

#### 4.091 Strategic environmental assessment of public policies, plans and programmes as an instrument for conserving biodiversity

CONSIDERING that, in most countries, public policies are the driving forces due to their scope (thematic, geographical and temporal) and their economic resources, and that they result in effective decisions, with long-term effects on biodiversity;

AWARE that, although essential, classical conservation policies that create networks of protected areas and species protection policies, are insufficient to curb the current rate of biodiversity loss;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the current prevailing economic model, based on the growing consumption of natural resources (which already exceeds the carrying capacity of many ecosystems), and that the impact of economic and sectoral policies - including urban development, infrastructure creation, energy, agricultural, industrial and fishing policies - affects biodiversity;

AWARE that strategic environmental assessment helps integrate planning and decision-making processes within the framework of sustainable development, and that IUCN works in a sustainable development paradigm;

KNOWING the operative and economic advantages of the implementation of strategic environmental assessment in public policies by using the precautionary principle in strategic phases and by mitigating accumulative and synergetic environmental impacts, as well as facilitating public participation in the selection of alternative forms of development, and therefore of ecosystem management;

AWARE that in European Union Member States the application of Directive 2001/42/EC - on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment - to public policies is not obligatory, and that many countries have adopted this Directive in a minimalist fashion and have therefore distorted its capacity to influence the strategic levels of decision making; and

UNDERSTANDING that in the context of the *IUCN Programme 2009-2012* the correct incorporation of biodiversity conservation in the environmental assessment of public policies will contribute decisively to the achievement of Global Result 5.1 *Economic, trade and investment policies better integrate biodiversity values*, and will also have an influence on the correct application of Thematic Programme Area 4 *Managing ecosystems for human well-being*;

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

1. URGES IUCN's state and government agency members to incorporate effectively the strategic environmental assessment of their public policies, beyond application to plans and programmes, and incorporating biodiversity conservation as a basic, guaranteed objective;

**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. REQUESTS the Director General to promote through the *Core Programme Area: Conserving Biodiversity* strategic environmental assessment of public policies, as a driving force that can have significant impact on and importance for biodiversity conservation.

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