

REC 3.106 Mitigation of the environmental impacts of the ‘Plan Puebla Panama’ and strengthening of Protected Areas adjacent to new road sections and other infrastructure works

RECALLING previous IUCN resolutions and recommendations which recognize and condemn the environmental impacts of large-scale infrastructure works and request the conduct of Environmental Impact Assessments and investments in environmental and social mitigation and compensation;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the commitments made by the Governments of Mesoamerica (most of Mexico and Central America) in matters relating to biodiversity, the establishment of representative systems of protected areas, the promotion of sustainable types of development, and the participation of local and indigenous communities in transparent consultation processes;

RECALLING the importance of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and the commitments made by countries in the region in matters relating to its establishment and implementation; and

DRAWING ATTENTION to the many examples of environmental destruction caused by the construction of roads, hydroelectric stations and other large-scale infrastructure works that do not take account of land-use planning criteria, investments in environmental impact mitigation and compensation, parallel strengthening of the abilities of environmental institutions, and the consolidation of protected areas adjacent to new infrastructure works;

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

1. ASKS the Governments of the Mesoamerican Region, the Inter-American Development Bank, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, and the Central American Commission for Environment and Development that:

(a) urgent steps be taken to guarantee that the construction of new roads and large-scale infrastructure works within the framework of the ‘Plan Puebla Panama’ fully include land-use planning criteria; real and proven mitigation and effective compensation of environmental, social and cultural impacts; and the strengthening of the environmental institutions responsible for the monitoring of these works;

(b) parallel support projects be developed for the declaration, strengthening and consolidation of protected areas that are found in the areas of influence or adjacent to these roads or infrastructure works, as much before – as during and after – these investments are made;

(c) transparent consultation and the respect of the rights of local communities and indigenous populations found in the areas of influence or adjacent to these roads or infrastructure works be ensured, before, during and after these investments are made; and

(d) it be guaranteed that projects supported within the framework of the ‘Plan Puebla Panama’ are fully in line with sustainable development models and that funding is not provided for those projects that present serious threats to indigenous populations and proposed or declared protected areas, or which do not have guaranteed resources for the implementation of investments in environmental impact mitigation and compensation; and

2. ALSO ASKS all bilateral and multilateral development agencies to guarantee the application of these criteria in the assessment of those projects presented within the framework of the ‘Plan Puebla Panama’, as well as the application of those international considerations and good practice established for the construction of roads or large-scale infrastructure works.

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.