

REC 3.104 Consolidation of a national system of protected areas in the Dominican Republic

CONSIDERING that the establishment of a national system of protected areas in the Dominican Republic has been a process of national interest evolving until it now accounts for almost 19 percent of national territory in terrestrial protected areas and 11 percent of national territory in marine protected areas;

CONSIDERING that in the process of developing the national system of protected areas the Dominican Republic has received the support and technical assistance of IUCN through different experts from the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA);

CONCERNED by recent events in the Dominican Republic concerning the drafting and approval of a Sectoral Law on Protected Areas that alters the objectives of these areas and places the stability of the entire system in jeopardy;

CONCERNED by this Sectoral Law's clear intent to reduce protection for marine areas of national, regional and international importance for the reproduction and conservation of endangered species of commercial interest, such as the queen conch *Strombus gigas*, spiny lobsters *Panulirus argus* and *P. guttatus*, hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata* and manatee *Trichechus manatus*;

CONCERNED ALSO by the clear intent of the aforementioned Sectoral Law to reduce protection of terrestrial areas of national, regional and international importance for the conservation of biodiversity, culture and water reserves in the Dominican Republic; and

CONSIDERING that among the areas most affected are the Jaragua National Park, core area of the Dominican Republic's only Biosphere Reserve, established in 2002, as well as the East National Park, proposed as a World Heritage Site for its extraordinary natural and archaeological wealth;

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URGES pertinent authorities in the Dominican Republic to:

- (a) ensure the protection and conservation of terrestrial and coastal and marine ecosystems of national, regional and international importance, within the framework of a consolidated national system of protected areas;
- (b) develop and strengthen the national system of protected areas with the involvement of local communities, as a strategy for combating poverty;
- (c) develop and implement management plans for protected areas to ensure that their potential for the country's development is realized; and
- (d) ensure that the environmental, economic and cultural services provided by protected areas are accessible and available for the good of humanity.

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.