

WCC-2012-Res-004-EN
Establishment of the Ethics Mechanism

UNDERSTANDING that ethics and morality are an integral part of IUCN and will make its messages, policies and actions more credible to the world at large and more meaningful for conservationists everywhere;

NOTING Resolution 3.022 *Endorsement of the Earth Charter* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004) that endorsed the Earth Charter as “the ethical guide for IUCN policy”;

ALSO NOTING “the strong ethical purpose that inspired the formation of IUCN in 1948 and continues today in the IUCN vision of ‘A just world that values and conserves nature’”;

AND NOTING Resolution 3.020 *Drafting a Code of Ethics for Biodiversity Conservation* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004) that reaffirmed IUCN’s “commitment to an ethical view of nature conservation, based on respect for the diversity of life, as well as the cultural diversity of peoples,” and led to the creation of the Biosphere Ethics Initiative (BEI): a soft law programme that highlights and shares continuously evolving local and global ethical principles of biodiversity conservation;

NOTING the importance of ethics to the IUCN membership as evidenced in other Resolutions, of note, Resolutions 4.098 *Intergenerational partnerships: fostering ethical leadership for a just, sustainable and peaceful world* and 4.099 *Recognition of the diversity of concepts and values of nature* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

ALSO NOTING the One Programme approach of IUCN, and that only when Commissions, Secretariat and membership work towards a common goal “can IUCN deliver on its Mission, uniting conservation action under one Union to create a strong and unified voice with which to transform society”;

AND NOTING IUCN Council Decisions C/74/18 and C/75/16 (IUCN Council, 2010) on the *Biosphere Ethics Initiative* that recognized the cross-Commission and cross-sectoral nature of ethics in IUCN, inviting all Commission Chairs, Councillors and the Secretariat’s Component Programmes “to work with the Biosphere Ethics Initiative to identify opportunities for integration and implementation of the BEI into their programme of work” as well as the need for ethical guidance when decision making, recommending “that an on-request ‘Ethics Advisor’ be appointed to the IUCN Council”;

THEREBY UNDERSTANDING that the membership, Secretariat and Commissions of IUCN have shown a general need and desire to take ethics explicitly into consideration in decision making, and should be provided with a practical and coordinated methodology to do so;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the promise of the BEI’s work over the past eight years has been to provide such a practical and coordinated methodology, known as the Relato Methodology: where local, regional and international leaders, from governments and NGOs, and from across disciplines, come together to highlight and promote ethical principles of biodiversity conservation in order to advance the global Evolving Biosphere Ethic, and the particular Local Ethic of each region;

YET UNDERSTANDING that this is not the only methodology available, but one that has been made available to assist with ethical engagement and has shown success;

ACKNOWLEDGING that the recent publication of the IUCN Environmental Law Programme on ethics and the world conservation movement (“Reasons for Hope: The Ethical Promise of the World Conservation Movement”) offers the Relato Methodology as a local-to-global approach to practical ethical engagement, and strengthens and eases access to, and further development and implementation of the Relato Methodology;

AND ACKNOWLEDGING the leadership and investment of the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law (WCEL), and Member States from around the world, in building the BEI;

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING the work of the Urban Specialist Group and the Specialist Group on Cultural and Spiritual Values of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in incorporating ethics into their respective programmes;

CONCERNED that the world faces urgent ethical questions regarding how to fairly and effectively meet the challenges of such issues as biodiversity loss, climate change, sustainable food and water supplies, growth in consumption and population, and the governance of international markets and corporations, and that the conservation policies and activities of IUCN and its member organizations can and should play a role in meeting those challenges; and

CONCERNED that, to date, the application of IUCN’s many ethics-based resolutions and mandates has been scattered across IUCN, and that IUCN needs to find a practical and coordinated methodology to make operational its endorsement of the Earth Charter as a guide to policy and programme, the World Charter for Nature, as well as IUCN’s many further commitments that endorse ethics as central to its entire programme;

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

REQUESTS the Director General and IUCN Commissions to:

- a. support the further development and implementation of the Biosphere Ethics Initiative and the Relato Methodology as a method for ethical engagement taking all means necessary to implement and integrate this initiative into the Secretariat’s component programmes and the Commission programmes;
- b. identify opportunities for integration and implementation of the BEI within the Secretariat’s component programmes and the Commission programmes;
- c. invite the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN WCEL to contribute to identifying effective ways to integrate the initiative, including specific recommendations on establishing an Ethics mechanism, into the programmes of the Secretariat and the Commissions and to serve as the Ethics focal point for reporting on such integration;
- d. recommend that implementation of the BEI, including establishment of an Ethics mechanism, reflects a One Programme approach to ethical engagement;
- e. encourage Members of IUCN to approach the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN WCEL with ethical concerns; and
- f. report to the IUCN Council annually on the implementation of this Resolution, as well as before the World Conservation Congress in 2016, through the Ethics Specialist Group of the IUCN WCEL.

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.