

16/16. CONSERVATION OF WETLANDS

AWARE of the fundamental ecological functions of wetlands in particular for the conservation of waterfowl as well as many other species and as a resource of great economic, cultural, scientific and recreational value;

CONCERNED that wetlands are among the most threatened habitats due to drainage, reclamation, drought, pollution and other factors;

CONSIDERING that conservation of wetlands is therefore of particular urgency and that international cooperative efforts are indispensable to achieve this aim;

CONSIDERING FURTHER that the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar 1971) provides a proper framework for such cooperation between States;

WELCOMING the role IUCN, in cooperation with IWRB, has played in providing the interim Secretariat to this Convention;

ALSO WELCOMING recent developments which contribute to the effectiveness of the Ramsar Convention, in particular the adoption of a Protocol to the Convention in Paris, December 1982, and the results of the Second Conference of Contracting Parties, Groningen, 7-12 May 1984;

RECALLING its Resolution 16 on the Ramsar Convention adopted at its 15th Session in Christchurch, New Zealand, 11-23 October 1981;

REFERRING to the IUCN programme for promoting the conservation of wetlands adopted at its present meeting as a special theme of attention amongst the many activities of IUCN;

The General Assembly of IUCN, at its 16th Session in Madrid, Spain, 5-14 November 1984:

1. REQUESTS the Director-General to give priority to continue to promote and service the Convention in cooperation with IWRB and to work closely with the Contracting Parties in arranging for a permanent Secretariat to the Convention;
2. INVITES all constituent bodies of the Union and its Membership to attach due priority to activities which aim to further the objective of effective wetlands conservation in the framework of the Union's special programme for this policy field, as well as to such activities as contribute to the implementation of the action points identified at the Groningen Conference;
3. NOTES WITH APPRECIATION the growing number of Contracting Parties as well as the large number of States represented at the Groningen Conference and reiterates its appeal to States which are not yet Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention to become such as soon as possible;
4. STRONGLY RECOMMENDS IUCN Member States Parties to the Ramsar Convention to give their full support to the effective functioning of this Convention:
 - (a) by endeavouring to provide financial support to its interim Secretariat;
 - (b) by giving priority attention to the achievement of such structural improvements to the Convention as were considered necessary by the Contracting Parties;
 - (c) by implementing the recommendations adopted at the Groningen Conference; and
 - (d) by continuing their efforts towards wetlands conservation at the national level, in particular by increasing the number of wetlands designated for the List of Wetlands of International Importance.