



Second Standing Committee
Sustainable Development,
Finance and Trade

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THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTS IN PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY

*Revised draft resolution prepared by the co-rapporteurs
Mrs. Sauda Mugerwa (Uganda) and Mr. Paul Günter (Switzerland)*

The 111th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

(1) *Recalling* the:

- International Plant Protection Convention, 1951;
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands), 1971;
- Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, 1972;
- Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972;
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, 1973;
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979;
- Establishment of the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 1982;
- World Charter for Nature, 1982;
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982;
- International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, 1983;
- Report of the World Commission on the Environment and Development, *Our Common Future*, 1987; and the
- Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992,

(2) *Acknowledging* the work of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) aimed at completing the difficult task of establishing the status of global diversity,

(3) *Recognising* that the intrinsic value of biodiversity –variability within and among living organisms and the systems they inhabit – is critical to the survival of the planet and the species that inhabit it as humankind has known them,

- (4) *Also recognising* that the conservation of biodiversity is a necessary condition for sustainable development insofar as such efforts contribute to poverty alleviation, food security, the provision of fresh water, soil conservation and human health,
- (5) *Recalling* that the current rate of biodiversity loss, as caused by human action, represents the first significant extinction event in the Earth's history,
- (6) *Recognising* that the Convention on Biological Diversity is the principal international instrument addressing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity,
- (7) *Convinced* that an improvement of the definition of the term "biodiversity", as used in the Convention on Biological Diversity, will heighten its practical use in some national and local conservation strategies,
- (8) *Noting* that the Convention on Biological Diversity does not clearly refer to the core causes of biodiversity loss,
- (9) *Also noting* that the greatest threats to biodiversity resulting from human activity are habitat loss, climate change, alien invasive species, over-exploitation and pollution,
- (10) *Aware* that under the Convention on Biological Diversity, States have sovereign rights over their biological resources,
- (11) *Recalling* the commitments undertaken at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the Seventh Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity aimed at reducing the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010,
- (12) *Recalling* in particular the programme of work on protected areas adopted during the most recent meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity,
- (13) *Recalling* that in situ conservation efforts in protected areas are, by themselves, insufficient,
- (14) *Noting* that the goods and services provided by ecosystems are not taken into account by conventional econometric methods,
- (15) *Recalling* in particular paragraph 44r of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002) aimed in particular at enhancing synergy and mutual supportiveness between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the policies and international trade agreements of the World Trade Organization (WTO),
- (16) *Considering* the entry into force of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity,
- (17) *Reaffirming* that the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources is one of the central objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and *noting to that end* the decision of the Seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to engage in negotiations to establish an international regime on access to genetic resources and the sharing of benefits,

(18) *Concerned* that the commercialisation of biodiversity may perpetuate historically inequitable relationships between the developed and developing countries (including States with tropical forests),

(19) *Noting* that providers of genetic resources and traditional knowledge have no means with which to prevent their misuse by multinational corporations,

(20) *Observing* that while a number of Member States require assistance to save their remaining biodiversity reserves, in particular through the maintenance of seed banks, only a few (ten) have to date called upon the services of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI),

(21) *Noting with alarm* the drastic impact that human activity has had on the biodiversity of inland waters and ocean systems that are beyond the jurisdiction of individual governments,

(22) *Concerned* that world leaders have neither given political priority to biodiversity, nor mandated and adequately funded an international organisation such as UNEP to coordinate the current scattered collection of environmental treaty instruments, including the Convention on Biodiversity,

1. *Calls on* governments to take more effective action in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity in order to reduce significantly the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010;
2. *Encourages* governments effectively to implement other international agreements related to biodiversity and to improve coordination in order better to meet the goals of the Convention;
3. *Urges* governments to focus their efforts on the immediate implementation of the programme of work on protected areas, with a view to establishing, by 2010 in terrestrial areas and by 2012 in marine areas, a comprehensive, effectively managed and ecologically representative national and regional system of protected areas;
4. *Recommends* that governments recognise population growth and current global economic structures as major impediments to reducing significantly the loss of biodiversity;
5. *Urges* governments to address the mechanisms of biodiversity loss, inter alia by examining and coordinating methods to reduce invasive species and by addressing climate change by fully and effectively implementing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
6. *Further recommends* that in the Convention on Biological Diversity, the aspect of sovereignty over biological resources be resolved in order to allow an international body to act in areas where resources transcend national borders. To this end, *urges* all Member States of the United Nations to authorise and adequately fund UNEP to upgrade it so that it may serve as the focal point for activities related to biodiversity;

7. *Recommends* that all Member States do their utmost to save remaining biodiversity reserves, and where appropriate, that they apply for the assistance of the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI);
8. *Calls on* governments to take more effective action in general in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, over and above actions in the specific domain of protected areas, by:
 - Fostering the ecosystems approach developed by the Convention on Biological Diversity as a key concept for the management of soils, water and living organisms; and
 - Incorporating the objectives of biodiversity conservation in sectors such as agriculture, forest management, water management and transportation;
9. *Encourages* governments to commit themselves actively to the establishment of an international regime on access to genetic resources and the sharing of benefits;
10. *Also encourages* governments to carry out cooperation in biodiversity conservation, and *invites* developed countries to take concrete action in helping developing countries in this regard, through technology transfer and capacity-building;
11. *Invites* governments which have not yet done so to ratify and implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
12. *Urges* governments to give full consideration in their trade policies to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;
13. *Calls on* governments to strengthen their efforts at all levels for the full implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, in particular through increased allocations of the human, financial and technical resources required, both in developed and developing countries;
14. *Also calls on* governments to develop and coordinate efforts to reduce significantly the loss of biodiversity in ocean areas and inland waters where no single nation has clear jurisdiction;
15. *Undertakes* to take action in the respective parliaments aimed at:
 - Assessing the economic benefits associated with the sound management of ecosystems, so as to incorporate the economic and social value of goods and services provided by biodiversity in decisions involving public finance, policy, planning, and natural resource management;
 - Developing appropriate and country-specific economic and social incentives to foster the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
 - Eliminating or reducing policies and practices that produce incentives leading to biodiversity loss or deterioration.