

WCC-2012-Rec-151-EN

Safeguarding Madagascar's unique and highly threatened natural heritage

RECALLING the objectives of IUCN "to influence, assist and encourage societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecological sustainable";

DRIVEN by the commitment of the international community to Aichi Target 12 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, which states, "By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained";

NOTING that a large proportion of Madagascar's endemic biodiversity is part of, or depends on, forest ecosystems for its survival;

EMPHASIZING that human survival in Madagascar will ultimately also depend on the continued presence of forests and their ability to provide essential ecosystem services;

AWARE that only about 16% of Madagascar's land area is still forested, that we have lost more than 1,000,000 ha of forest in just the 15 years between 1990 and 2005, and that the remaining 94,000 km² of forest are being lost at a rate of approximately 500 km² per year;

ENCOURAGED by a decline in deforestation rates in Madagascar from 0.83% between 1990 and 2000 to 0.53% between 2000 and 2005, and to 0.12% inside protected areas;

CONCERNED, however, about the current almost complete lack of enforcement of environmental law in Madagascar, compounded by the suspension and/or withdrawal of donor aid for environmental projects by most of the largest multilateral and bilateral funders, such as the USAID and the European Union (EU), in response to the political events of March 2009;

DEEPLY CONCERNED about the extremely high rates of illegal selective logging of Madagascar's rosewood and ebony trees in 2009 and 2010, about the ongoing illegal logging of precious hardwoods, about illegal artisanal mining inside protected areas and unsustainable rates of hunting of larger vertebrate species, particularly of the larger lemurs;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the Transitional Government, in March 2010, reinstated the ban on Rosewood logging and exports for two to five years (decree number 2010-141);

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the Transitional Government, in August 2011, renewed its commitment to combat the illegal exploitation of the country's forests by prohibiting the harvest, exploitation, transport and sale of rosewood and ebony, demanding registration of existing stocks within 30 days, invalidating any export permits, and strengthening penalties for illegal possession of such woods (ordinance No. 2011-001);

ENCOURAGED by the fact that five species of rosewood and 104 species of ebony native to Madagascar were recently added to Appendix III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) at the request of the Transitional Government; and

FURTHER ENCOURAGED by the decision of the World Bank, in June 2011, to grant an exceptional additional financing to Madagascar to support the *Programme Environnemental III* "due to its global public good nature, and the substantial risks associated to social safeguards linked to the end of the [previous] funding";

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Jeju, Republic of Korea, 6–15 September 2012:

1. URGES the Government of Madagascar (or, in the interim, the Transitional Government) to:
 - a. continue to implement the ban on rosewood and ebony logging and export that it decreed in March 2010;
 - b. make every possible effort to enforce Madagascar's environmental laws, and not to tolerate illegal exploitation of its forests and of the species depending on them;
 - c. increase the protection of the country's natural heritage, and in particular of its protected areas, by ensuring that the Ministry of the Environment and Forests is given the financial resources and support it needs to effectively combat such illegal exploitation;
 - d. develop, with help from IUCN and its Commissions, an innovative approach to ensure the sustainable use of the country's forest resources that benefits human communities local to those resources and prevents extinction of the harvested species and of any species depending on them; and
 - e. manage the harvest of forest resources in a way that provides incentives for their conservation;

2. CALLS ON all providers of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Government of Madagascar (or, in the interim, the Transitional Government), including governments, multilateral institutions and charities, to:
 - a. continue, or immediately resume, funding Madagascar's environmental sector through projects implemented by civil society organizations;
 - b. increase levels of technical and financial support for environmental protection, and in particular for the protection of forests and species depending on them;
 - c. combine support for environmental protection with support for good governance initiatives in order to advance development of stable institutions that can ensure long-term effectiveness of conservation and sustainable use of its wildlife and natural resources; and
 - d. recognize that the environmental sector is a critical underpinning of humanitarian assistance and not a separate unrelated activity; and

3. REQUESTS the Director General and the IUCN Commissions to:
 - a. provide technical support to the Government of Madagascar (or, in the interim, the Transitional Government) on:
 - i. developing a system of sustainable use of the country's forest resources;
 - ii. managing the sustainable harvest of those resources in a way that provides incentives for their conservation;

- iii. developing a system for identification and labelling legally harvested timber, such as the EU's FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade) programme; and
 - iv. identifying sustainable rates of permitted hunting for the main vertebrate species harvested for subsistence consumption;
- b. communicate the urgency of solving the current environmental crisis in Madagascar to global decision makers, to all IUCN Members, and to the public at large;
 - c. form a national working group of members of the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), which can facilitate technical assistance to the Government and monitor and evaluate the measures taken to solve the crisis; and
 - d. convene a joint working group on Madagascar consisting of members of SSC, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), and the World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL) that will support the Secretariat in the implementation of the measures outlined above.

State and agency Members of the United States abstained during the vote on this Motion for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process.