

WCC-2012-Res-067-EN

IUCN and the Arctic region – intensified and coordinated work

NOTING that the Arctic environment is one of the world's most threatened ecosystems; the threats are manifold: from the on-going changes originating in climate change, to an increase of competition for the natural resources of the area;

RECALLING decisions by previous General Assemblies (GA) and World Conservation Congresses (WCC): 4th GA Copenhagen 1954, 7th GA Warsaw 1960, 10th GA New Delhi 1969, 11th GA Banff 1972, 14th GA Ashkhabad 1978, 15th GA Christchurch 1981, 16th GA Madrid 1984, 17th GA San José 1988, 18th GA Perth 1990, 19th GA Buenos Aires 1994; 1st WCC Montreal 1996, regarding the development of an action plan for Arctic conservation and sustainable development, working with indigenous peoples, *et al.*; 2nd WCC Amman 2000, regarding the need for an Arctic strategy and action plan, integrated ecosystem management, ecological integrity, and environmental security, *et al.*; 4th WCC Barcelona 2008, regarding IUCN representation by appropriate experts at relevant negotiations;

RECOGNIZING that IUCN throughout the history of the Union has been working in different areas for preserving the natural ecosystems of the Arctic, and has supported different initiatives to strengthen this work;

ACKNOWLEDGING the excellent work undertaken by the Arctic Council in promoting sustainable development in the Arctic region;

ALSO ACKNOWLEDGING the responsibility of all nations bordering the Arctic region jointly to make every effort to create a sustainable ecosystem-based management approach to development in the Arctic area;

UNDERLINING that what happens in the Arctic region affects global nature, and thus all societies in the world;

RECOGNIZING that Arctic ecosystems provide essential services including those necessary for the livelihoods of indigenous peoples;

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that IUCN's effort could be more effective by increasing the coordination within the Union;

APPRECIATING the work done by the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Specialist Groups in the Arctic region; and

RECOGNIZING the excellent scientific work undertaken by IUCN in working out the ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSA) criteria, including consideration of the way they may be used for informing future decisions regarding conservation of the marine environment both within and beyond national jurisdiction;

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

1. AFFIRMS the interest of IUCN in playing a significant role in the Arctic region based on its major assets;
2. REQUESTS the Director General to continue to collaborate with the Arctic Council;

3. ENCOURAGES IUCN Members, Councillors, Commissions and the Secretariat to continue and to intensify joint work in cooperation with governments and relevant organizations in the Arctic and Subarctic region;
4. RECOMMENDS that the Director General strengthen the IUCN presence in the Arctic Council through its contribution to the work of the Arctic Council;
5. REQUESTS that IUCN Member and Commission experts in issues related to the Arctic, in collaboration with the Secretariat, develop a comprehensive IUCN Action Plan for its work in the Arctic region, with the aim of securing increased and relevant contributions from IUCN to ongoing and upcoming activities within the Arctic Council, its Member States, permanent participants and observers; and
6. REQUESTS the Director General to promote the implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020* and relevant programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in relation to the Arctic environment.

The State Member Denmark provided the following statement for the record:

“Denmark, on behalf of Greenland welcomes Motion 086 ‘IUCN and the Arctic Region – intensified and coordinated work’ sponsored by the Swedish Museum of Natural History. The Sponsor supports the amendments [made].

Climate change and the increased activities in the Arctic have resulted in new and rapidly developing challenges to Arctic biodiversity, Indigenous Peoples and residents of the Arctic. Increased cooperation is essential to understand, address and respond to these challenges. Denmark, as one of the eight arctic states of the Arctic Council, sees this circumpolar cooperation as **the** main regional forum for advancing the goals of the international nature conventions and agreements in the Arctic Region.

Denmark would in this regard like to use the opportunity to welcome fruitful cooperation between IUCN as an Observer in the Arctic Council and the Arctic Council’s working groups such as the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF).

In light of the challenges facing Arctic biodiversity, there is a need to emphasize and encourage increased collaboration between the Arctic Council’s working groups and IUCN. In regard to the suggested Motion, Denmark finds that there is a need to highlight the importance of strengthening of the IUCN presence in the Arctic Council and its contribution to the work of the Arctic Council.

Denmark finds that a comprehensive IUCN Action Plan for the Arctic Region should take into account the Arctic Council and its working groups plans and that an action plan should be developed with the aim of securing increased and relevant contribution to ongoing and upcoming activities within the Arctic Council.

We therefore support the Motion as amended.”

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.