

WCC-2012-Rec-167-EN

Strengthening of European provisions for biodiversity in overseas entities

RECALLING that Outermost Regions (ORs) and Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), which constitute European overseas entities as officially recognised by the United Nations, are home to biodiversity of global importance;

CONSIDERING that the populations of the ORs and the OCTs are very vulnerable to the effects of climate change, and that the protection of natural ecosystems is vital for the resilience of local societies and the reduction of risks;

RECALLING Resolution 4.079 *The European Union and its overseas entities faced with climate change and biodiversity loss* adopted by the 4th World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

WELCOMING the opening of European LIFE funding to the ORs (for the period 2007–2013), as they had not benefited from it in the past;

REGRETTING nonetheless the lack of consideration given to the management of ecosystems in overseas entities regarding the funding granted by the European Union (EU) to ORs and OCTs, and in the European strategy for biodiversity;

FURTHER REGRETTING the fact that the actors engaged in biodiversity in the OCTs suffer unfairly because of the status of their territories, since the international and European funding they are eligible for is insufficient to address conservation and biodiversity issues;

CONSIDERING the commitment of the European Union and the Member States to the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* adopted at the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10), held in Nagoya, Japan, between 18 and 29 October 2010;

RECALLING the European Union's commitment to the biodiversity in EU overseas entities at the Reunion Island Conference in 2008, supported by the Secretariat of the CBD;

WELCOMING the support given by the French Government to IUCN for the coordination of the implementation of the recommendations of the Message from Reunion Island (2008);

ALSO WELCOMING the BEST preparatory initiative funded by the European Parliament and launched by the European Commission in the form of two invitations to tender in 2011 and 2012; and

CONGRATULATING the numerous actors in the ORs and OCTs who mobilized to respond to the first invitation to tender, showing the European authorities the reality of the local requirements and the dynamism of the overseas entities;

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

1. INVITES the European institutions to:
 - a. continue the implementation of the recommendations of the Message from Reunion Island for European overseas entities;

- b. integrate more fully the ORs and OCTs into European policies on biodiversity and in European maritime policy, in particular to support the sustainable management of their exclusive economic zones;
 - c. propose adequate investments in the field of biodiversity in ORs and OCTs, as a key feature of sustainable development and adaptation to climate change, by devoting a specific budget to it both in structural funds attributed to the ORs and in development funds attributed to the OCTs;
 - d. support the implementation of a sustainable provision devoted to the biodiversity of European overseas entities, receiving adequate funding (BEST), notably by making specific proposals on the basis of the results of the first preparatory invitation to tender;
 - e. engage in an ambitious EU strategy for biodiversity in overseas entities, with sustainable and preferably dedicated financial means, and with a strategic coordination role assured by the European Commission Directorate-General for the Environment;
 - f. support the integration of environment and biodiversity protection in the updating of the Council Decision 2001/822/EC of 27 November 2001 on the association of the OCTs within the European Community Overseas Association Decision (OAD), and also in the Operational Programme 2014–2020 of the ORs; and
 - g. make the European OCTs eligible in the new LIFE+ 2014–2020 regulation;
2. CALLS ON the French, British and Dutch Governments as well as the European overseas entities (ORs and OCTs) concerned to provide their full support for these objectives and for the strengthening of European policies on overseas biodiversity;
 3. INVITES the overseas entities in question to work and cooperate with other island States through their respective regional organizations, where this may be relevant; and
 4. CALLS ON the Director General to continue her commitment to a greater consideration of European overseas biodiversity through the dedicated working programme.

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.