

2.87 Protected areas and the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor

NOTING that Central America has played a pioneering role in the formulation and approval of regional conventions;

RECOGNIZING the momentous political decision of the Presidents in the Mesoamerican region in signing and supporting initiatives for the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and the Mesoamerican Coral Reef System;

FURTHER NOTING the need for continuity and follow-up on compliance with these agreements and initiatives over the medium and long term, given the nature of the environmental problems;

RECALLING the exceptional biological wealth of the isthmus and its vital ecological function as a migratory corridor between North and South America;

STRESSING the importance of the protected areas and national parks as irreplaceable instruments for nature conservation and sustainable development in Central American countries; and

ACKNOWLEDGING that the 5th IUCN Mesoamerican Forum, held in Guatemala City (3–7 October 1999), adopted a comparable motion;

The World Conservation Congress at its 2nd Session in Amman, Jordan, 4–11 October 2000:

1. ENCOURAGES the governments and parliaments of Mesoamerica to continue processes for the legal declaration of protected areas and national parks in their respective countries so as to:
 - (a) preserve representative samples of all natural ecosystems in the isthmus;
 - (b) fill gaps currently existing in each country's system of protected areas; and
 - (c) consolidate and give continuity to the regional environmental initiatives of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and Mesoamerican Coral Reef System;
2. INVITES the pertinent authorities to allocate the economic resources necessary for an efficient administration and protection of the protected areas and national parks in Mesoamerica;
3. URGES regional governments and civil society to make it a priority to protect natural ecosystems that provide economically important environmental services and functions in the region and to protect the Central American population against major natural disasters through the legal declaration of protected areas;
4. SUPPORTS rapid legal declaration (as protected areas) of the following sites, thus contributing in concrete and direct form to the constitution of the Mesoamerican Corridor:

- (a) Punta de Manabique, Río Sarstún, Manchón Huamuchal, Sierra Santa Cruz, Sierra Caral, and Yaxhá in Guatemala;
 - (b) Punta Izopo in Honduras;
 - (c) the Pital-La Cureña zone in the northern region and La Danta Biological Corridor in the south and central Pacific zone in Costa Rica; and
 - (d) forest in the watershed of the Mosquito Gulf, on the Caribbean coast of Panama;
5. COMMITS to continuing support, within available resources, of efforts for the design, promotion, administration and co-management of protected areas in the Mesoamerican region that ensure equitable participation by local communities;
6. CALLS ON the States of Mesoamerica to continue with the implementation of, and compliance with, regional and international commitments and agreements in the environmental arena.

This Recommendation was adopted by consensus. State and Agency members United States refrained from engaging in deliberations on this Motion and took no national government position on the Recommendation as adopted, for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process (see p. 76).