

WCC-2012-Res-095-EN

Traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local peasant communities in the Andes and the Amazon Rainforest as a mechanism for adaptation to climate change

OBSERVING that climate change affects the most vulnerable populations in the Andes and the Amazon Rainforest, especially with regard to their productive and subsistence activities related to farming and the management of natural resources, especially biodiversity;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the fact that there is a global approach to the identification of the different mechanisms for adapting to climate change in order to lessen the vulnerability and increase the resilience of the affected populations and ecosystems;

RECOGNIZING that, over the course of history, indigenous peoples and local communities have developed knowledge and practices, which in many cases have allowed them to adapt successfully to climatic variations;

BEARING IN MIND that this knowledge is a cultural legacy, which forms part of the identity of the indigenous peoples and local communities, who want to build their own means of development;

CONSIDERING that there are relevant, frequent coincidences between local perceptions and the available scientific knowledge on the effects of climate change, and that the complementarity of traditional knowledge and scientific knowledge may help indigenous peoples and local communities adapt successfully to climate change;

ALSO TAKING INTO ACCOUNT that this knowledge, and these innovations and practices, can be taken as references by society in general to find better alternatives for adapting to climate change, highlighting the fact that, at the same time, the approval and participation of the owners both of this knowledge and of these innovations and practices are required, as is the promotion of the principle that the benefits derived from their use should be shared;

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in which the Contracting Parties engage to “respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and use of biological diversity”; and

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the fact that, according to Article 10(c) of the CBD, the Contracting Parties engage to “protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional and cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements”;

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

1. CALLS ON the institutions and agencies of the national States to promote the research, recovery and use of traditional knowledge and practices as a strategy for adaptation to climate change and to include it in their public policies; and
2. ASKS the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) to ensure that traditional knowledge and practices are included in the comprehensive inventory of tools to combat climate change comprehensively, in other words, as part of a strategy that includes biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.

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.