

#### **4.003 Strengthening IUCN's National and Regional Committees**

RECOGNIZING that IUCN's National and Regional Committees are important instruments for involving the IUCN membership in carrying out the Mission of IUCN worldwide;

RECALLING that Article 66 of the IUCN Statutes states that: "Members of IUCN within a state, a Region or a part of a Region may organize committees restricted to members of IUCN or their representatives to facilitate cooperation among members, coordination of the components of IUCN, and participation of members in the programme and governance of IUCN";

RECOGNIZING that IUCN National Committees meet regularly to consider national and international issues related to the Mission of IUCN and to undertake joint activities on these issues and provide an important conduit for member participation in the design and implementation of the IUCN Programme;

RECALLING that while Article 71(b) of the IUCN Statutes states that National and Regional Committees "shall be self-governing and shall not impose financial obligations or liabilities upon IUCN, which shall not be responsible for commitments entered into by a Committee unless these have prior authorization of the Council;", this does not bar the Director General from implementing a programme designed to strengthen the capacity of National and Regional Committees;

NOTING that during the meeting of Chairs of IUCN National and Regional Committees held in February 2006 in The Hague, the lack of resources and means for members to implement the IUCN Programme were identified as one of the principal problems confronting the Committees;

RECOGNIZING that Article 66 of the IUCN Regulations states that "Committees recognized by the Council shall:... b) be solely responsible for any funds they raise and any debts and legal obligations incurred";

RECALLING that in the 2003 *Tarragona Declaration*, ratified by the Iberoamerican Committees, the creation of a Patrimony Operating Fund to facilitate the effective operation and functioning of National Committees was instituted as a common line of work among National Committees in search of financial support;

CONCERNED by the inability of some Committees, due to lack of resources, to comply fully with their statutory obligations contained in Articles 66(f) and 66(g) of the IUCN Regulations, which stipulate that Committees must "endeavour to ensure the full participation of their members" and "cooperate with the Secretariat and the Commissions to advance the work of IUCN", and NOTING that lack of compliance has even led to some Committees becoming defunct;

OBSERVING the great potential of IUCN's membership, through its wide diversity and expertise, for making a greater impact on conservation, were cooperation with members to be strengthened;

CONVINCED of the capacity of IUCN members to implement the IUCN Programme, thus contributing to delivering the Mission of the Union and disseminating its ideas within their regions and locations;

AWARE of the potential of IUCN Committees to facilitate and coordinate members' interactions with the Union's Programme in the regions and countries in which Committees operate, thus contributing to Programme implementation in the field through the membership;

CONSIDERING that IUCN must support this function of the National and Regional Committees in order to achieve the objectives of the Union;

FURTHER CONSIDERING that IUCN National and Regional Committees generally lack the financial means to undertake the necessary activities for providing a national or regional platform for IUCN members;

CONVINCED that when IUCN National Committees obtain the necessary means to adequately perform their role as national and regional convenors of members, IUCN's Mission and Programme will be better served;

RECALLING that members of IUCN pay annual dues to IUCN;

CONSIDERING that National Committees do not receive financial support from the IUCN Secretariat; and

FURTHER RECALLING Article 68 of the IUCN Regulations that stipulates that "The Director General shall nominate a Secretariat official responsible for liaison with each Committee and shall: (a) keep the Committee informed of IUCN activities; (d) consult with the Committee about the development of IUCN initiatives in its State or Region; [and] (e) inform the Committee when IUCN has been consulted on issues of importance to the State or Region";

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

1. APPLAUDS the important contribution of National and Regional Committees to the Mission and Programme of IUCN; and
2. ENCOURAGES IUCN's members to support and finance the activities of National and Regional Committees;

**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. REQUESTS the Director General to initiate, no later than in two years, a programme to strengthen the capacity of National and Regional Committees so that they can perform their national and/or regional convening role adequately;
4. REQUESTS the Director General to develop jointly with National and Regional Committees mechanisms to support and finance more integrated and sustained participation of the National and Regional Committees in the execution of the Union's Programme; and
5. CALLS ON the Director General in consultation with IUCN's National and Regional Committees to:
  - (a) enhance coordination within membership as well as coordination with the IUCN Secretariat; and
  - (b) involve IUCN members in the implementation of the *Programme 2009-2012*, including:
    - (i) creating instruments for providing resources to the Committees, assuring their sustainability over time;
    - (ii) strengthening the institutional capabilities of the Committees;
    - (iii) reinforcing liaison between IUCN's Secretariat, the Commissions and the National and Regional Committees and therefore with the members, keeping them informed of its activities and initiatives within their territorial ranges; and
    - (iv) establishing greater cooperation between IUCN's Secretariat, the Commissions, the National and Regional Committees and the membership.

State member Switzerland abstained during the vote on this motion. The Swiss Federal Office for the Environment provided the following statement for the record during the 11th Plenary Session:

*Taking into account the large number of motions, which is growing steadily from one Congress to the next and the difficulties in implementing a certain number of motions; and noting that several interventions are heading in the direction of better governance concerning motions; the Swiss delegation recommends that Council deals with this matter at three levels: 1. Find a mechanism to ensure that motions are truly operational, that they correspond to the general thrust of the programme and available finances; 2. Improve the voting system by introducing a rule that a motion is only accepted if more than 50% of the votes cast are in favour in the two categories of membership (States and NGOs). The votes cast to which we refer include abstentions. 3. Set up monitoring of implementation of the various motions that is regularly*

*updated and transparent, in line with Motion 128 [editorial note: now Resolution 4.010] already adopted.*

State and agency members of the United States abstained during the vote on this motion.