

**WCC-2012-Rec-148-EN**  
**Mountain protected areas**

AWARE that the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro dramatically put the phrase 'Sustainable Development' on the world stage, so that it is now a global societal goal and a basic mantra;

NOTING that this Conference unanimously included a Chapter 13 on *Managing Fragile Ecosystems: Sustainable Mountain Development*;

RECOGNIZING that mountain protected areas of various IUCN Categories provide the best protection for biological diversity, soil stability, most regulated and highest quality water, carbon sequestration, the many sacred and other culturally valued sites in mountains, and outstanding opportunities for recreation and tourism, more than other kinds of land use; and therefore at that time mountain protected areas were identified as significant contributors to sustainable mountain development;

FURTHER NOTING that the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) was strongly represented in the initiation of Chapter 13, and its subsequent programme in Agenda 21, and on the Interagency Group concerned with implementing the Mountain Chapter;

AWARE that today, in the dialogue about Sustainable Mountain Development among UN agencies, national governments and most donors, the role of the various kinds of protected areas is not being recognized for the many ecosystem services of great economic contribution that they make to sustainable development, especially water and biodiversity, along with ecotourism; and

DEEPLY CONCERNED that mountain protected areas as a land use have been largely dropped from the lexicon; for instance in the latest FAO publication *Why Invest in Sustainable Mountain Development?* (2011), protected areas are scarcely mentioned, and in preparatory documents for the Rio+20 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development this year, they were not even identified;

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

1. AFFIRMS the unique and significant role that formal protected areas play in land and water use and development and thus for human welfare;
2. CALLS ON UN agencies, national governments and donors to recognize that especially in the face of climate change, mountain areas kept in their natural or carefully managed state, such as in National Parks, Protected Landscapes, Dedicated Multiple Use Areas, Biosphere Reserves, Community Conservation Areas, and the like, are powerful pieces of sustainable development;
3. URGES that because of the special susceptibility of mountains to the impacts of global change, that mountain protected area creation, enlargement and connection in corridors come to the forefront of global thinking, planning, and land and water use policies; and
4. REQUESTS the Director General to emphasize mountain protected area creation, enlargement, and connectivity in the *IUCN Programme for 2013–2016*.