

REC 3.085 Principles of knowledge sharing of the Conservation Commons

NOTING that the *Conservation Commons*¹ is a cooperative undertaking of IUCN members and non-members to promote sharing of biodiversity data, information, and knowledge to facilitate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, based on a common set of Principles;

AIMING to establish a global partnership within the conservation community for the sharing of data, information, and knowledge in order to accelerate action in support of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the natural world;

ACKNOWLEDGING that open access to sharing and use of conservation data, information, and knowledge resources by all sectors of society is essential both to enable effective decision-making and to empower those concerned with the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world;

RECOGNIZING that global inequities directly restrict access to data, information and knowledge for many of the world's people, with adverse impacts on the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world;

UNDERSTANDING our collective responsibility to maintain the highest standards of information quality, as well as personal and organizational integrity, and to collaborate actively in the creation of an effective, stable and trusted conservation-related data, information, and knowledge-sharing framework;

AGREEING that all efforts to support a *Conservation Commons* should, first and foremost, support ongoing initiatives – particularly at the national level – and build capacity within these initiatives to support conservation efforts at all levels;

NOTING Article 19 of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, that every individual has the right to freedom of opinion and expression, that this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers;

RECALLING Principle 10 of the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, noting that environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level, and that at the national level each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes;

RECOGNIZING that under Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity each Party shall, subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that under Article 17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Parties shall facilitate the exchange of information, from all publicly available sources, relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account the special needs of developing countries; and

¹ The notion of a knowledge commons for biodiversity conservation was first discussed within the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) consortium, noted in IUCN Resolution 2.23 (Amman, 2000); as a means to address the 'digital divide' in access to data, information, and knowledge relevant to the conservation of biodiversity, and improve the basis for policy-development and decision-making.

FURTHER RECOGNIZING the extensive discussions and dialogue which have taken place among numerous IUCN members and non-members with regard to the Principles of the Conservation Commons;

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

1. CALLS UPON IUCN members, and all sectors of the international community, to endorse the Principles of the *Conservation Commons* annexed to this Recommendation; and
 2. URGES them to participate in the *Conservation Commons* in accordance with these Principles.
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Annex to Recommendation 3.085

PRINCIPLES OF THE CONSERVATION COMMONS

Principle 1

Open Access: The Conservation Commons promotes free and open access to data, information and knowledge for conservation purposes.

Principle 2

Mutual Benefit: The Conservation Commons welcomes and encourages participants both to use resources and to contribute data, information and knowledge.

Principle 3

Rights and Responsibilities: Contributors to the Conservation Commons have full right to attribution for any uses of their data, information, or knowledge, and the right to ensure that the original integrity of their contribution to the Commons is preserved. Users of the Conservation Commons are expected to comply, in good faith, with terms of uses specified by contributors and in accordance with these Principles.

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.