

WCC-2016-Res-047-EN

Advancing conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction

NOTING that nearly two-thirds of the world's ocean is beyond national jurisdiction, and that this area provides valuable ecological, economic, social and cultural benefits;

CONCERNED that marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ) is being significantly reduced by certain human activities, and noting the need to protect biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ), such as by establishing marine reserves or other types of marine protected area (MPA);

RECALLING the recommendation from the marine Cross-cutting Theme at the IUCN World Parks Congress (Sydney, 2014) to urgently increase the ocean area that is effectively and equitably managed in ecologically representative and well-connected systems of MPAs or other effective conservation measures. This network should target protection of both biodiversity and ecosystem services and should include at least 30% of each marine habitat. The ultimate aim is to create a fully sustainable ocean, at least 30% of which has no-extractive activities;

FURTHER RECALLING that the outcome document from the IUCN World Parks Congress (Sydney, 2014): (a) expressed support for Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 – at least 10% of coastal and marine areas are conserved by 2020 and (b) recommended development and adoption of an international instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to protect and manage biodiversity in the high seas;

NOTING that greater effort will be needed to establish MPAs in ABNJ to meet the adopted targets;

RECOGNISING that international law, as reflected in UNCLOS, provides the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out;

NOTING that marine reserves play an important role in and are tools for safeguarding biodiversity;

AWARE that the Convention on Biological Diversity process to identify ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in ABNJ is useful for describing areas that need enhanced protection, but that establishing protective measures is a matter for States and competent intergovernmental organisations, in accordance with international law, including UNCLOS;

RECALLING that Resolution 5.074 *Implementing conservation and sustainable management of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction* (Jeju, 2012) supported the conservation and sustainable management of marine biodiversity in ABNJ; and

WELCOMING United Nations General Assembly Resolution 69/292, adopted by consensus in June 2015, in which the General Assembly decided to develop an international legally-binding instrument under UNCLOS for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of ABNJ and to that end decided to establish a Preparatory Committee;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Hawai'i, United States of America, 1-10 September 2016:

1. ASKS States to continue contributing to the work of the Preparatory Committee established pursuant to the UNGA Resolution 69/292 to make recommendations to the General Assembly on the elements of the draft text of an international legally binding instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and further URGES Member States to include the following measures in their recommendations to the General Assembly:

- a. the rapid identification, designation and effective management of an ecologically representative and well-connected system of MPAs¹, including reserves, in ABNJ;
- b. the assessment of the impacts of human activities, including cumulative impacts, on ABNJ;

¹ MPAs include the IUCN Protected Area Categories I-VI.

- c. the regulation of activities to prevent significant adverse impacts on the marine environment;
 - d. effective monitoring, compliance and enforcement;
 - e. capacity building and the transfer of marine technology; and
 - f. the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources from ABNJ;
2. ENCOURAGES Members to support science-based processes that allow for the establishment of an ecologically representative and well-connected system of MPAs including reserves as an element of the new agreement;
 3. URGES States to call on the UNGA to decide to convene an intergovernmental conference that will take place in 2018 on the elements and to elaborate the text of an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS; and
 4. CALLS ON the Director General, the Commissions and Secretariat to provide technical support and to promote and support the actions described above.

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 Motions Process.