

4.068 Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD)

RECALLING Recommendation 18.23 *Land Degradation* and Recommendation 18.30 *Legal Instruments for the Conservation of Forests* adopted by the 18th IUCN General Assembly (Perth, 1990); Resolution 1.55 *Indigenous Peoples and Forests* adopted by the 1st IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996); Recommendation 2.94 *Climate change mitigation and land use* adopted by the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000); Resolution 3.012 *Governance of natural resources for conservation and sustainable development*, Resolution 3.015 *Conserving nature and reducing poverty by linking human rights and the environment* and Resolution 3.057 *Adapting to climate change: a framework for conservation action* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004);

HIGHLIGHTING that the Mission of IUCN is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable;

RESPONDING to the findings of the *Fourth Assessment Report* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that warming of the climate system due to human activity is unequivocal and that immediate and deep cuts in global emissions are required to avoid dangerous climate change;

RECOGNIZING that land-use change in the tropics, principally deforestation, accounts for around one-fifth of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and that in many countries forest degradation often precedes deforestation;

ALSO RECOGNIZING that biodiverse ecosystems, particularly forests, have a crucial role to play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate impacts and that natural ecosystems are suffering directly from the impacts of climate change and also from the perverse impacts of measures which are supposed to tackle climate change, for example clearing natural vegetation to plant agrofuel crops;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Earth's remaining natural ecosystems are essential to regulate the climate and keep the planet habitable and that extensive, natural forests are especially valuable as stable, resilient, very large carbon stores, which must be protected and restored;

NOTING the *Bali Action Plan* and in particular Decision 2/CP.13 *Reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries: approaches to stimulate actions*, adopted by the 13th Meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP13) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and 3rd Meeting of the Parties (CMP3) to the Kyoto Protocol (Bali, December 2007);

FURTHER NOTING that COP13 and CMP3 agreed to invite Parties and relevant organizations and stakeholders to explore options including demonstration activities that address Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) in developing countries, based on the sustainable management of forests;

ALSO RESPONDING to the recommendations of the 9th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP9) establishing an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change to develop scientific and technical advice on biodiversity in so far as it relates to climate change and Decision 1/CP.13 *Bali Action Plan* of UNFCCC COP13 as well as the UNFCCC *Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change* so as to support the enhanced implementation of synergies between the CBD and UNFCCC;

RECOGNIZING that forest protection and good forest governance, equitable participation and sustainable forest management are crucial for REDD;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that there are unavoidable changes in climate and therefore adaptation and resilience strategies are essential for the conservation and sustainable management of forests;

RECOGNIZING that forest destruction through clearing and industrial-scale logging, the degradation and desertification of shrublands and grasslands, and industrial-scale agrofuel

production (including tree crops grown to produce energy) are all contributing to climate change and that emissions from clearing and degradation of other natural ecosystems add to this;

RECOGNIZING that mechanisms are needed to prevent reforestation for biofuels or carbon reservoirs replacing valuable ecosystems including shrublands and tussock grasslands which in themselves are carbon reservoirs;

AWARE of the new and economic opportunities offered by the creation of a carbon market resulting from binding agreements and incentives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and of the potential extension of these economic opportunities to REDD activities;

BEARING IN MIND that a properly designed and appropriately regulated climate change mitigation funding mechanism for REDD might provide new sources of funding for biodiversity conservation, contribute to the maintenance of ecosystem functions and promote rural development;

CONSIDERING, however, that in the absence of effective design and regulations, such an incentive system can have perverse effects such as an increase in deforestation and forest degradation at other sites (so-called 'leakage'), and social marginalization from resource capture by privileged and powerful actors, possibly resulting in the net impoverishment of forest-dependent, vulnerable communities;

INFORMED that the carbon market, in its current architecture, has failed to address adequately the concerns listed above, and that some perverse effects are already observed on the ground in Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF - see the *Marrakech Accords* of the UNFCCC) projects financed by the unregulated, voluntary carbon market;

ALSO INFORMED that the architecture and rules presently discussed concerning the REDD modality risk the replication and extension of these perverse effects, causing serious and justified concerns among indigenous peoples and local communities living within and around forests;

FURTHER INFORMED that indigenous peoples and local communities are actively mobilizing for the recognition of their land and resource-use rights and some have expressed serious reservations about market-based REDD mechanisms; and

WELCOMING the work the IUCN Secretariat has initiated in collaboration with several members and partners to optimize synergies between poverty reduction, forestsector reform processes such as Forest Law Enforcement and Governance (FLEG) and 'readiness mechanisms' designed to help countries prepare for REDD;

