

#### 4.121 Increasing the pace and scale of conservation in the Mediterranean Biome

RECOGNIZING that Mediterranean-type ecosystems worldwide - in the Mediterranean Basin, southern South Africa, south and southwestern Australia, southwestern United States (California) and northwestern Mexico (Baja California), and northern and central Chile - have reached a state of crisis, with a ratio of more than eight times the area of converted natural habitat to that under protection, making Mediterranean-type habitats one of the most converted and least protected natural systems on Earth;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that Mediterranean ecosystems worldwide possess extremely high endemism and diversity of species, harbouring greater than 20% of the Earth's plant species in less than 2% of its surface area forming global biological hotspots wherever they occur, as noted in Recommendation 3.102 *Conservation of Mediterranean-type ecosystems* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004);

ALSO RECOGNIZING that the value of natural Mediterranean ecosystems remains poorly recognized by key stakeholders in each region where they occur and that significant efforts are needed to assess, understand and raise awareness of the values of these habitats;

NOTING that the world's conservation leaders have gathered in the Mediterranean Basin, the largest single Mediterranean ecosystem in the world, for the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

CALLING ATTENTION TO the global Mediterranean biome assessment conducted by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and partners and its urgent and tragic results which show the degree of threat and lack of protection of Mediterranean communities worldwide, in particular in the Mediterranean Basin and Chile;

RECOGNIZING that ecologically well-managed Mediterranean systems nurture prominent cultures, societies and economies, and provide valuable services locally, nationally, regionally and globally including, among others:

- (a) agricultural crops that sustain local communities and support globally desired high-value products such as wine;
- (b) tourism of all types, including nature-based tourism;
- (c) desirable places to live and work;
- (d) water for human consumption, energy and agriculture in arid lands; and (e) native plant products that are staples in households worldwide;

CALLING attention to the dramatic negative human influences that affect, to varying degrees, each of these systems worldwide, including but not limited to:

- (a) infrastructure development;
- (b) urbanization and unplanned growth;
- (c) introduction and spread of invasive species;
- (d) environmentally damaging tourism practices;
- (e) incompatible fire management; and (f) incompatible water management, including impacts on water quality, quantity and flows;

NOTING the disproportionate impact of climate change on the plants, animals, human societies and ecosystem functions of Mediterranean systems worldwide;

RECOGNIZING that a significant and urgent increase in the pace and scale of conservation in Mediterranean regions needs to be achieved by shifting social attitudes and behaviours of natural resource management; and

CONCERNED that these commitments have failed to address adequately the rapid conversion of Mediterranean ecosystems, and that, despite the crisis status of Mediterranean ecosystems, the conservation movement has done little to advance the pace and scale of Mediterranean

conservation worldwide, such that today only 5% of Mediterranean habitat worldwide is under protection;

**The World Conservation Congress at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5-14 October 2008:**

1. CALLS ON leaders of states that harbour Mediterranean ecosystems to produce policies, targets and support mechanisms that encourage increased protection and management, and to slow conversion of Mediterranean ecosystems;
2. CALLS ON civil society and non-governmental organizations to support these endeavours to increase protection and slow conversion of Mediterranean ecosystems;
3. REQUESTS managers of Mediterranean lands and waters to approach biodiversity management and conservation in the context of larger landscapes, where varied degrees, governance and purposes of protection combine with biodiversity-sustaining land and water-use practices (such as agriculture and energy production) to create 'living landscapes' where biodiversity and ecosystem function needs are fully met and integrated with human livelihoods;
4. RECOMMENDS that IUCN's members take the following immediate actions between the 4th and 5<sup>th</sup> Sessions of the IUCN World Conservation Congress:
  - (a) identify capacity and information bottlenecks that challenge Mediterranean ecosystem conservation in each region of their world distribution;
  - (b) work together to overcome these bottlenecks through establishment and support of, and participation in, a Global Mediterranean Action Network, which supports collaboration, sharing of knowledge, and bridging of capacities for this under-addressed and at-risk habitat type;
  - (c) set targets for expanded networks of public and private protected areas integrated into surrounding working landscapes in order to reduce the crisis facing Mediterranean systems; and
  - (d) encourage the adoption of the use of different protected area categories and management designations within broader managed landscapes based on biological and social needs;
5. CALLS FOR a renewed commitment by civil society and Mediterranean biome states to work with natural resource industries in Mediterranean regions, particularly agriculture, and by municipalities to develop long-term sustainable practices that advance conservation-compatible land and water management and that encourage set-asides and private lands conservation to protect remaining priority Mediterranean habitat;
6. RECOMMENDS the establishment of a working group involving government leaders of Mediterranean biome states to facilitate cooperation and collaboration to champion protection and sustainable management of the biome;
7. URGES governments to heighten and prioritize their application of and adherence to existing policy frameworks for biological diversity conservation within their Mediterranean ecosystems, including the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Barcelona Convention and the European Union's Natura 2000 Network; and
8. REQUESTS governmental and non-governmental leaders in Mediterranean conservation to report back to IUCN members at the 5th Session of the World Conservation Congress on progress made globally and regionally in the above themes, to take stock, and to determine further steps necessary for ensuring effective conservation of Mediterranean ecosystems worldwide.

State and agency members of the 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 U.S. General Statement on the IUCN Motions Process.