the World Resources Institute that document accelerating rates of deforestation, forest degradation and forest fragmentation in tropical, temperate and boreal forests;

RECOGNIZING that these trends have significant adverse impacts on forest biological diversity, and that there is an urgent need to move forward with actions to address the loss of forest biodiversity;

RECALLING that in its November 1995 statement to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) emphasized that:

- a) forests play a crucial role in maintaining global biodiversity, and hold the vast majority of the world's terrestrial species;
- b) the maintenance of forest ecosystems is crucial to the conservation of biodiversity well beyond their boundaries;
- c) within specific forest ecosystems, maintenance of ecological processes is dependent upon the maintenance of biodiversity;
- d) forest biodiversity loss is linked to the substantial deforestation, fragmentation and degradation of all types of forests;

RECALLING further that in this statement, the COP highlighted a number of specific CBD provisions and issues of particular relevance to effective implementation of the CBD in relation to forest biodiversity;

SUPPORTING the advice on forest biodiversity provided by the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at its second meeting;

WELCOMING the ongoing work under the IPF to pursue consensus and coordinated proposals for action to support the conservation and sustainable management of forests;

NOTING that Parties to the CBD, at their forthcoming Third Conference:

- a) will consider the need for further input to the IPF which builds upon its previous statement and which could draw upon the advice on forest biodiversity provided by SBSTTA at its second meeting;
- b) that such input could include a framework on forest biodiversity which could draw, *inter alia*, on the eight priority research areas identified by SBSTTA at its second meeting and that any programme of work under SBSTTA fully consider the final results of the IPF, following its fourth meeting in 1997;

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

REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources:

- a) to ensure that forest biodiversity is a priority in the IUCN Programme;
- b) to strengthen IUCN's contributions to the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification, and to the work of the IPF and other complementary international agreements and institutions related to forests;

- c) to formulate forest policies and management guidelines based on input from all regions, identifying and promoting successful experiences as potential models, providing technical assistance and facilitating dialogue at all levels.

Note. This Resolution was adopted by consensus. The delegation of the State member United States indicated that had there been a vote the delegation would have abstained.