

WCC-2012-Res-069-EN

Strengthening coordination for managing the aquatic ecosystems of East Asia

ACKNOWLEDGING that conserving biodiversity and maintaining the resilience of aquatic ecosystems is essential for “sustainable nature for human well-being”, addressed as a priority area by IUCN;

AWARE that East Asia is a very densely populated area where one-third of the world's human population resides; most of them reside in river basins and coastal areas where population and economic growth have been the fastest, threatening food security and the sustainability of aquatic ecosystems, especially in coastal and estuarine areas where freshwater and marine ecosystems actively interact;

NOTING that the rivers and adjacent seas of East Asia are productive enough to support approximately 40% of the global fisheries yield and to account for about 80% of global aquaculture production, and that most East Asians are dependent on fisheries;

EMPHASIZING the importance of large rivers and estuaries in East Asia (e.g. the Mekong, Huang He and Chang Jiang Rivers) for sustaining biodiversity and the productivity of marine ecosystems;

CONCERNED that, together with climate change effects and overfishing, increasing anthropogenic activity in the rivers and coasts of East Asia is expected to reduce water availability and quality, biodiversity, resilience and sustainability of aquatic ecosystems;

ALARMED that the recent nuclear accident in Fukushima, Japan, in March 2011, caused international concern over the possible spread of radiation via ocean currents and food chains, and potential exposure to contaminated marine products through international trade and the migration of marine animals, expediting an international network for monitoring and managing the seas adjacent to East Asia;

RECOGNIZING that a local environmental accident or problem in a country can directly or indirectly influence and threaten the sustainability and food security of the aquatic ecosystems of neighbouring countries;

RECALLING the World Conservation Congress Resolutions and Recommendations for managing aquatic ecosystems, including: Resolution 1.17 *Coastal and Marine Conservation and Management* adopted by the 1st IUCN World Conservation Congress (Montreal, 1996); Resolutions 2.20 *Conservation of Marine Biodiversity* and 2.56 *Land-use Policies and Legal Tools for Coastal Conservation* adopted by the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2004); Resolution 4.031 *Achieving conservation of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdictions*; Resolution 4.065 *Freshwater biodiversity conservation, protected areas, and management of transboundary waters* and Recommendation 4.116 *Fisheries management by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs)* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

RECOGNIZING that IUCN works closely with international organizations to research and manage aquatic ecosystems, including the Global Water Partnership, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); and

CONSIDERING Resolution 3.003 *Engagement by IUCN with local and regional government authorities* adopted by the 3rd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Bangkok, 2004), and Resolution 4.003 *Strengthening IUCN's National and Regional Committees* adopted by the

4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008);

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Jeju, Republic of Korea, 6–15 September 2012:

1. RECOMMENDS States establish an international network for monitoring and managing freshwater and marine ecosystems in East Asia and the adjacent seas to conserve biodiversity, maintain sustainability, and build resilience under the threats of climate change, overfishing, anthropogenic intervention and environmental accidents;
2. CALLS ON the regional Members and National Committees of South and East Asia and the governments of South and East Asian countries to initiate discussion on strengthening coordination for the monitoring and management of cross-boundary freshwater, coastal, estuarine and marine ecosystems; and
3. Requests the Director General to promote regional governance for managing aquatic ecosystems in East Asia; and to collaborate with international organizations, including the IOC, FAO, GEF, Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), Northwest Pacific Action Plan, Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) and related non-governmental organizations, to initiate discussion on establishing a regional organization for this purpose.

State and agency Members of the United States abstained during the vote on this Motion for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process.