

4.087 Impacts of infrastructure and extractive industries on protected areas

AWARE that protected areas are sites managed by governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, NGOs, or private parties, to achieve long-term conservation of nature and associated ecosystem services and cultural values, and that they are crucial for the protection of the Earth's biological diversity;

ALSO AWARE that these sites are most important for human health and well-being, through maintaining some of the essential ecosystem functions that we all benefit from;

CONSCIOUS of the role that protected areas and their networks are likely to play in helping to avoid, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change;

STRESSING that many of these sites are also the territories, homes, or use areas for indigenous peoples and local communities, and that they are culturally important for a wide variety of faiths, religions and persuasions;

APPRECIATIVE of the commitment shown by countries and communities of the world, in declaring and managing such sites for various ecological, cultural and economic reasons;

CONCERNED that many such sites are threatened by, *inter alia*, a range of large-scale infrastructure projects such as major dams, energy plants, highways, ports and airports as well as from extractive industries including mining, oil and gas, industrial fishing and extensive aquaculture, and industrial logging;

AWARE that increasingly some of these activities are taking place in ways that may not make the damage immediately apparent, such as underground mining and oil extraction that starts outside a protected area but drills under it or affects its underground water resources;

NOTING that in the pursuit of economic growth objectives, sites crucial for biodiversity conservation and often for the cultural survival of indigenous peoples and local communities, are subjected to diversion, pollution and contamination, intrusion, disruption, submergence, dumping, discharge of effluents, drilling, or other processes that impair their ecological integrity;

ALSO NOTING that such damage often rebounds on the pursuit of development itself, by undermining water security, impairing crucial ecosystem functions that have then to be replaced by costly measures, at times even causing forced displacement of communities, and other such impacts;

CONSIDERING that social disruption related to such developments are also of serious concern;

CONCERNED that infrastructure or industrial companies often do not follow existing best practice measures (such as those described in the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) publication, *Good Practice Guidance for Mining and Biodiversity*, produced in cooperation with IUCN) in assessing impacts, avoiding ecologically and culturally fragile sites, seeking consent from relevant authorities and from indigenous peoples and local communities, and employing stringent mitigation measures where development activities are carried out;

STRESSING that many national governments do not have adequate policies and measures in place to ensure that the integrity of their protected areas is not compromised by infrastructure and extractive industry; and

CLARIFYING that for the purposes of this Resolution, the term 'protected areas' includes Community Conserved Areas and Indigenous Protected Areas that may not yet be recognized in formal protected area systems, but which countries are encouraged to recognize under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) *Programme of Work on Protected Areas*;

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

1. REMINDS all countries of:

(a) their obligation under various environmental conventions and agreements to protect the diversity of life, and to promote protected areas as a critical means of achieving such protection; and

(b) the importance of protected areas to achieving the long-term conservation of nature and associated ecosystem services and cultural values, livelihoods, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, and revenue flows including their contribution to reducing or eliminating poverty, and in most cases their importance as the territories or homes of indigenous peoples and local communities;

2. REQUESTS governments, the private sector and indigenous/local communities to review large-scale infrastructure or extractive-industry developments (other than those oriented to the conservation-related management of their sites) that are ongoing or proposed in areas immediately adjacent to protected areas;

3. URGES national governments, the private sector and indigenous/local communities to:

(a) phase out or mitigate, where appropriate, ongoing large-scale infrastructure or extractive-industry developments (other than those oriented to the conservation-related management of the site) affecting the protected areas under their respective jurisdiction, and to prohibit further diversion of protected areas for such activities, allowing these only in the most exceptional circumstances where overwhelming public interest (such as maintenance of traditional livelihoods) requires it, and only after a full consultative process that engages experts, indigenous peoples and local communities, and the general public in consenting to such an exceptional situation; and

(b) in exceptional situations where such activities need to be allowed, adopt full compensatory and mitigation measures, including creation of new or expanded protected areas that more than offset the negative impact of any de-gazetting, change in delimitation or downgrading of protection status, keeping in mind the need to fully respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities while taking such measures;

4. URGES the private sector and other relevant parties to honour prohibitions or restrictions on such activities that are imposed by governments or communities, and voluntarily avoid such activities until prohibitions or restrictions come into place;

5. CALLS ON governments and/or the private sector to compensate and offer other appropriate and feasible livelihood options to workers and others whose livelihoods are affected by the closure of ongoing large scale infrastructure or extractive-industry developments within or adjacent to protected areas; and

6. CALLS ON communities, civil society organizations and government agencies to report and take action on illegal infrastructure and extractive-industry activities occurring within or adjacent to protected areas;

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*:

7. REQUESTS the Director General and IUCN's Commissions to advise and assist governments and communities pursuing the actions called for in paragraphs 1 to 6 above, should such assistance be requested.

State and agency members of the United States abstained during the vote on this motion.