

18.14 The Principles of Ethically Sound and Sustainable Development

CONCERNED that the combination of demographic expansion, urban overcrowding, industrialization and huge technological power with distorted economies is leading to ever more frequent conflicts between individuals, between communities, and even between nations;

RECOGNIZING that the biosphere is a self-contained habitat for humanity, that the earth's resources (living and non-living) are finite despite the capacity of living resources to yield a sustainable production if well managed, and that population planning strategies which bring humanity into a stable balance with nature are therefore essential;

RECOGNIZING ALSO that there is a special responsibility on nations with a high *per capita* consumption of non-renewable and renewable resources, used at non-sustainable rates, to reduce their demands;

EMPHASIZING that governments, communities and human individuals are subject to a moral law which imposes obligations towards other societies and individuals, and that this moral law demands the acceptance of a duty of care for the biosphere and of policies that protect the interests of future generations;

AWARE of the unique contribution that IUCN can make in promoting strong guidelines for conservation and development, especially through the implementation of the proposals contained in the draft World Conservation Strategy for the 1990s;

The General Assembly of IUCN—The World Conservation Union, at its 18th Session in Perth, Australia, 28 November-5 December 1990:

1. CALLS upon governments, especially State members of IUCN, to:
 - a. reduce to the absolute minimum extraction of those non-renewable resources that cannot be substituted, in preparation for the inevitable phasing-out of such extraction in the long term;
 - b. recycle as much as possible of such materials, aiming towards full recycling in the future;
 - c. minimize, and as far as possible eliminate, releases to the biosphere of:
 - i. oil and petroleum products (through spillages and discharges);
 - ii. gases resulting from combustion of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas);
 - iii. heavy metals;
 - iv. nitrates and phosphates (resulting from

excessive use of fertilizers and from unsustainable intensive agriculture);

- d. ensure that uses of renewable resources are as efficient as possible and that where renewable resources are being used unsustainably, their use be reduced to sustainable levels;
 - e. recycle all possible organic wastes, thereby reducing pollution of rivers and underground aquifers and enhancing land fertility;
 - f. promote clean and safe renewable energy supplies (such as solar, wind and hydro) thereby minimizing the use of fossil fuels and other sources of pollution;
 - g. promote the development and introduction of technologies and industrial processes that do not discharge waste into rivers, underground aquifers, the sea or the atmosphere;
 - h. encourage manufacturers of future consumer goods to plan materially and financially for the full recycling of the materials these goods contain at the end of their useful life;
2. URGES governments, in planning the development of rural and urban societies, to recognize the need for such societies to follow different paths:
 - a. basing rural development on the conservation, proper management and sustainable use of renewable natural resources;
 - b. basing urban development on the economical use of materials and energy and on maximal recycling and on avoidance of waste;
 3. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources:
 - a. to strengthen the expertise within the Union in the fields of sociology, economics and other social sciences relevant to the understanding of the human dimension of sustainable development;
 - b. to promote the elaboration of medium-term strategies for sustainable rural development which ensure that rural communities receive a fair share of development opportunities and a just economic return for the goods and services they provide.

