

WCC-2012-Rec-177-EN

Economic valuation and development of financial mechanisms for the payment for ecosystem services in areas of extreme poverty

RECOGNIZING that the number of cases of deforestation and forest degradation processes continues to shoot up in Mexico and Latin America and the mechanisms, guidelines and protocols to curb this trend have not responded or had the required effect;

MINDFUL that the natural infrastructure of marine and terrestrial ecosystems on our planet continues to break down and hence their capacity to provide ecosystem services that are vital for the well-being of humanity today and in the immediate future is diminishing, and that forests and jungles continue to be felled since they represent no economic value or return for their owners and their ecosystem services are not paid for;

RECOGNIZING the climate change crisis, the loss of ecosystems and the great wave of extinction of species, which is destroying life on this planet, and which, if it continues in this manner will turn the Holocene into the period of the Earth's geological history that will be marked by a sixth wave of mass extinction of species, making adaptation and resilience strategies essential for the conservation and sustainable management of the planet's biocapacity;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation) projects and their requirements have been shown to be completely non-viable given the conditions of extreme poverty experienced by most of the owners (private and community) of rural forests and jungles in Mexico, and that therefore a redesign in accordance with simplified, local protocols, at a sub-national level is essential in order to launch them successfully and convert them into reality in the field;

RECOGNIZING that the ecosystem services payment schemes applied by the National Forestry Commission (CONAFOR) of Mexico, with the corresponding surveillance and monitoring actions, have reversed the deforestation trend in protected natural areas such as the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, protecting biodiversity and fighting poverty;

CONSIDERING that instead of rather complicated, out-of-context regulations, what is needed is field experience and common sense in order to make decisions regarding the development of mechanisms that effectively halt deforestation, with simple development and monitoring protocols, which can be applied to real conditions, and in order for resources to have a real impact in the field, benefiting the owners rather than only reaching consultants and decision makers;

TAKING as a reference the experience of local projects already underway, such as the case of the Sierra Gorda Biosphere Reserve, where the diversification of the sources of funding for the application of payments for ecosystem services for water, biodiversity and carbon are already a reality thanks to a series of ecosystem services and products integrated from the outset, in a regional rather than vertical manner;

MINDFUL that the voluntary carbon market offers a wide range of opportunities for governments, companies and individuals to mitigate their emissions in forest projects, which comply with the objectives of a REDD project, with no unnecessary complications while, at the same time, helping to fight poverty, so that biodiversity conservation generates opportunities for the development of local communities and pays them fairly for the environmental services provided by their ecosystems; and

WELCOMING the interest and intent of the IUCN Secretariat to develop synergies that fight poverty and recognize the rights of local communities, while protecting biodiversity effectively

with financial incentives for local communities, by fighting deforestation and forest degradation;

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

CALLS ON the Government of Mexico to maintain the payment of compensation by CONAFOR in order to:

- a. strengthen the scheme, the geographical scope and the current funding to ensure its permanence through national security, maintaining Mexico's natural heritage;
- b. promote the development of local, state protocols with rules that are viable in real contexts, which stimulate alternative sources and means of funding, and which in turn foster a social awareness disseminated by all the media, of the mitigation of carbon footprints. This would involve calling on social and corporate voluntary responsibility, so that creativity and local protocols can give rise to conservation schemes through other ecosystem services that allow these financial resources to pour into their owners' pockets, resulting in conservation management that guarantees the permanence of the services they provide us with;
- c. foster mechanisms for the adequate economic valuation of natural infrastructure and its ecosystem services, defining the financial impact of local biocapacity, generating goods and services; and
- d. use all media to raise public awareness of the climate emergency that motivates the mitigation of ecological footprints at all levels and that involves taking joint responsibility for the preservation of natural capital.

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.