

15/11. TROPICAL MOIST FORESTS

NOTING that the tropical moist forests are thought to contain half or more of all plant and animal species;

RECOGNIZING that tropical moist forests are among the most biologically diverse of all ecosystems;

RECOGNIZING FURTHER the vulnerability and fragility of tropical moist forests when subjected to most conventional forms of development, despite technological aids, and when subjected to unsustainable levels of shifting cultivation;

NOTING that if current rates of deforestation continue, a major reduction in biological diversity will inevitably occur;

AWARE that all nations stand to benefit from this major segment of the world's biological heritage, from direct-use benefits such as forest products and medicines, from their important mediating roles in global cycles of elements and water, and from maintenance of a high potential of biological productivity;

RECALLING that the World Conservation Strategy assigns a high priority to urgent actions to conserve tropical moist forests;

The General Assembly of IUCN, at its 15th Session in Christchurch, New Zealand, 11-23 October 1981:

URGES those nations with tropical forests to protect a representative series of the world's tropical moist forest ecosystems and biota, and with appropriate research organizations, develop and improve silvicultural systems to regenerate tropical moist forests and manage them on a sustainable basis;

RECOMMENDS that these nations re-examine their policies with respect to forest clearing and conversion to grazing, agriculture and exotic tree plantations, and discourage trade in tropical moist forest products not harvested on a sustainable basis. RECOMMENDS FURTHER that adequate systems be established for monitoring the status of tropical forests and rates of deforestation, so that conservation requirements can be identified and actions taken; and

CALLS UPON all development assistance and international funding agencies to scrutinize carefully any projects which result in the clearing of tropical moist forests by including in their cost-benefit analyses all long-term and intangible values which will be lost, and to provide financial assistance for conservation and monitoring activities.

