

WCC-2012-Res-014-EN

Implementing Aichi Target 12 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020*

RECALLING that Aichi Target 12 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* states: “By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained”;

GREATLY ENCOURAGED that this is by far the strongest commitment ever made by the world’s governments to combat the escalating extinction crisis;

ALARMED that the evidence from the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* indicates that, due to human impacts, the current rate of extinction is at least 1,000 times higher than the natural rate;

NOTING that the most common causes of extinction are habitat loss and fragmentation, over-harvesting, invasive alien species, disease, and increasingly the effects of climate change;

DEEPLY CONCERNED that an increasing number of threats, such as ocean acidification, ocean warming, and emerging infectious diseases (including the fungal disease chytridiomycosis that is affecting many amphibians) cannot yet be controlled in the wild on a time-scale necessary to prevent extinctions;

AWARE that the drivers of extinction come from economic sectors such as energy, trade and finance as well as from natural resource sectors such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries;

EMPHASIZING that the extinction crisis will only be addressed through a strong cross-sectoral commitment in each country, ensuring that all relevant major decisions, for example on infrastructure development, are taken in a manner that takes threatened species into account, and ensures that measures are taken so that such species are not driven towards extinction;

FURTHER EMPHASIZING that species provide huge benefits to people economically, socially, aesthetically, culturally and spiritually, and that their loss results in an impoverishment for all humankind;

ASSERTING that despite these huge benefits, species must not be required to demonstrate their value to people in order to have a right to exist;

ENCOURAGED that, although evidence clearly indicates that the global 2010 Biodiversity Target was not attained, the observed rate of deterioration in vertebrate species would have been around 20% higher in the absence of successful conservation interventions;

CONCERNED that unlike most other negative environmental trends, extinction is inherently irreversible, and the loss of every species forecloses future options;

AWARE that in many instances extinctions can be prevented through broader conservation measures such as the safeguarding of sites of importance for biodiversity, and integrated programmes that simultaneously address poverty and biodiversity, and so single-species conservation is not necessarily the best way to save species;

ASSERTING, nevertheless, that in some cases single-species conservation is the only way to prevent extinctions;

NOTING that in many instances, the funding needed to prevent the extinction of particular species is not large, but needs to be long term;

CONCERNED that many donors do not fund species-related conservation, and those that do often only support project cycles of a few years, making it hard to achieve long-lasting conservation success;

GRATEFUL for the recent establishment of two new species-related funding mechanisms – the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund by His Highness Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and the Save Our Species Fund by the World Bank, Global Environment Facility and IUCN – both of which complement some important existing species-related funding mechanisms;

NOTING that species are the component of biodiversity that most readily captures the public imagination in virtually all cultures; and

AWARE of IUCN's particular strengths and expertise in species conservation through the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), the Secretariat and many of the Members;

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

1. CALLS ON all countries to:
 - a. identify globally and nationally threatened species during the development of their respective National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and include strong provisions for their conservation and recovery addressing their threats and drivers;
 - b. support their NBSAPs through well-developed processes for preparing national *Red Lists* and for identification, appropriate protection and management of sites of global importance for biodiversity bearing in mind the new standard that IUCN is developing for identifying such sites, and building on existing networks of such sites already identified worldwide;
 - c. develop multi-stakeholder plans for the recovery of threatened species, drawing as needed from the guidelines *Strategic Planning for Species Conservation* developed by IUCN's SSC;
 - d. develop innovative approaches to preventing extinctions that provide benefits to local human communities and build support for conservation, including through sustainable use where relevant and appropriate;
 - e. ensure that all major development projects, such as the building of dams and the conversion of natural habitats, take the needs of threatened species fully into account, and are only implemented if they include measures to conserve threatened species, prevent extinctions and bring about species' recovery;
 - f. ensure that all programmes involving the harvesting of wild species, including in the fisheries and forestry sector, are managed so that the harvest levels are sustainable, including for non-target species, and where possible generate incentives for conservation; and
 - g. build the capacity of national nature conservation agencies to implement species recovery programmes;

2. REQUESTS the SSC and the Director General to:
 - a. enhance the *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* so that it reaches its potential, as outlined in the draft IUCN Red List Strategic Plan 2012–2020, thus providing the essential background for monitoring the achievement of Aichi Target 12 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020*; and
 - b. provide technical support to countries and other stakeholders as needed to achieve Aichi Target 12, including on:
 - i. training in *Red List* assessments;
 - ii. identifying of sites of global importance for biodiversity;
 - iii. implementing species conservation planning;
 - iv. managing invasive alien species and preventing their introduction;
 - v. implementing reintroduction programmes;
 - vi. managing *ex situ* conservation programmes;
 - vii. carrying out assessment of disease risk, including the determination of key biodiversity and ecological processes critical to preventing and reducing the rate of emergence of new infectious pathogens; and
 - viii. implementing sustainable use projects to ensure that they are truly sustainable and contribute to the conservation of the harvested species and others potentially affected;
3. CALLS ON the scientific community to conduct research on threats that cannot currently be controlled in the wild, such as amphibian chytridiomycosis and ocean acidification, to develop practical management options to mitigate their impact on threatened species, to enable them to survive in viable populations while the long-term drivers of loss (such as rising CO₂ levels) are brought under control; and
4. CALLS ON all funding agencies, including the public and private sectors and civil society, to give increased support to prevent extinctions and to continue recognizing the importance of long-term funding and investment for species conservation.