

4.081 Equitable access to energy

NOTING that access to reliable and sustainable sources of energy underpins human development;

FURTHER NOTING that the current energy mix contributes significantly to biodiversity loss, pollution of the Earth's air and water and is the primary cause of climate change, which threatens the future of the Earth's environment;

AWARE that *Agenda 21* of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992) called upon all nations to promote sustainable development utilizing the precautionary principle; that the 9th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-9, New York, 2001) called on all nations to promote clean energy policies; that the *Plan of Implementation* adopted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD, Johannesburg, 2002) contained specific prescriptions for implementing those policies, and that the *Chairman's Summary* of the 15th Session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15, New York, 2007) highlighted the role of energy as crucial for sustainable development, poverty eradication and achieving internationally agreed development goals, and noted it is generally acknowledged that access to reliable, affordable, economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sound energy services is crucial, particularly for developing countries;

UNDERSTANDING that there is a need to further diversify the energy supply by developing advanced, cleaner, healthy, more efficient, reliable, affordable, socially acceptable, environmentally sound, cost-effective and economically viable energy technologies;

FURTHER UNDERSTANDING that decentralized systems of energy production and distribution are more appropriate for increasing equitable access to sustainable energy alternatives on the basis that they are generally less harmful to the environment than large infrastructurebased centralized systems, and require lower levels of capital investment and thus are more economically viable for cash-poor communities;

CONCERNED at the slow pace with which national governments, the private sector and civil society are moving towards creating equitable access to such a sustainable energy future;

RECALLING that the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004) adopted Recommendation 3.086 *Coordination of sustainable development programmes for energy* recognizing the importance of energy to IUCN's Mission and Resolution 3.059 *IUCN's energy-related work relevant to Biodiversity Conservation*; that the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000) adopted Resolution 2.17 *Climate and energy* which requests the IUCN Director General to "request IUCN regional offices [...] to help educate government officials, civil society and the private sector about the World Energy Assessment and about cleaner, more affordable available energy options evaluated therein";

WELCOMING the work currently undertaken by IUCN to accelerate transition to energy systems that are ecologically sustainable, socially equitable and economically efficient;

NOTING the inclusion of energy in the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012*; and

THANKING the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) and its Energy Law and Climate Change Specialist Group for their leadership since the 1st IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996) in relation to the Union's technical advice on energy policy and law;

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

1. REQUESTS IUCN's members to inform national and sub-national level policy and investment decisions for increasing access to energy by:
 - (a) identifying the social, economic and ecological implications of rural and urban energy options available to poor communities;

- (b) understanding and communicating the importance of ecosystem services to the viability of energy alternatives under consideration by national and local governments; and
 - (c) developing and promoting practices, including guidelines, assessments and payments for ecosystem services, which ensure the maintenance of ecosystem services which underpin energy systems;
2. RECOMMENDS that governments pursuing agendas to increase equitable access to energy give preference to decentralized systems of production and distribution;
 3. INVITES all IUCN members, within their mandates, to work with the IUCN Director General in the implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012*, particularly with respect to energy issues; and
 4. URGES all stakeholders and donors to give every consideration to providing the support necessary to enable the development and implementation of ecologically sustainable, socially equitable and economically efficient energy systems;

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. CALLS ON the Director General to provide leadership in advancing equitable access to ecologically sustainable, socially equitable and economically efficient energy systems, as a necessary part of the biodiversity conservation and social equity objectives of the Union; and
6. INVITES all IUCN Commissions to work with the IUCN Director General in the implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012*, particularly with respect to energy issues.

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