

WCC-2016-Res-067-EN

Best practice for industrial-scale development projects

RECALLING that the mission of IUCN is to "influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable";

MINDFUL that IUCN supports finding a balance between development and the conservation of ecosystems and the communities they support to ensure equitable outcomes for the future of the economy, for people and for nature;

RECOGNISING that there is a need for infrastructure investments to support a prosperous future and the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;

FURTHER RECOGNISING that such investments often have serious direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on the environment;

AWARE that many countries have legislation guiding such projects, that various financial institutions employ safeguards to guide such development, and that several companies voluntarily employ measures to mitigate adverse environmental impacts;

CONCERNED that not all countries have or enforce legislation limiting the adverse impacts of industrial-scale development, not all financial institution safeguards provide adequate protection, and that not all companies employ voluntary standards;

RECALLING the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially Goal 9 on resilient infrastructure and inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, Goal 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements, Goal 12 on sustainable production and consumption, and Goal 15 on halting biodiversity loss;

RECALLING the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, especially Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 on the integration of biodiversity into planning, Target 4 on sustainable production, Target 5 on deforestation, Target 8 on pollution and Target 12 on reversing biodiversity declines; and

RECALLING previous Resolutions on land use-planning, infrastructure and protected areas, including 1.51 *Indigenous Peoples, Mineral and Oil Extraction, Infrastructure and Development Works* (Montreal, 1996), 2.34 *Multilateral and bilateral financial institutions and projects impacting on biodiversity and natural features* (Amman, 2000), 4.087 *Impacts of infrastructure and extractive industries on protected areas* (Barcelona, 2008), 4.088 *Establishing the IUCN Extractive Industry Responsibility Initiative* (Barcelona, 2008) and 5.037 *The importance of nature conservation criteria in land-use planning policies* (Jeju, 2012), as well as Recommendation 2.82 *Protection and conservation of biological diversity of protected areas from the negative impacts of mining and exploration* (Amman, 2000);

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

1. URGES the Director General and Commissions to continue to intervene on issues of concern regarding development projects, to provide science-based solutions, technical expertise and advice, and to promote transparency and public participation in analysis and decision-making in development projects;
2. CALLS on Members and governments to promote best practice for all industrial-scale development projects to limit environmental and social impacts by ensuring:
 - a. that projects are sited within the context of an integrated, sustainable, cross-sectoral and transparent landscape-level plan;
 - b. the avoidance of areas of significance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, particularly World Heritage Sites and other priority conservation areas;
 - c. the legal mandating and approval of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) during the project design phase when permission for the project is requested, following international best practice;

- d. that full responsibility is taken for all identified environmental and social impacts across the value chain, regardless of the economic climate;
 - e. application of the mitigation hierarchy to avoid, minimise, restore and, as a last resort, compensate or offset residual impacts where they occur;
 - f. transparent and accountable reporting and decision making throughout the project; and
 - g. respect for the legal and customary land and resource rights of local communities, and their free and prior informed consent to any project that affects such rights; and
 - h. significant penalties for legal non-compliance and recognition for projects going beyond compliance; and
3. CALLS ON international financial institutions and their shareholders to recognise their role and responsibility for driving best practice and to develop, implement and coordinate safeguards to support the points above.

State and agency Members of the United States voted against the motion with Amendment 3, which was adopted by the World Conservation Congress.