

4.045 Accelerating progress to establish marine protected areas and creating marine protected area networks

AWARE of the mounting pressures being suffered by marine ecosystems, nearly all of which are threatened by anthropogenic activities;

ALARMED by the two-fold increase every ten years since 1963 of marine 'dead zones';

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that analyses conducted by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have established that 25% of fish stocks are overexploited and 50% are fully exploited, and that there is a subsequent risk of the disappearance of commercial species and the collapse of fish resources while hundreds of millions of people depend upon fish products for their livelihoods;

RECALLING several IUCN resolutions and recommendations which, since 1963, have exhorted states to create marine protected areas, and in particular Recommendation 17.38 *Protection of the coastal and marine environment* adopted by the 17th IUCN General Assembly (San José, 1988) and Resolution 1.37 *Marine Protected Areas* adopted by the 1st IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996), which urged coastal states to quickly establish national systems of representative Marine Protected Areas (MPAs), in cooperation with local communities and resource users, and to set a percentage target for such representation where this would be useful and appropriate;

FURTHER RECALLING Recommendation IV.11 *Marine protected areas* of the IVth IUCN World Parks Congress (Caracas, 1992) and Recommendations V.22 *Building a Global System of Marine and Coastal Protected Area Networks* and V.23 *Protecting Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Processes through Marine Protected Areas beyond National Jurisdiction* noted by the Vth IUCN World Parks Congress (Durban, 2003) which highlighted the importance of integrating MPAs with terrestrial and marine landscapes and called on the international community to establish by 2012 a global system of effectively managed, representative networks of marine and coastal protected areas, consistent with international law and based on scientific information, that greatly increases the marine and coastal area managed in MPAs; is designed to be resilient, particularly in the face of large-scale threats linked to global change; and builds the best available science on connectivity into marine and coastal protected area network design, in order to create networks that are ecologically coherent;

RECALLING that in the *Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development* (Johannesburg, 2002), paragraph 32(c) called for the establishment of MPAs consistent with international law and based on scientific information, including representative networks by 2012;

NOTING that Decision VII/5 on marine and coastal biological diversity adopted by the 7th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP7, Kuala Lumpur, 2004) established that the goal for CBD work relating to marine and coastal protected areas should be the establishment and maintenance of marine and coastal protected areas that are effectively managed, ecologically based and contribute to a global network of marine and coastal protected areas;

FURTHER NOTING that Decision VII/28 of CBD COP7 (Kuala Lumpur, 2004) reaffirmed that effectively managed MPAs are one of the tools essential to ensuring the conservation and sustainable management of marine and coastal biodiversity, and laid out a *Programme of Work on Protected Areas*, with the objective of establishing and maintaining by 2012 for marine areas comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas;

FURTHER NOTING that paragraph 22 of the same decision VII/28 "recalls the obligations of parties towards indigenous and local communities in accordance with article 8(j) and related provisions and notes that the establishment, management and monitoring of protected areas should take place with the full and effective participation of, and full respect for the rights of, indigenous and local communities consistent with national law and applicable international obligations";

WELCOMING the efforts and commitments by many governments and civil societies to significantly and urgently increase the coverage and effectiveness of MPA networks within their jurisdiction;

FURTHER WELCOMING extensions of existing protected coastal areas to connect to adjacent marine zones;

CONCERNED that, despite these commitments, as of the end of 2006, only 0.65% of the area of the seas and oceans and 1.6% of the area within exclusive economic zones worldwide is covered by MPAs, with the lowest levels of protection occurring in temperate and polar areas, and that average annual increases remain at less than 5% per year, according to the MPA Global Database;

RECOGNIZING that there is a need for better reporting and accurate tracking of progress and better mapping of MPA achievements, as well as a scaling-up of efforts towards achieving the global MPA targets; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING the difficulties posed by the increasing costs of effectively managing MPAs;

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

1. INVITES the United Nations to declare an International Year of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems to highlight the importance of the world's oceans and coasts to human well-being and to ensure that the systematic creation and effective management of MPAs receives strong support;
2. CALLS ON the CBD Secretariat, together with partners, to expand technical support, training, and the development of tools and resources to assist Parties to the Convention to accelerate their efforts to create and improve the effectiveness of MPAs and MPA networks;
3. INVITES the conveners of the 2nd International Marine Protected Area Congress in 2009, and of CBD COP10 in 2010, to include in their deliberations a comprehensive report on progress toward the goal of creating MPA networks by 2012;
4. CALLS ON states to:
 - (a) accelerate their efforts to increase the establishment of MPAs and to create, by 2012, a global and effectively managed system of marine and coastal protected areas in accordance with the goals set by the WSSD and CBD;
 - (b) recognize the need to improve the management effectiveness of existing and future MPAs to increase marine resilience in the face of climate change and ocean acidification;
 - (c) define MPA systems based on a diversity of complementary tools which allow the combination of highly protected areas with managed multiple use areas;
 - (d) promote the creation of effectively managed MPAs beyond national jurisdictions, in accordance with international law;
 - (e) increase integration of MPAs within other policies for the governance and management of marine, coastal and terrestrial areas in accordance with integrated watershed management practices; and
 - (f) increase cooperation amongst those that are signatories to the CBD, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to ensure the harmonization of methods and tools to assist the Parties in fulfilling their responsibilities for the creation and management of networks of coastal and MPAs;
5. RECOMMENDS that governments, donors and other development agencies undertake systematic analyses of the effects and impacts of marine and coastal protected areas in the context of sustainable development and management of natural resources, and to undertake in particular, economic and sociological evaluations, in order to increase

understanding of the contribution of such areas to sustainable development, especially poverty alleviation;

6. URGES policy makers to improve the legal framework that embraces the concept of MPAs in their respective national laws;
7. URGES international financial institutions to increase and expedite their support for initiatives aimed at establishing MPAs, as well as at implementing management plans for these areas; and
8. CALLS ON civil society, regional organizations, and bilateral and multilateral assistance agencies, to support the commitments of governments to create and improve the effectiveness of MPAs and MPA networks;

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*:

9. REQUESTS the Director General to;
 - (a) increase efforts to support the commitments of governments and other IUCN members to create and improve the effectiveness of MPAs and MPA networks through the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012* and through the work of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), including an increase in funding allocated towards addressing the 2012 targets for MPAs and MPA networks;
 - (b) establish, in consultation with WCPA and working with the World Database on Protected Areas and others, a regular and transparent process for tracking and reporting commitments and progress toward creating MPAs and MPA networks, as well as significant remaining gaps in MPA coverage; and
 - (c) report to the 5th IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2012 on the extent to which the goal of creating MPA networks has been achieved; and
10. REQUESTS the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) to assist those State members requesting advice in developing regulations that recognize MPAs.