

4.130 Strengthening the Natura 2000 Network

RECOGNIZING the intrinsic value for conservation of the Natura 2000 Network, defined in Article 3 of Council Directive 92/43/CEE of 21 May 1992 on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna (the 'Habitats Directive'), as "a coherent European ecological network of special areas of conservation... composed of sites hosting the natural habitat types listed in Annex I [of the Directive] and habitats of the species listed in Annex II";

RECALLING that Natura 2000 contributes to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) *Programme of Work on Protected Areas*, which the European Union and its Member States have committed to implementing fully;

RECALLING that Article 3 of the Habitats Directive also requires the habitats listed in Annexes I and II "to be maintained, or where appropriate restored to, a favourable conservation status in their natural range";

OBSERVING that neither the Habitats Directive nor Council Directive 79/409/CEE on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the 'Birds Directive') establishes any specific financial mechanism; and

TAKING into account that Article 6.3 of the Habitats Directive specifies that "Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives";

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

1. URGES the Member States of the European Union and its regions to:
 - (a) expand the coverage of the Natura 2000 Network by their respective laws, making it an integral part of the overall body of rules and regulations;
 - (b) provide tools for financing these areas, endowing them also with the necessary resources for their conservation and active management; and (c) promote the role of local stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, in the management of these areas; and
2. CALLS ON the European Union and its Member States to:
 - (a) promote the provision of buffer zones for Natura 2000 Network sites, where this can complement the existing provisions of the Habitats Directive and support the integration of the Network into the wider land- and seascape;
 - (b) promote the ecological connectivity of these areas as required by article 10 of the Habitats Directive; and
 - (c) provide access to adequate financial mechanisms for sustaining the Natura 2000 Network as well as for supporting a participatory approach for its management.

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.