

### **REC 3.103 The Biosphere Reserve of the Chaco and indigenous peoples**

AWARE of the importance that the Gran Chaco of South America, its cultures and its ecosystems have for the conservation of biological and cultural diversity on the planet;

CONSIDERING that the northern part of the Paraguayan Chaco is historically part of the territory of diverse indigenous peoples, and that the historic rights of these peoples are recognized through the *Constitution of Paraguay*, articles 62 to 67 and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention (169) concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that the Northern Chaco is inhabited by indigenous communities who have no contact with the surrounding societies, and that these communities, through their pattern of life in balance with nature, sustain the integrity of their ecosystems and are also a fundamental part of the cultural diversity of humankind;

GREETING with approval the Paraguayan Government's political will and initiative to establish, with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Man and Biosphere Committee and in cooperation with a coalition of civil society organizations, a Biosphere Reserve in the Paraguayan Chaco and to promote its recognition by UNESCO;

CONSIDERING Articles 8(j) and 10(c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and Decision VII/28 of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of its Conference of the Parties – COP7 (Kuala Lumpur, 2004), adopting the *CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas*;

ALSO CONSIDERING the *Akwe:Kon Voluntary Guidelines* for action, adopted by CBD COP7 Decision VII/16;

AKNOWLEDGING Recommendations V.24 *Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas*, V.25 *Co-management of Protected Areas*, V.26 *Community Conserved Areas* and V.27 *Mobile Indigenous Peoples and Conservation* noted by the V<sup>th</sup> IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003); Resolutions 12.5 *Protection of traditional ways of life* adopted at the 12<sup>th</sup> IUCN General Assembly (Kinshasa, 1975), 18.16 *Recognition of the role of indigenous communities* adopted at the 18<sup>th</sup> IUCN General Assembly (Perth, 1990), and 19.21 *Indigenous People and the sustainable use of natural resources*, 19.22 *Indigenous people*, and 19.23 *The Importance of Community-based Approaches* adopted at the 19<sup>th</sup> IUCN General Assembly (Buenos Aires, 1994); and Resolutions 1.49 *Indigenous peoples and IUCN*, 1.50 *Indigenous peoples, intellectual property rights and biological diversity*, 1.53 *Indigenous peoples and protected areas* and 1.55 *Indigenous peoples and forests* adopted at the 1<sup>st</sup> IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996); and

RECALLING *Indigenous and Traditional Peoples and Protected Areas: Principles, Guidelines and Case Studies. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 4*<sup>1</sup>, which was launched at the 2<sup>nd</sup> IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000);

The World Conservation Congress at its 3<sup>rd</sup> Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17–25 November 2004:

1. EXPRESSES its support for the initiative of the Government of Paraguay, UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Committee and environmental organizations, towards the declaration of part of the Northern Paraguayan Chaco as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and calls for the relevant actors in Argentina, Bolivia and Brazil to cooperate in the establishment of a transboundary Biosphere Reserve in the region, considering its natural and cultural relevance;

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<sup>1</sup> J. Beltrán (ed.). 2000. Gland, Switzerland and Cambridge, UK. IUCN, Cardiff University and WWF.

2. CALLS on all governments and stakeholders involved in the Chaco to respect the rights of the indigenous peoples to their ancestral territories; and

3. REQUESTS the government and stakeholders involved in the Chaco to assure the effective and complete participation of indigenous peoples in the process of establishment of the Biosphere Reserve in the Gran Chaco, to promote the implementation of public policies that respect indigenous communities with or without contact with the surrounding societies, to assure the protection of their lands, the sustainable use of their natural heritage and the full participation of indigenous communities in the management of public and private protected areas.

State member Sweden abstained from voting on this motion for reasons given in the Swedish Government's general statement on the motions process (see page x).

The Department of State, United States, provided the following statement for the record:

*State and agency members United States refrained from engaging in deliberations on this motion and took no national government position on the motion as adopted for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolution Process.*