

4.085 Establishing the 1% *Earth Profits Fund* and sustaining government conservation finance

RECOGNIZING that the rate of environmental degradation and loss of biological and cultural diversity continue to accelerate, and that our planet's biosphere is in crisis;

CONSIDERING that a central element in achieving sustainability is directing sufficient financial resources toward conservation and sustainable development, that additional resources estimated at as much as USD 300 billion per year are urgently needed to reverse the current environmental decline and to achieve a sustainable global society, and that USD 300 billion is approximately 0.5% of the current Gross World Product;

RECOGNIZING that the stability of funding sources for environmental conservation projects and programmes, including those of IUCN, is essential to the efficacy of the implementation of these programmes, particularly in developing nations;

NOTING that many conservation initiatives are market-based, including but not limited to, carbon trading, Clean Development Mechanisms, Joint-Implementation projects, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) programmes, assignable-quota fisheries, and payments for ecosystem services and rehabilitation;

AWARE THAT nations are currently suffering the effects of higher food, water and energy prices – a situation being aggravated by climate change and the instability of financial institutions – and that vulnerable nations are struggling to make universal provision of even the most basic humanitarian services for their populations and that these difficulties greatly hinder their ability to invest in environmental conservation;

ALARMED at the state of financial institutions in member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the inevitable impact of this on the markets and financial institutions of developing nations, who derive the majority of their environmental conservation funding from OECD countries;

GRAVELY CONCERNED that nations affected by this crisis may decide to reduce the priority given to their financial obligations to environmental conservation programmes, funds, studies and initiatives, which are necessary for continued conservation and environmentally sustainable development;

CONSIDERING that past financial commitments to environmental conservation from governments, international financial institutions, corporations and private philanthropies have totalled about USD 3 to 7 billion per year; that, while laudable, such commitments have fallen far short of what is needed to reverse environmental decline; and that although national governments agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 to dedicate 0.7% of GNP to Official Development Assistance (ODA) to developing countries, most have failed to keep this commitment;

RECOGNIZING that 51 of the 100 largest economies in the world are corporations, it is clear that the private sector possesses substantial financial capacity to contribute to this critical environmental challenge for the 21st century, and that the Global 500 – the top 500 revenue-earning companies globally, as identified each year by *Fortune* Magazine – include petroleum, automotive, electronics, communications, airlines, banks, insurance, pharmaceuticals, food, merchandise, chemical, health care, defence contractors, power, clothing, entertainment, paper, heavy equipment, soft drinks, office equipment and other industries; and that these 500 companies together earn approximately USD 10 trillion per year in revenue, and USD 1 trillion per year in profits; and

FURTHER RECOGNIZING that it is in the interest of these companies, as well as the collective future of human civilization, to urgently assist in the sustainable development and conservation of the biosphere of the planet, and in the stability of the world's financial systems;

The World Conservation Congress at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5-14 October 2008:

1. CALLS ON states to recommit at the forthcoming Doha Conference in November 2008 to 0.7% GNP funding promises and to refrain from reducing these commitments, while ensuring the fulfilment of financial obligations related to environmentally sustainable development and conservation, especially in these times of economic crisis;

In addition, the World Conservation Congress, at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5–14 October 2008, provides the following guidance concerning implementation of the *IUCN Programme 2009–2012*:

2. REQUESTS the Director General in consultation with the IUCN Commissions to:

(a) explore mechanisms to establish a new private-sector conservation finance initiative, in consultation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), international financial institutions, governments, IUCN members and NGOs, to provide increased and sustained support to biodiversity conservation and sustainable development, to be called the *1% Earth Profits Fund*, taking into account priority needs through a consultative process;

(b) propose to the CEOs and Boards of Directors of the Global 500 companies that they join the 1% Earths Profit Fund by contributing no less than 1% of their annual, after tax profits for a trial period of five years;(c) support governments, NGOs and international organizations in their efforts to ensure that the global economic crisis does not affect environmentally sustainable development initiatives, including studies to help develop programmes that are resistant to economic instability; and

(d) encourage that market mechanisms created under Multilateral Environmental Agreements are sufficiently resilient to global economic instability.

State and agency members of the United States voted against this motion.