

## **WCC-2012-Rec-166-EN**

### **Responding to rapid expansion of the mining and gas industry in Australia**

NOTING the remarkable natural diversity of the Australian continent;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the unique responsibility of the Australian Government to protect, conserve and restore the biological diversity of an entire continent;

NOTING the commitments that the Australian Government has made to the international community to protect, conserve and present World Heritage properties within its territory;

ALSO NOTING the international commitments entered into by the Australian Government in relation to migratory species, internationally significant wetlands and the conservation of biological diversity;

NOTING that the Australian Government's national environmental law provides an important mechanism for the protection of threatened and migratory species, internationally significant wetlands and World Heritage areas;

CONCERNED at the potentially significant environmental risks posed by the expansion of mining and gas activities in Australia, including coal mining and coal seam gas extraction;

NOTES that the Australian Government proposes to transfer by accreditation, project approval powers under federal environmental law to its states and territories, subject to their agreement to meet federal environmental standards to protect matters of national environmental significance; and

NOTING that environmental non-government organizations in Australia are concerned that this transfer of project approval power will result in reduced protection for matters protected under the Australian Government's national environmental law;

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

1. URGES the Australian Government to maintain an active role in the protection, conservation and restoration of the remarkable natural diversity of the Australian continent;
2. CALLS on the Australian Government to fulfil its commitments to the international community by retaining its statutory powers to assess and regulate impacts on threatened and migratory species, internationally significant wetlands and World Heritage areas;
3. ENCOURAGES the Australian Government to ensure comprehensive assessment of the impacts of mining and gas expansion, including consideration of cumulative impacts and use of strategic assessments where appropriate, on matters protected under the Australian Government's national environmental law;
4. ENCOURAGES the Australian Government to ensure that environmental values are not significantly impacted by mining and gas extraction activities; and
5. ENCOURAGES the Australian Government to continue to implement measures aimed at improving the scientific basis and transparency of decision making for coal seam gas and large-scale coal mining developments, including through the work of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee on coal seam gas and large-scale coal mining.

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.