

#### 4.044 Actions to conserve the Pampas and Campos of South America

BEARING in mind that the grasslands of the Rio de la Plata, formed by the plains and open lands of Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil, make up one of the largest temperate grassland regions in the world, with an area of nearly 750,000 square kilometres;

CONSIDERING that the biodiversity of these grasslands is very high, with thousands of species of vascular plants of diverse origin, including more than 550 grasses, that these areas are inhabited by between 450 and 500 species of birds - of which at least 60 are considered to be grassland-only species - and nearly 100 land mammals, one of which is the Pampas deer *Ozotoceros bezoarticus*, a species with emblematic status in the region and in serious danger of extinction;

AWARE that grassland systems provide a wide range of environmental goods and services, which, apart from the customary supply of meat, milk, wool and hides produced by pastoral systems, include aspects such as the role of grasslands in maintaining the gas composition of the atmosphere through CO<sub>2</sub> capture, their role in controlling soil erosion, and as a source of genetic material for large numbers of plant and animal species that today form the basis of the world's food supply;

NOTING that, due to the importance of the region as one of the world's principal areas for agricultural production, the grassland areas there have been shrinking in the last few decades at the rate of 1% per year, and in some places are being given over entirely to other uses (agriculture or forestation) at a rate of 10% per year;

RECALLING that the IIIrd IUCN World Parks Congress (Bali, 1982) established that, to be satisfactorily protected, a biome must have at least 10% of its area under protection;

RECOGNIZING that, despite these important characteristics and functions, temperate grasslands are one of the least protected types of biomes globally - barely 4.59% of their area is protected - and that this situation is even worse in the grassland region of Rio de la Plata: Argentina, 1.2%; Uruguay, 0.21%; Brazil, 2.23%; and

AWARE of the need to boost the most recent activities and achievements obtained through the efforts of the following programmes and initiatives:

- (a) identification of Valuable Grassland Areas in the Plains and Open Lands of Argentina, Uruguay and southern Brazil (Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina);
- (b) Important Bird Areas for the Conservation of Birds in Argentina, Priority Sites for Biodiversity Conservation (Aves Argentinas);
- (c) the initiative 'Alianzas del Pastizal' for the conservation of grasslands in the southern cone of South America (BirdLife International, Aves Argentinas, Aves Uruguay, Save Brazil, Guyra Paraguay);
- (d) Priority Areas for Conservation, Sustainable Use and Distribution of Benefits of Biodiversity of Brazil: Update (Ministry of the Environment, Department of Biodiversity and Forests); and
- (e) Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative (Grasslands Protected Areas Task Force, IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas);

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

1. CALLS ON the Governments of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to:
  - (a) intensify their efforts to designate more protected areas in the temperate grasslands of the plains and open lands of South America, in order to extend the area protected to 10%; and
  - (b) develop and promote natural grassland utilization and management practices that aim to establish agroecological systems capable of providing and sustaining the diverse environmental services and wildlife of the temperate grasslands of the plains and open lands of South America;

2. URGES the relevant agencies of the Governments of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay to:
  - (a) develop integrated management and conservation policies, particularly for species under threat in the temperate grasslands of the plains and open lands of South America; and
  - (b) include in their agendas the development of actions for the conservation and sustainable use of natural grasslands and to raise public awareness of their importance;
3. ASKS international funding bodies to increase support for initiatives seeking to preserve the temperate grasslands of the plains and open lands of South America, in keeping with the regional priorities determined by member governments; and
4. URGES interested non-governmental organizations to take cognizance of the need to preserve the temperate grasslands of the plains and open lands of South America, and to promote an understanding of their role in sustaining a range of environmental services upon which society depends;

**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:**

5. ASKS the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) to assist State members seeking advice in drafting appropriate environmental laws.

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.