

## **WCC-2016-Res-051-EN**

### **Ecological connectivity on the north coast of the Alboran Sea**

RECOGNISING the Alboran Sea as one of the most important marine biodiversity reservoirs in the world and as the European sea with the highest diversity of species;

RECALLING its strategic geographical location, forming a natural border between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, being situated at the closest point between the continents of Europe and Africa and, therefore, an essential enclave for migratory processes;

CONSIDERING that the Alboran Sea forms part of the Mediterranean, a basin that is protected by international commitments such as the Mediterranean Action Plan or the Network of Managers of Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean;

AWARE of the Alboran Sea's dependency on the conservation status of its shores, subject to high demographic pressure with corresponding effects on biodiversity, water quality and the availability of resources;

AWARE that a large part of this coastline has been profoundly transformed by human actions, especially through urban development, in some cases to extreme levels, leading to the disappearance of entire habitats;

NOTING that the Autonomous Government of Andalusia has made notable efforts to protect the north coast of the Alboran Sea, protecting the most important ecosystems on the Andalusian coast that are still intact or have suffered few changes;

RECOGNISING the need to protect the ecosystems that have remained undisturbed by human activities or that have been only partially modified and are not legally protected, as well as the urgent need to restore habitats wherever possible; and

CONCERNED about the existence of a road network along the coast of Andalusia, which forms a powerful artificial barrier isolating coastal ecosystems from other surrounding natural areas, and hampering or preventing processes of ecological connectivity;

### **The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:**

1. CALLS ON Members to collaborate actively with the Director General and Commissions, especially in Europe and the Mediterranean region, to develop actions aimed at improving the status of coastal ecosystems, their connectivity and to disseminate information about the problems they are facing;
2. ENCOURAGES Commissions to provide technical and programmatic support to promote and strengthen existing initiatives and to share information on their conservation;
3. URGES IUCN State Members that border on Alboran Basin, as well as their regional governments, to promote effective measures to improve the status of the coastal ecosystems in the Alboran Sea;
4. URGES the European Union and its Member States to provide funds for the creation of green infrastructure, which allows for the restoration of ecological connectivity between coastal ecosystems and those inland, in addition to the development of actions to rehabilitate and restore coastal ecosystems;
5. ENCOURAGES Spanish administrations with competence for the Andalusian coastline to maintain and increase efforts made to protect coastal ecosystems and to rehabilitate and restore coastal habitats that have disappeared or are declining, as well as to open up new lines of work aimed at the restoration of ecological connectivity;
6. REQUESTS the declaration of the Alboran Sea as an oil and gas free zone, as well as the ratification by Spain of the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (2004) and adoption by Spain of International Maritime Organization (IMO) guidelines, with a view to future regulation that includes specific measures to reduce underwater noise; and

7. ENCOURAGES efforts to expand knowledge of pressures arising from interactions between marine and terrestrial areas.

**State and agency Members of the United States** abstained during the vote on this motion for reasons given in the U.S. General Statement on the IUCN Motions Process.