

WCC-2012-Res-062-EN

Atlantic Forest in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, as a priority biome for conservation

CONSIDERING that the Atlantic Forest in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay is one of the most endangered biomes in the world, among the richest in biodiversity (over 10,000 plant species; 298 species of mammals; over 200 bird species; and more than 140 species of reptiles), and among the most significant in terms of levels of endemism (8,000 tree species, 40% of the total; 200 bird species, 16%; 71 mammal species, 27%; 94 reptile species, 31%; and 286 amphibian species, 60%; to mention only the best-known taxonomic groups), there is an absolute urge to enhance its protection;

RECOGNIZING that in Brazil only approximately 8% of the Atlantic coastal forest remains, that less than 20% of the remaining biome is officially conserved in protected areas, and that high rates of forest loss are still present, approaching 350 km² or 0.25% per year in Brazil, and even higher rates in Argentina and Paraguay, international recognition of the importance of conserving the remnants of what still exists of the Atlantic Forest may be critical for its protection – from individuals to organizations and societies in general, and from local to national and global levels – and that IUCN is in a unique position to influence many levels of decision making and conservation policy that may help create change;

AWARE that IUCN, primarily through its Commissions and Members, can play an important role in advocating the importance of conserving the Atlantic Forest among the Multilateral Environmental Agreements and conventions;

ANTICIPATING the continuing rapid growth of national, regional and global pressures on natural habitats, especially those where human populations are concentrated (70% of the Brazilian population lives in cleared lands once covered by the Atlantic Forest, even though it accounts for only 11% of the nation's territory, and approximately 80% of the Brazilian gross domestic product (GDP) is generated in the Atlantic Forest region);

UNDERSTANDING that the integrity of the world today may depend on the protection of natural areas – to provide for food and water security and reduce the pressures caused by climate change and soil degradation, pollution and other negative impacts on human well-being and the preservation of the world's biodiversity;

RECALLING Resolution 4.004 *Strengthening IUCN's institutional presence in South America* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008), aiming at strengthening IUCN's initiatives in South America, and which resulted in the establishment of an office in Brazil; and

REAFFIRMING the importance of IUCN's role for global conservation, it is imperative that it provides the following guidance for the implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2013–2016* on this matter;

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

1. REQUESTS the Director General to include into the IUCN regional programmes specific and measurable initiatives to influence public policies to better protect the Atlantic Forest in Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay, and to contribute more effectively to the implementation of the Conventions that deal with Biodiversity and Climate Change and, recognizing the role of the organization's Commissions and Members in influencing policies and actions, to work on synergies that may enhance the implementation of the Conventions; and

2. REQUESTS the Director General to:
- a. incorporate specific activities and goals regarding the conservation of the Atlantic Forest into the *IUCN Programme 2013–2016* pursuant to the aforementioned point;
 - b. further strengthen IUCN's bioregional role in South America, considering the Atlantic Forest as being present in Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay;
 - c. strengthen IUCN's role to enhance protection of Atlantic forests, in one of its most important niches, which is to integrate South American countries in the "IUCN family" approach, enhancing the application of international conventions and regional agreements (such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and Mercosul, among others);
 - d. expand IUCN's recommendations to protect Atlantic forests for the next quadrennium, integrating the objectives, themes and specific activities, specifying responsibilities for the different components of the "IUCN family", such as Members, Commissions, Secretariat, at both regional and central levels;
 - e. take action regarding sending letters to the three countries' presidents, ministers and other decision makers in support of Atlantic Forest protection, based on the relevant international conventions and regional agreements; and
 - f. support local member organizations and members of Commissions in emergency situations that may threaten the Atlantic Forest in any of the three countries that host this biome.

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.