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

1. URGES all IUCN members and all Parties to the UNFCCC to:
 - (a) include REDD within a post-2012 climate policy regime as a fully integrated companion mechanism aligned with, and contingent on, deep reductions of carbon emissions from the use of fossil fuels with the ultimate objective of rapidly stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide (CO₂);
 - (b) ensure that REDD initiatives are designed strategically to align with, complement and reinforce established national priorities, including poverty reduction strategies, national biodiversity action plans, sustainable forest management efforts and forest governance reform processes; and
 - (c) ensure that national and sub-national initiatives for REDD:
 - (i) include substantial incentives for reducing and reversing forest degradation;
 - (ii) include ecosystem approaches such as forest landscape restoration (FLR) that promote sustainable and multifunctional land use, resilience to climate change and the integrity of indigenous communities;
 - (iii) recognize both the local and global values of biodiversity;
 - (iv) ensure equitable participation of local forest dependent communities and indigenous peoples with particular emphasis on securing rights,

land tenure, livelihood benefits and poverty reduction, and the provision of substantial incentives for reducing and reversing deforestation and the degradation of indigenous ecosystems, especially forest ecosystems;

- (v) build resilience, enhance adaptive capacity and are integrated into broader national adaptation strategies;
- (vi) ensure equitable sharing of benefits and costs between agencies of government and forest communities, and within forest communities; and
- (vii) apply effective social safeguards to protect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities including relevant provisions of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*;

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 and REQUESTS the Director General to:

- (a) support the integration of REDD policies and strategies into national and sub-national poverty reduction efforts, national biodiversity action plans, forest protection, sustainable forest management initiatives and forest governance-reform processes;
- (b) facilitate partnerships among relevant parties, organizations and stakeholders in order to build consensus, generate synergies and strengthen capacity for REDD;
- (c) support pilot programmes for REDD that take into account national and regional circumstances and directly contribute to poverty reduction, biodiversity conservation, forest protection, sustainable forest management and improved forest governance;
- (d) develop and promote best-practice principles and operational tools for the equitable sharing of costs and benefits from REDD; and
- (e) in consultation with the Chairs of IUCN's Commissions, position the Union at the forefront of international institutions seeking to ensure that initiatives providing incentives for REDD are carried out with full social safeguards to protect the interests and rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, with particular attention to more vulnerable groups and specific reference to the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*;

3. REQUESTS the Director General to:

- (a) support the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group established at the CBD COP9 with a view to maximizing the synergies between biodiversity, REDD and LULUCF; and as an input to negotiations at UNFCCC COP14 in Poland (December 2008) and UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen (November/December 2009);
- (b) prepare a report in close consultation with IUCN Commissions (in particular the joint CEESP and WCPA Theme, TILCEPA), IUCN's members and representatives of concerned indigenous peoples and local communities, assessing the relative advantages and disadvantages, opportunities and risks of different REDD financing mechanisms, and investigating ways to ensure effective social and biodiversity safeguards, for presentation to the IUCN Council at its second meeting in 2009;
- (c) request the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) and the IUCN Environmental Law Centre (ELC) to develop a proposal for a legal instrument linking the CBD and the UNFCCC to ensure that climate solutions negotiated under the UNFCCC optimize biodiversity outcomes through ecosystem-based approaches to climate mitigation and adaptation and result in no adverse impacts on biodiversity and present the proposal at the relevant meetings of the CBD and the UNFCCC; and

- (d) urge IUCN members to support the relevant CBD decisions, as well as all recommendations from deliberations from the CBD Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group, and ensure that they are reflected in the UNFCCC REDD decisions and processes. IUCN should facilitate communication on the outcomes of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group State Parties of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), and ensure that this work reflects the work already done on identifying forest areas of high conservation value, which should be protected under REDD mechanisms; and
4. URGES the Director General and Chairs of IUCN's Commissions to harness the knowledge and skills of IUCN members, Commission members and the Secretariat to actively pursue policies and mechanisms to:
- (a) secure the land and resource rights of indigenous peoples and local communities that historically held use rights on the land where the carbon is stored;
 - (b) ensure their free, prior and informed consent to any initiatives providing incentives for REDD on their land and/or that affect their rights; and
 - (c) ensure that they receive an equitable share of benefits arising from REDD (reflecting their traditional role in conserving forests) and that such benefits are equitably distributed within communities.

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.