

RES 3.020 Drafting a code of ethics for biodiversity conservation

RECALLING humanity's primary responsibility for preserving the diversity of life on earth, taking into account the past and present impact of its activities on the environment;

REAFFIRMING the value of the existence of biodiversity, linked to humanity's own value, as well as to the satisfaction and wellbeing that its existence brings, and the additional value it represents for future generations;

HIGHLIGHTING the concerns raised by the use and impact of new biotechnology tools on the future of biodiversity, particularly with regard to certain genetically modified organisms, and by negotiations on the patentability of living matter;

HIGHLIGHTING ALSO the limits, or even pernicious effects, of a strictly utilitarian view of biodiversity and the services rendered by nature;

RECALLING the first preambular paragraph to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which underlines the intrinsic value of biological diversity and the value of its elements at social, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic levels;

RECALLING FURTHER that the *Global Biodiversity Strategy* and IUCN's strategy *Caring for the Earth* set out the basic principle that respect is due to all peoples and forms of life on earth, and stipulate that human development must not be implemented at the expense of future generations, nor threaten the survival of other species;

REAFFIRMING its commitment to the preamble of the IUCN Statutes, which affirms that nature conservation contributes to the establishment of peace, progress and human prosperity and that natural beauty constitutes the essential framework for humanity's spiritual development, which an increasingly mechanized existence renders necessary more than ever; and

NOTING that many philosophical and religious schools of thought are becoming more and more explicitly involved in nature conservation;

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

1. REAFFIRMS IUCN's commitment to an ethical view of nature conservation, based on respect for the diversity of life, as well as the cultural diversity of peoples;
2. CALLS ON the IUCN Director General to invite the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law to hold discussions with a view to drafting a code of ethics for the conservation of biodiversity, accompanied by aims to be achieved and actions to be undertaken, and to submit such a code for consideration at the next World Conservation Congress;
3. PROPOSES that IUCN takes an interest in the efforts made by existing philosophical and religious schools of thought regarding nature conservation throughout the world; and
4. RECOMMENDS that IUCN considers subsequently strengthening its work with states in order to promote the adoption of national codes of ethics offering each and every person rights and duties concerning respect for the diversity of life on Earth.

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.