

3.022 Endorsement of the Earth Charter

RECALLING Recommendation 2.96 *Earth Charter and draft International Covenant* adopted by the 2nd Session of the World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000), calling for members at the 3rd Session to consider a response to the Earth Charter;

NOTING the strong ethical purpose that inspired the formation of IUCN in 1948 and continues today in the IUCN Vision of “A just world that values and conserves nature”;

FURTHER NOTING the ethical leadership shown by IUCN over the past 50 years, highlighted by the *World Charter for Nature* (adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1982), *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living* (1991), and the *Draft International Covenant on Environment and Development*;

ACKNOWLEDGING the international community’s commitment to the role of ethics in sustainable development made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) in the *Plan of Implementation*, paragraph 6;

MINDFUL of the need for environmental programmes and policies to reflect shared values inclusive of respect for cultural diversity and the greater community of life, ecological integrity, social and economic justice, democracy, non-violence and peace;

APPRECIATING the decade-long consultation process that generated the *Earth Charter*, involving recommendations from communities and experts in all regions of the world and close collaboration with the IUCN Commission on Environmental Law;

ENCOURAGED by the decision of the UNESCO General Conference to recognize the *Earth Charter* as an important ethical framework for sustainable development and to utilize it as an educational instrument for the United Nations *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development*, and noting also the decision of the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication to use the *Earth Charter* in its future programmes; and

CONVINCED that promulgation of global ethics based on shared values is essential to create a sustainable and healthy future for ‘people and nature’ in our ‘one world’;

The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17–25 November 2004:

1. ENDORSES the *Earth Charter* as an inspirational expression of civil society’s vision for building a just, sustainable and peaceful world;
2. RECOGNIZES, consistent with IUCN’s Mission, the *Earth Charter* as an ethical guide for IUCN policy and will work to implement its principles through the *IUCN Intersessional Programme 2005–2008*;
3. RECOMMENDS that the *Earth Charter* be used by IUCN to help advance education and dialogue on global interdependence, shared values, and ethical principles for sustainable ways of living; and
4. ENCOURAGES member organizations and states to examine the *Earth Charter* and to determine the role the *Earth Charter* can play as a policy guide within their own spheres of responsibility.

The Department of State, United States, provided the following statement for the record:

There are many laudable goals in the Earth Charter with which the United States agrees. However, there are many controversial propositions in that document with which the United States takes issue.

In the view of the United States, a wholesale endorsement of the Earth Charter would not be appropriate, and it is not advisable to adopt an unqualified requirement that the Earth Charter be used as an "ethical guide" for IUCN policy.

State and agency members United States voted against this motion.