

4.046 Artisanal fishing organizations active in the sustainable management of the Mediterranean

OBSERVING that the Mediterranean Sea is one of the areas of the world with the highest biodiversity and that it is home to unique endemism and ecosystems, which form part of the natural heritage of the countries in the Mediterranean Basin;

ALSO OBSERVING that for years now, the Mediterranean Sea and its marine resources have been suffering from severe degradation (overexploitation, pollution, changes in the coastline, etc.), bringing it near to the point of collapse, and that its biodiversity has decreased dramatically over the last few years;

OBSERVING that the Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Basin are totally insufficient, since they only represent 1% of the protected zone, and do not guarantee the long-term conservation of marine biodiversity or the sustainable use of natural resources;

RECOGNIZING that 80% of the Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean have no management plans or are inadequate to protect marine ecosystems properly and, moreover, have not been implemented with the participation of users;

HIGHLIGHTING the anthropological and social importance of the artisanal fishing sector for the communities in the Mediterranean Basin and the crisis that the sector is experiencing due to overexploitation, the high price of oil, the deterioration in the sector's social image and the decrease in generational succession;

FURTHER HIGHLIGHTING the fact that artisanal fishermen, as some of the main users of the sea, represent key organizations that have an essential role to play in ensuring the conservation of the marine biodiversity of the Mediterranean;

OBSERVING that, over the years, the artisanal fishing sector has generated very extensive traditional ecological knowledge, transmitted from one generation to the next, which complements scientific knowledge and is in danger of being lost due to the crisis in the sector;

ALSO OBSERVING that the disappearance of traditional ecological knowledge would entail a loss of opportunity to improve the quality of scientific knowledge about ecosystem functioning and biodiversity;

WARNING that the lack of participation by artisanal fishermen in fishery resources management models jeopardizes the future of conservation;

RECALLING Resolution 3.052 *Protected areas in the Mediterranean* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004);

RECOGNIZING the work carried out by IUCN through the Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation in the establishment of cooperation and programme exchanges in the Mediterranean region; and

ALSO RECOGNIZING the work carried out by the Network of Artisanal Fishing Communities for Sustainable Development (RECOPADES) and by the Lonxanet Foundation, in recognition and defence of the social, cultural, economic and environmental rights of the men and women in fishing communities;

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

1. URGES Mediterranean countries to:
 - (a) coordinate actions to facilitate the culture of change within the fishing sector, promoting sustainable development, the importance of Marine Protected Areas and following a participative philosophy and methodology;
 - (b) recognize the value of the artisanal fishing sector's traditional ecological knowledge, and to generate mechanisms and alliances that will allow this to be transferred and systematized for the scientific community and the rest of society;

- (c) encourage Mediterranean artisanal fishing organizations to play an active role in making decisions on the design and implementation of Marine Protected Areas, on the sustainable management of marine resources and, in short, to lead the movement for the conservation of marine biodiversity; and
- (d) increase the tools for training artisanal fishing organizations to carry out this management, and to facilitate the technical support and advice on various issues provided by strategic partnerships of scientific institutions and NGOs;

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:

2. URGES the Director General to cooperate with Mediterranean countries in carrying out the actions called for in sub-paragraphs 1(a) to (d) above.

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.