

#### 4.135 Environmental impact of windbased power production in Spanish and Portuguese mountain areas

RECALLING that the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit and the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, both held in 2002, have reinforced the calls to action and definition of priority actions for sustainable development in mountain areas;

CONSIDERING that IUCN has acknowledged the importance of mountain systems through Resolution 3.038 *Conservation and Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004), which recognized that mountains provide goods and services to half the global population, and which called for sustainable use of their resources and biological diversity;

ALSO CONSIDERING Resolution 3.039 *The Mediterranean mountain partnership* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress, which recognized that in spite of its rich biodiversity, the Mediterranean biogeographic region is among those most threatened by deforestation and other land transformation processes, although mountain areas are home to the highest concentration of biodiversity and endemic species;

FURTHER CONSIDERING that Resolution 3.039 noted that many Important Bird Areas and Important Plant Areas are located in these regions, which thus host most of the existing protected areas of the Mediterranean region, and recognized that mountain landscapes result from the interaction over millennia between environmental conditions and human cultures and identities;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the European Landscape Convention (Florence, 2000) aimed at promoting landscape protection, management and land-use planning, as well as the organization of European cooperation in this field;

NOTING current developments by the wind power industry in Spanish and Portuguese mountain areas, which entail direct impacts and impacts from auxiliary infrastructure on the mountain landscapes including soil erosion, and on epiphytic and animal species, including several that are included in Annex II of the European Union 'Habitats Directive', and Annex II of the EU 'Birds Directive' as well as the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species*;

ASSUMING that the renewable character of wind power production does not exempt it from adequate location, feasibility and sustainability studies appropriate to the concerned geographical location; and

CALLING FOR due compliance with Articles 6 and 7 of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the EU 'Habitats Directive'), whereby Member States shall apply appropriate management plans, specific to the sites or integrated into other development plans, and shall avoid deterioration of natural habitats and the habitats of species, as well as disturbance of the species for which the areas have been designated;

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

1. URGES the Governments of Spain and Portugal to:
  - (a) carry out environmental impact assessments for projects having an impact on national and regional boundary areas, pursuant to the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (1991), whereby the Parties commit to take all appropriate and effective measures to prevent, reduce and control significant adverse transboundary environmental impact from proposed activities;
  - (b) avoid development of wind power production in protected mountain areas, and not to authorize the establishment of related facilities within protected areas (including those in the Natura 2000 network and those considered as relevant for potentially affected endangered species at the international, national or regional levels), and for surrounding zones, evaluate alternatives and strictly apply Article 6 of the Habitats Directive;

- (c) establish exclusion zones for wind power production facilities around the aforementioned areas, since environment and species do not recognize boundaries, and the proximity of such facilities to breeding areas such as forests or rock areas may be harmful to animal populations during periods of high vulnerability; and
- (d) develop wind power plans identifying areas where wind power production is authorized or banned on the basis of environmental considerations and not only the wind resource.

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.