

1.45 The Precautionary Principle

RECOGNIZING that the Precautionary Principle offers guidance on how to respond when faced with uncertainty about environmental damage;

AWARE that the principle has come to play an increasingly significant role in debates on the environment;

DETERMINED to create an opportunity for the members and Commissions of the Union to learn from experiences in the formulation and application of the principle since its introduction;

CONSIDERING the expertise and experience of IUCN in both conservation science and international environmental agreements, and RECALLING that the IUCN has established working groups on key environmental issues in the past;

The World Conservation Congress at its 1st Session in Montreal, Canada, 14–23 October 1996:

1. REQUESTS the Director General, within available resources, in conjunction with the Chair of the Commission on Environmental Law and in consultation with IUCN members and other Commissions, to appoint an interdisciplinary Working Group, by July 1997, to examine the Precautionary Principle and advise on its use in an environmental context and with special reference to the IUCN Programme;
2. ALSO REQUESTS the Director General to disseminate these findings and recommendations widely and in particular to bring them to the attention of the secretariats of all international environmental and resources use conventions and agreements.

Note. This Resolution was adopted by consensus. The delegation of the State member United States indicated that had there been a vote the delegation would have abstained.