

RES 3.065 A landscape/seascape approach to conservation

RECALLING the outcome of the Vth IUCN World Park Congress (Durban, 2003) concerning the importance of a global system of protected areas linked to the surrounding landscapes and seascapes, and the crucial role of landscape/seascape policies and plans as means for spreading the benefits of protected areas beyond their boundaries;

AWARE of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species and the UNESCO-MAB World Network of Biosphere Reserves in favour of the Ecosystem Approach and means of protecting biodiversity in the wider landscape/seascape;

NOTING that, notwithstanding the impressive 11.5 percent terrestrial coverage already achieved by the global protected areas network, most of the world's biodiversity exists outside of protected areas and depends on effective biological connectivity and ecological networking;

RECOGNIZING that the landscape/seascape approach includes measures to protect and add value to the biological and cultural diversity of whole territories and seascapes, as demonstrated by initiatives such as the Project APE (Apennine Park of Europe) in Italy, the Regional Natural Parks of France, the National Parks of the UK and the Biosphere Reserves of Spain;

NOTING that many such initiatives involve the use of IUCN Management Category V protected areas (Protected Landscapes and Seascapes);

FURTHER NOTING that the landscape/seascape approach can help restore the relationship between people and places, to strengthen local identities and cultures, and to enhance the awareness and capacity of local communities to manage their natural resources and conserve their natural and cultural heritage;

STRESSING that much is still to be understood about the relationship between biological and cultural diversity in the landscape/seascape, in particular with regard to mobility and other traditional patterns of resource use that enhance biodiversity through biological connectivity, and human livelihoods and cultures through social connectivity;

RECALLING the European Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe (Florence, 2000), which states that the "landscape has to be recognized as an essential component of people's surroundings, a powerful expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage and a foundation of their identity";

CONSIDERING that the implementation of that Convention's principles depends on effective and equitable forms of governance at the landscape/seascape level and strong links between protected area and landscape/seascape policies, and that it can promote new alliances between people and nature;
and

RECOGNIZING that such alliances are crucial in all regions of the world and in places in Europe and the Mediterranean where biodiversity depends on long and complex processes of human interactions with nature, and it can be demonstrated that landscape/seascape diversity reflects a tight intertwining of natural and cultural values;

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

1. CALLS upon IUCN members, national and regional governments and civil society at large to develop innovative governance systems and strategic programmes fostering the integration of protected areas in their landscapes/seascapes, strengthening transboundary cooperation, enhancing the

engagement of relevant communities and promoting the conservation of both biological and cultural diversity;

2. EXHORTS interested parties to adhere to the European Landscape Convention and to demonstrate its effective implementation in protected areas and their regional contexts, integrating nature conservation with effective enhancement of their landscape/seascapes;

3. URGES IUCN to play a much more active role in assisting IUCN members to draw the full benefits of the landscape/seascape approach by:

(a) clarifying and articulating what the landscape/seascape approach entails and developing/disseminating examples of relevant policies, plans, methods and tools;

(b) promoting exchanges of experience and networking about IUCN members and partners that have developed and implemented policies and practices inspired by the landscape/seascape approach;

(c) reviewing lessons learned and potential for improvement, in particular with regard to landscapes/seascapes crucial for biodiversity conservation and sustainable livelihoods;

(d) adopting a formal statement about the landscape/seascape approach, including advice on governance mechanisms that help integrate protected areas and other forms of conservation within the landscape/seascape; and

(e) advocating the approach in national and international policies, supporting transboundary cooperation and fostering the development of national and international enabling frameworks; and

4. REQUESTS the IUCN Director General to develop Secretariat capacity and specific initiatives in support of the above, in association with the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management, the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, and the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, provided the following statement for the record:

Protected areas should be established based on scientific evidence and after careful consideration regarding its necessity among all relevant sectors and stakeholders.