

RES 3.054 Threats from Olympic Games and other major sporting events to protected areas and biodiversity

CONCERNED by the threats to rare and threatened species as well as to valuable existing protected areas, including National Parks, Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage Sites, that would be incurred by many applications for Olympic Games, World Ski Championships and other major sporting events;

RECALLING the essential role of well-conserved protected areas for the wellbeing of nature as well as human populations, as underlined once again by the 7th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Kuala Lumpur, 2004);

ACKNOWLEDGING that consumption of vulnerable species is a significant, and often the most significant, threat to biological diversity;

RECALLING also that the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the International Ski Federation (FIS) and other relevant international sports federations very often mention environmental issues as being important selection criteria;

AWARE that the environmental impact of major sporting events are often irreversible; and

ALSO AWARE that proper independent environmental impact assessments are rarely made before starting activities, or that their results are not adequately taken into account;

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

1. CALLS on the IUCN Director General to offer IUCN's assistance to help identify information and sources of expertise that could be used by the IOC, FIS and other international sports organizations to ensure the integrity of nationally and internationally recognized protected areas;

2. RECOMMENDS that the IOC, the FIS and other relevant international sports federations:

(a) address the concerns of the conservation community regarding the effects some past sporting events have had on the integrity of protected areas, other areas of recognized biodiversity importance, and on the conservation of threatened species;

(b) respect the integrity of designated protected areas and other areas of recognized natural or cultural importance as a requirement when selecting the location for sporting events;

(c) seek early, thorough, and independent environmental impact assessments, and ensure that:

(i) public access to the results of such environmental impact assessments is assured; and

(ii) full consideration is given to these impacts during the whole process, including site selection, realization and post-event rehabilitation work; and

(d) ensure host and candidate host nations do not offer either Red List Threatened Species, or natural products or parts where identification of species has not occurred, for sale, consumption or as gifts at events or functions; and

3. CALLS ON all relevant international initiatives, programmes, agreements and organizations, such as the World Heritage Convention, the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme, the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, 1971), and regional conventions, to work with the IOC, FIS and other international sports federations.

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

State and agency members United States abstained during the vote on this motion.