

WCC-2012-Res-050-EN

Protection of Mediterranean submarine canyons

APPROVING the recommendations of the meetings in Istanbul (January, 2010) and Procida (September, 2010) for the protection of Mediterranean submarine canyons, approved by the IUCN Mediterranean Forum, held in Malaga, Spain, between 22 and 25 November 2010;

CONSIDERING the unique, vulnerable character of the submarine canyons and seamounts in the Mediterranean; and

RECOGNIZING the Mediterranean as a specific marine system in which submarine canyons and seamounts are of great importance;

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

ASKS the Mediterranean coastal States to:

- a. recognize the importance of submarine canyons as structural elements in the functioning of Mediterranean ecosystems;
- b. support the building of a knowledge base on:
 - i. the ecological role of Mediterranean submarine canyons and seamounts, in particular to underline the key role they play in the lifecycle of several marine species;
 - ii. the anthropogenic impact suffered by submarine canyons and seamounts, such as land-based pollution, waste, the removal and extraction of natural resources (also including the study of zones near the canyons); and
 - iii. their economic and ecological importance with regard to the services they provide;
- c. adopt the Precautionary Principle for developments and activities that could have an impact on those canyons located in waters under French jurisdiction, notably pollution and waste from land-based activities;
- d. support the creation of a coherent network of marine protected areas in the Mediterranean, taking the protection of canyons into account;
- e. support in particular the cooperative project currently underway between France and Spain for the creation of Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (SPAMI) in the Gulf of Lion; and
- f. continue the support given to activities in the Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas under the Barcelona Convention (RAC/SPA).

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.