

WCC-2012-Rec-152-EN

Enlarging and connecting transboundary protected areas for the Ecological Corridor of Northeast Asia

RECALLING Recommendation 1.38 *Ecological Networks and Corridors of Natural and Semi-Natural Areas* adopted by the 1st IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996) and Resolution 4.035 *Strengthening IUCN's work on protected areas* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

EMPHASIZING the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB) *Programme of Work on Protected Areas* Goal 1.2 "By 2015, all protected areas and protected area systems are integrated into the wider land- and seascape, and relevant sectors, by applying the ecosystem approach and taking into account ecological connectivity/and the concept, where appropriate, of ecological networks." (Kuala Lumpur, 2004);

ACKNOWLEDGING the efforts of other regions on networking protected areas and establishing ecological corridors, such as ECONNECT, Pan-European Ecological Network, European Alps to the Mediterranean, Cantabrian Range to Western Alps Corridor, Natura 2000 network, and the Tri-national Mont Blanc Massif in Europe; Yellowstone to Yukon Connectivity Corridor in North America; the Terai Arc in Nepal and India; the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and the Vilacamba-Amboró in South America; Greater Virunga Landscape, Maloti Drakensberg Transfrontier in Africa and many others;

REALIZING that although Northeast Asian countries have strived to protect their own ecosystems such as Baekdudaegan protected area in the Republic of Korea (ROK), Mount Paektusan Biosphere Reserve in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Changbaishan protected area in China and Sikhote-Alin protected area in Russia, many flora and fauna in Northeast Asia have become extinct and/or endangered regionally and globally, their habitats also being in danger of degradation;

UNDERSTANDING that there is a lack of comprehensive coordinated research on regional ecosystems of Northeast Asia that includes ROK, DPRK, China and Russia;

CONSIDERING that building governance for the ecological corridor among neighbouring countries, such as connecting Baekdudaegan protected area from the southern end to the northern end of ROK by the Korean Ministry of Environment and Korean Forest Service, protecting transboundary areas between China and Russia such as the Lower Tumen River Area by the United Nations North East Asian Sub-regional Programme for Environmental Cooperation (NEASPEC), have the limitation of being able to extend to the entire reach of Northeast Asia's protected areas;

REFLECTING on the fact that Northeast Asian countries have displayed the least cross-border cooperation for environmental conservation due to political tension, and IUCN has limited experience of working in this region which needs more support and focus at the international level to conserve the environment;

RECOGNIZING the need for comprehensive protection of the precious and threatened natural and cultural heritage of the Northeast Asian countries, with respect to rapid destruction of ecosystems, and the importance of international cooperation in enlarging and connecting protected areas that transcend national borders in the context of climate change, biodiversity conservation and maintaining global peace; and

HIGHLIGHTING that IUCN's new conservation paradigm of resilience (Nature+ theme of the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Jeju 2012) should encompass environmental

approaches more than the stewardship of nature so as to contribute to mitigating national conflicts;

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

1. URGES the Governments of ROK, DPRK, China and Russia as well as NGOs of the countries concerned to recognize the Ecological Corridor of Northeast Asia: the linking up of Baekdudaegan protected area, Tumen river basin and Sikhote-Alin Mountains;
2. ENCOURAGES relevant regional and local agencies to promote action plans for the conservation and improvement of biological richness and cultural diversity in Northeast Asia;
3. REQUESTS the Director General, the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), in collaboration with international organizations and other stakeholders, to promote the abovementioned Ecological Corridor in Northeast Asia, putting global attention on the need for expanding and linking protected areas in Northeast Asia; and
4. CALLS UPON the Director General, WCPA and SSC to:
 - a. support research plans to build long-term linkup methodologies for the conservation of isolated DPRK ecosystems by creating the grounds for its cooperation and participation; and
 - b. provide regular exchange of academic outcomes among IUCN Members and partners, governments and NGOs of ROK, DPRK, China and Russia to engage in the ecological networking of Northeast Asia.

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.