

WCC-2012-Rec-163-EN

Action to increase the protection and sustainable use of the American Gran Chaco

AWARE that the Gran Chaco macro-region, being the second largest forested ecoregion in South America, stretching across Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay, and covering almost 1,200,000 km², possesses natural assets that are insufficiently protected, for example under 7% of its surface area in Argentina is protected;

CONSIDERING that, due to its size, the territory comprises a large variety of environments associated with extensive plains, diverse woodlands, scrub and grasslands forming savannahs and wetlands;

INDICATING that these ecosystems provide the livelihood and cultural identities of several indigenous peoples, rural communities and small-scale producers;

HIGHLIGHTING that the rate of loss, fragmentation and degradation of the natural environment continues to increase due to accelerated agricultural expansion and the application of new technologies, thus contributing to the region's growing incorporation into the international market as a supplier of primary agricultural products;

INDICATING that this trend does not solve the chronic problems of marginalization and poverty suffered by the local population and there are even signs of this population migrating in significant areas of the region;

BEARING IN MIND the great biodiversity of the Gran Chaco, which includes a large number of threatened species (the Jaguar *Panthera onca* being one of the most emblematic), endemic species, medicinal plants and genetic resources, and the wide range of ecological goods and services these ecosystems provide such as climate regulation, the storage and supply of water and their role in the control of soil erosion;

RECALLING Resolution 4.029 *Conservation and sustainable use of fish in the Río de la Plata Basin* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008), which highlighted the Gran Chaco as being an ecosystem of great value for ensuring the conservation of fish diversity in the Río de la Plata Basin;

CONSIDERING that the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010, adopted a series of decisions applicable to the Gran Chaco, including Aichi Target 11 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* as well as Decision X/6, which urges the Parties to incorporate considerations regarding the preservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services into wider poverty eradication and development processes;

RECOGNIZING the achievements of the Argentine Republic in adopting Law N° 26.331 regulating the Minimum Budgets for the Environmental Protection of Native Forests as well as Emergency Law N° 26.160 regulating the Ownership and Possession of Lands Traditionally Occupied by Indigenous Communities, and Law N° 26.562/2009 regulating the Minimum Budgets for Environmental Protection for the Control of Burning Activities and progress in the instrumentation of Conservation Corridors in the Chaco sector of Argentina; progress with regard to the rights of the indigenous peoples of the Plurinational State of Bolivia; the significant progress made by the Federative Republic of Brazil in the fields of development, conservation and protected areas; and the work carried out in the sphere of sustainable development in the Republic of Paraguay; and

OBSERVING that, despite the above, no significant increase in the extent of the protected areas has been achieved, and that the current level of protection falls far short of achieving the global conservation goals, and that it is necessary to establish a Resolution to improve biodiversity conservation and environmental services to benefit local populations and society in general;

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

1. CALLS ON the Governments of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and Paraguay to:
 - a. collaborate in the achievement of Aichi Target 5 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020*, reducing the rate of loss, degradation and fragmentation of all natural habitats, including forests and wetlands;
 - b. intensify efforts to increase the designation of protected areas in the Gran Chaco, in order to meet the goal of 17% of protected areas by 2020, as established by Aichi Target 11 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020*;
 - c. implement conservation corridors and other forms of connectivity between natural areas of biodiversity value, both nationally and in transboundary areas;
 - d. continue to develop and promote sustainable practices in the use and management of native ecosystems in South America in order to guarantee the conservation of environmental services and resilience, including models for the certification of, valuation of and payment for environmental services, etc.;
 - e. develop integrated policies for the conservation and sustainable use of the woodland, wetlands and associated grasslands, including specific actions to protect or recover endangered species and/or restore degraded areas;
 - f. promote the effective participation of the various stakeholders (indigenous peoples, local communities, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, etc.) in land-use planning within the macro-region; and
 - g. promote campaigns to raise public awareness of the value of the Gran Chaco's natural and cultural heritage;
2. INVITES the corresponding government agencies and non-governmental organizations to draw up and adopt inter-institutional and intersectoral measures and plans of work for local and regional development compatible with biodiversity conservation, particularly in conservation corridors; and
3. CALLS ON the Director General to support the development of sub-regional actions and policies aimed at improving the conservation status and promoting the sustainable use of native forests, grasslands and wetlands in the Gran Chaco.

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.