

RES 3.073 Conservation of medicinal plants

RECOGNIZING the fundamental importance of medicinal plants to local and traditional systems of health care, as well as to the present and future discovery and development of new medicines;

CONSCIOUS of the current and increasing importance of medicinal plants and the herbal products supply-chain to local livelihoods and national economies;

ALARMED by the present and increasing threat to medicinal plant species survival from overharvest, loss of habitat, and other threats to species and ecosystems;

RECALLING the *Chiang Mai Declaration – Saving Lives by Saving Plants* signed on 26 March 1988 by the members of the Chiang Mai International Consultation on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants, convened by IUCN, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF), which was followed in 1993 by the WHO/IUCN/WWF *Guidelines on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants*;

NOTING the efforts of the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group, established in 1994 by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), to address these threats; the relevant efforts of the joint IUCN/WWF support of the TRAFFIC programme focus on medicinal species in international trade, and the contributions of IUCN regional and species programmes to medicinal plant conservation;

FURTHER NOTING that the IUCN General Assembly/World Conservation Congress has acknowledged medicinal use as an important value of species and ecosystems in the following Resolutions and Recommendations: 15/11 *Tropical Moist Forests* (Christchurch, 1981), 19.66 *Opening of the Tapón del Darien* (Buenos Aires, 1994), 2.55 *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*, 2.63 *Illegal and/or unsustainable trade of wildlife species among and from the Mekong riparian countries*, and 2.88 *Establishment of an Ecological Corridor in the Americas* (Amman, 2000);

ACKNOWLEDGING the importance of efforts to conserve and sustainably use medicinal plants through the broader plant conservation targets identified by the *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation*, endorsed by the World Conservation Congress at its 2nd Session in Amman, October 2000 (Resolution 2.25 *Conservation of Plants*), and adopted by the 6th Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity on 19 April 2002, in The Hague (Decision VI/9);

AWARE of the need to revise and update the 1993 *Guidelines on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants* to include significant new challenges and changes in approach to conservation and sustainable use; and

WELCOMING the revision of the *Guidelines* undertaken by WHO, WWF, TRAFFIC, and IUCN in consultation with more than 600 stakeholders worldwide;

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

1. SUPPORTS the revision of the 1993 *Guidelines on the Conservation of Medicinal Plants* as a joint undertaking of WHO, WWF, TRAFFIC, and IUCN in consultation with a broad spectrum of stakeholders;
2. URGES the herbal products and pharmaceuticals industries, donors, development aid agencies, national governments, conservation and rural development NGOs, and other stakeholders, to endorse and implement the revised *Guidelines*; and
3. REQUESTS the IUCN Director General and the SSC to provide technical and scientific assistance to this process and institutional partnership, and especially to civil society and local communities,

where this is possible within funding and other constraints, in order to complete the revision, and to publish and make widely available the revised *Guidelines*.