

## 1.55 Indigenous Peoples and Forests

RECALLING that forests in many places have been and still are home to numerous indigenous peoples;

RECALLING that forests and nature in general are not only a natural resource for indigenous peoples, but allow a harmonious way of life that has served as an example and guide to these societies, and a space for life of spiritual and cultural value;

AWARE that, based on colonial methods of exploiting natural resources, the forests of the world inhabited by indigenous peoples have been exploited;

CONSIDERING the terms of ILO Convention No 169 and the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity regarding the rights of indigenous peoples with respect to the management, use and conservation of biodiversity;

CONSIDERING the recommendations and guidelines established in Agenda 21;

CONSIDERING the principles proposed in the draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

CONSIDERING the emphasis placed in *Caring for the Earth* on the role of indigenous peoples in sustainable development and their rights in the management of natural resources;

MINDFUL of the recommendations of the 18th Session of the IUCN General Assembly and Resolutions and Recommendations 19.20, 19.21, 19.22, 19.23 and others of the 19th Session that refer to indigenous peoples, and specifically those referring to forests;

RECOGNIZING that many natural forested areas which still survive are today mostly inhabited by indigenous peoples;

GIVING due consideration to global forest dialogue, including work elements being addressed under the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF);

CONCERNED that the growing international interest in forests sometimes does not consider the interests of indigenous peoples living there nor consider forests as the home of indigenous peoples;

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

REQUESTS the Director General, the Secretariat and the technical programmes, Commissions, members and Councillors of IUCN, within available resources, to work collaboratively with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Convention on Biological Diversity to support, participate in and advocate the development of forest policy which considers the following principles:

- a) recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples taking account of the terms of ILO Convention No 169, and the principles proposed in the draft UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- b) recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to use the natural resources on their lands or territories in an equitable and ecologically sustainable way;
- c) recognition of the need to ensure effective participation by indigenous peoples in the strategic planning and implementation of all activities on their forest lands.

*Note. This Resolution was adopted by consensus. The delegations of the State members Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland and United States indicated that had there been a vote they would have abstained, in the case of New Zealand and the United States for the reasons given under Resolution 1.49. The delegation of the State member India dissociated itself from this Resolution for the reasons given under Resolution 1.49.*

*The use of the term “indigenous peoples” in this Resolution shall not be construed as having any implications as regards the rights which may attach to that term in international law.*