

WCC-2012-Res-041-EN

Development of objective criteria for a Green List of species, ecosystems and protected areas

CONCERNED that biodiversity loss has accelerated since the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was adopted in 1993, and that the species and ecosystems being lost, and the protected areas being degraded, are valuable in their own right as well as critical to human well-being;

NOTING that the extinction of species and the diminution of their populations both contribute to biodiversity loss, and that this loss leads to degradation of natural ecosystems and to a decline in the provision of ecosystem services;

ACKNOWLEDGING the invaluable role played by the *IUCN Red Lists* in assessing the extinction risk of species and risk of collapse of ecosystems, and of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in promoting the good management of protected area systems globally;

EMPHASIZING that a focus on avoiding and reversing declines in biodiversity loss is critical but insufficient, and therefore must be complemented by a strategy for recovering species and ecosystems, and promoting good management of natural systems, including through the establishment of effectively managed protected area systems, to ensure their conservation;

RECOGNIZING that a successfully conserved species is self-sustaining demographically and ecologically, genetically robust, healthy, has populations distributed across the historical range in ecologically representative settings, including within representative systems of protected areas, and, in the case of widely distributed species, has replicate populations within each ecological setting, in order to enhance resilience across its range;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that conservation success depends on the restoration of threatened species and ecosystems, and the maintenance and sound protection of fully-functioning populations, species and ecosystems, including through representative and effectively managed systems of protected areas as insurance against existing and future risks including climate change;

CELEBRATING that conservation actions over the last four decades, including progress towards the establishment of effective systems of terrestrial and marine protected areas, have successfully reduced the slide of countless species towards extinction relative to their projected status in the absence of such actions;

ALSO CELEBRATING that national governments and many other organizations have made significant efforts to expand existing systems of protected areas to address representativeness and persistence of *in situ* biodiversity, and to improve management effectiveness and positive outcomes for biodiversity conservation in accordance with the IUCN *Durban Action Plan* and the CBD's *Programme of Work on Protected Areas*;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that local, national and international conservation decisions, and funding for them, frequently consider the *IUCN Red List* status and the degree of protection within protected areas when determining priorities;

RECOGNIZING that WCPA is well advanced in developing an IUCN Green List of Well-Managed Protected Areas based on objective standards to recognize success in the effective management and equitable governance of protected areas in accordance with Aichi Target 11 of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020*;

NOTING that an agreed set of conservation standards is needed not only to measure extinction or risk of collapse (i.e. *IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria*), but also to systematically classify conservation and management success of species and ecosystems, thus recognizing and incentivizing conservation action and complementing the *IUCN Red List* with objectively defined “Green Lists” at the levels of species and ecosystems;

FURTHER NOTING that such sets of standards across protected areas, species and ecosystems would reward, and also encourage investment in programmes and policies that enhance and measure conservation success and management effectiveness; and

ACKNOWLEDGING that, in principle, Green List criteria could be applied to any relevant unit and scale, including species, ecosystems, and protected areas and sites, landscapes and seascapes of importance for biodiversity;

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

1. REQUESTS the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC), the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM), and WCPA, whose expert networks support and provide scientific guidance and information on species, ecosystem and protected area conservation respectively, to conduct international scientific consultations to develop objective, transparent and repeatable criteria for Green Lists that systematically assess successful conservation of species and ecosystems, including in protected areas;
2. REQUESTS SSC, CEM and WCPA to explore synergies with the criteria being developed for the Green List of Well-Managed Protected Areas, possibly with a view to developing a consistent approach to the Green List Criteria across IUCN;
3. REQUESTS the Director General to provide support to these efforts;
4. REQUESTS SSC, CEM and WCPA to report to the next IUCN World Conservation Congress on progress achieved; and
5. URGES countries to work with relevant IUCN constituencies to develop and implement Green Lists, and to monitor both risk and success in order to provide a complete picture of the status of species and ecosystems, and assess the management status and effectiveness of protected areas throughout their entire global distribution.