

4.037 Municipal Conservation Areas

UNDERSTANDING that the concept of governance of protected areas refers to the interaction among structures, processes, and traditions that determine how power is exercised and responsibilities carried out, how decisions are made and how citizens and different social sectors participate in the management of these areas;

EMPHASIZING that the concept of good governance of protected areas is associated with fair methods, negotiation processes and the search for consensus among the plurality of actors and interested parties, which results in building better bases for societal decision making;

RECOGNIZING that the *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* approved by the 7th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (Kuala Lumpur, 2004), identified challenges related to promoting broad participation of interested parties in the management of protected areas, good-governance practices and the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits derived from conservation;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that IUCN identifies four forms of governance of protected areas: governmental, shared, private and community-based;

CONSIDERING that Municipal Conservation Areas are natural or modified spaces, marine or continental, that contain biodiversity and/or important natural resources, provide ecosystem services and/or possess cultural importance, and are established or recognized by the municipality through a legal or municipal instrument in accordance with the environmental and land-use policies and the development policies of the country concerned and of the corresponding protected area system;

NOTING that Municipal Conservation Areas are a suitable instrument for attempting to reach the goals of biodiversity conservation, socio-environmental conflict management, poverty reduction, attaining *Millennium Development Goals*, and implementing the principles of the ecosystem approach, by linking conservation efforts with local needs, conservation of water resources, environmental services, and promotion of ecotourism, among others;

RECOGNIZING that Municipal Conservation Areas contribute to efforts to decentralize and de-concentrate the management of protected area systems and to the recognition of territorial, local and ethnic autonomy; and that they arise out of municipal and civil society structures linked to natural spaces, fostering a sense of ownership and participation in those involved, including traditionally marginalized actors, such as women, youth and ethnic minorities;

NOTING that Municipal Conservation Areas are still seen as vulnerable spaces given the little recognition they receive in legislation and from national protected area systems;

AWARE of the necessity to identify training sites and to strengthen management skills, as well as to improve the development of indicators and follow-up, making possible the monitoring of experiences in this area; and

ALSO AWARE that Municipal Conservation Areas, due to their origins and conservation objectives, are closely linked to other forms of protected area governance: shared, community-based and private;

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

1. CALLS ON all countries of the world to:
 - (a) recognize the value of Municipal Conservation Areas for biodiversity conservation and their importance for increasing the effectiveness of protected area systems; and
 - (b) disseminate the lessons learned through material and exchanges relevant to this theme; and

2. REQUESTS IUCN State members, to integrate, as far as possible, Municipal Conservation Areas into their national systems of protected areas;

In addition, the World Conservation Congress, at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5-14 October 2008, provides the following guidance concerning implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012*:

3. URGES the Director General to:
 - (a) recognize the value of Municipal Conservation Areas for biodiversity conservation and their importance for increasing the effectiveness of protected area systems; and
 - (b) develop the capacity to promote and assist initiatives involving members in the creation and strengthening of Municipal Conservation Areas through technical and financial support; and
4. REQUESTS IUCN's Commissions to promote and support:
 - (a) carrying out of technical, legal and political studies in each of the regions of the world supporting Municipal Conservation Areas as effective tools for the conservation of biodiversity and promotion of local development;
 - (b) development of training sites and dissemination of materials promoting Municipal Conservation Areas;
 - (c) construction of a global data bank that would make possible the monitoring of the progress of this conservation instrument; and
 - (d) introduction of Municipal Conservation Areas into the *CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas* at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of Parties in 2010, in order to influence global policies that regulate this kind of protected area governance.

The California Institute for Public Affairs noted for the record that this Resolution was drafted in Spanish and refers to a level of government that may cover both urban and rural in many countries, although in the English language the word 'municipal' commonly refers to local government units that are mainly urban.