

2.43 Sustainable management and protection of Asia's major river systems

ACKNOWLEDGING that Asia's major river systems, including their watershed areas, support the livelihoods of a significant proportion of the world's human population both within and across countries;

AWARE that these river systems are home to a great diversity of ecosystems with a wealth of plant and animal life;

FURTHER AWARE that overexploitation or misuse of these river systems and their surrounding lands may lead to habitat loss, species extinction, soil erosion, siltation, pollution, flooding, and unstable water flows that may threaten the integrity of these rivers;

ENCOURAGED by the recent efforts of riparian States to address critical issues affecting the protection of these waters, such as:

- (a) logging bans in the upper watersheds of the Yangtze;
- (b) the commitment to establish a wetlands reserve to protect the headwaters of the Yangtze, Yellow, and Lancang (Mekong) Rivers;
- (c) coordination by Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Vietnam on Mekong River conservation; and
- (d) NGO initiatives for forest protection in the Himalayan region;

APPLAUDING the World Conservation Union's Overall Programme until the next World Conservation Congress;

NOTING its orientation towards producing measurable progress in each of its seven Key Result Areas, including ecosystem protection;

EMPHASIZING that any efforts to protect and manage these river systems should take into account the needs of local people to maintain their livelihood, and should involve local communities in this process in order to be effective and sustainable; and

RECALLING Resolution 19.23 *The importance of community-based approaches* adopted by the 19th Session of the IUCN General Assembly (Buenos Aires, 1994) and Recommendation 1.42 *Collaborative management for conservation* adopted by the 1st Session of the World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996);

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

1. CALLS ON the riparian States to utilize fully the existing cooperative mechanisms and arrangements for conservation and sustainable management of these important waters;
2. REQUESTS the Director General to:

- (a) design and conduct a study on the necessity and feasibility of establishing a new mechanism for conservation and sustainable management of these waters for the common interest of the riparian States;
- (b) on completion of this study to convene, if necessary, a meeting of governments and representatives of indigenous communities and organizations of riparian States to discuss the findings of the study and determine agreed appropriate follow-up actions;
- (c) assist in obtaining the necessary funding for activities related to this Resolution; and
- (d) report back to the IUCN membership at the next session of the World Conservation Congress on progress made with implementing this Resolution.

This Resolution 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 Resolution as adopted, for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process (see p. 76).