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RESOLUTION No. 1

ON RECONCILING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH
THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The Ministers taking part in the European Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

Considering that public authorities are being increasingly called upon to resolve conflicts between the requirements of nature conservation and those of economic and social development;

Considering that precautionary environmental measures must be an essential part of governmental policy;

Hereby adopt, with a view to reconciling economic development with the protection of the natural environment:

A. Recommendations on procedures for assessing the effects of development on nature

Having taken into consideration the report presented by the Federal Republic of Germany

the Ministers recommend that Governments:

1. review their legislation and administrative arrangements so as to ensure that all relevant environmental factors are properly assessed and taken into account in the planning of economic and social development schemes;
2. and where no such arrangements exist
 - (i) define the fundamental objectives of nature conservation and landscape planning as a basis for ensuring the compatibility of human activities with the requirements of protection of the natural environment;
 - (ii) prepare suitable measures comprising criteria on

- a. the integration of environmental planning in economic and social development schemes affecting the environment,
 - b. the systematic assessment of environmental compatibility of public measures, including those dealing with private activities;
- (iii) set up effective machinery for implementing these measures, ensuring in particular that the other responsible authorities involved co-operate closely with nature conservation authorities whenever conservation interests may be affected.

The Ministers recommend that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, taking into consideration the related activities of other international bodies and the need to avoid duplication, include in the Intergovernmental Work Programme:

1. the exchange of information and experience between the member States:
 - (i) on goals, legal aspects, procedures and methods for the examination and evaluation of the effects of public measures on the natural environment;
 - (ii) procedures and methods for early and co-ordinated planning of landscape, land use, infrastructures and facilities;
2. on the basis of this exchange of information and experience, the development of general principles for procedural patterns and methods for planning of the natural environment and for the assessment of the ecological impact of alternative courses of action on the natural environment.

B. Recommendations on leisure pursuits and nature conservation

Having taken into consideration the conclusions of the European Technical Conference on Leisure and Nature Conservation held in Hamburg in June 1975, the Ministers commend to the governments the general principles set out in Resolution No. 1 of the Technical Conference and in the appendix thereto;

With regard to Resolution No. 2 on European co-operation adopted by the Technical Conference, the Ministers recommend that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe include the following in the Intergovernmental Work Programme:

1. the assessment of the effects of the various kinds of open-air activities on the well-being of the population and on the natural environment;
2. the study of the carrying capacity of areas of different kinds that are subjected to recreational pressures;
3. the preparation of an inventory permitting comparison of national legislation on leisure areas and protected areas;
4. the rapid and co-ordinated establishment of networks of leisure areas with national and regional development programmes, in accordance with the resolutions of the Vienna Conference;
5. the study of transfrontier leisure areas in relation to nature conservation;
6. the intensified exchange of information on protected areas and leisure areas by means of:
 - (i) periodic seminars for the staff of these areas;
 - (ii) preparation of a manual on the setting up and equipping of information and field centres;
 - (iii) utilisation of the European Information Centre for Nature Conservation of the Council of Europe;
7. the development of effective co-operation with major representative organisations concerned with nature conservation, recreation and tourism.

3. Recommendations on parks and nature reserves

Considering that sites, landscapes, flora and fauna can be protected by means of park and nature reserves, which must accordingly become genuine instruments of national policies for the planning of the natural environment and natural resources ;

Having taken into consideration the report presented by France ;

The Ministers recommend to governments the following measures :

1. the development of an appropriately funded programme to establish or extend protected areas ;

This programme could be put into effect in stages :

- (i) preparation of
 - a. an inventory of natural resources pinpointing sites, landscapes and natural environments eligible for protection ;
 - b. an inventory of ecosystems within their territory which are representative of Europe's heritage ;
- (ii) incorporation of the results of these inventories in regional and town planning studies so as to ensure that due weight is given to them ;
- (iii) speeding-up in each country of the establishment of a European network of areas enjoying different degrees of protection depending on their function and aims, taking into account Resolution (73) 30 of the Committee of Ministers.

This network could come under the patronage of the Council of Europe

2. simultaneous and co-ordinated implementation, within a given protected area, of

- (i) the programme of infrastructures and amenities needed to safeguard the natural environment,

- (ii) any programme of infrastructures needed for the benefit of the local population in cases where there are existing human activities ;
- 3. encouragement of direct, voluntary participation by inhabitants and local authorities in the region surrounding the protected area, in the elaboration of the protection system and its operation in the framework of planning schemes and the development of the local economy ;
- 4. establishment of a coherent system of information and education specific to the protected area concerned but at the same time integrated into a national or European system designed to educate the general public and create greater awareness of the urgent problems involved in the protection of natural resources.

The Ministers recommend the following action to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe :

- 1. the collection and collation of national standards applied to the inventories prepared by governments of member states (see item 1 (i) above), with a view to harmonising efforts made in the various countries ;
- 2. the encouragement of cooperation between member states in ensuring implementation on a European scale of the above measures recommended to Governments with any modifications necessary to take account of local conditions.

This cooperation should aim inter alia at :

- (i) harmonising the aims which regulations are intended to serve,
- (ii) creating joint transfrontier protected areas and coordinating programmes of action in them,
- (iii) stepping up personal contacts and exchanges of ideas.

D. Recommendations on the conservation of the natural and cultural values of the countryside

Considering

1. that although human activities have often impoverished natural scenery, they have resulted in rural landscapes with a combination of cultural-historic and perceptible values, thus satisfying essential needs of mankind;
2. that agriculture and forestry may hold a key position in safeguarding and maintaining valuable agricultural landscapes in all their diversity, while acknowledging that unsound agricultural management and certain agricultural techniques sometimes diminish the natural cultural-historic and aesthetic values of the countryside;

Noting

1. that these values are essential for human well-being which is threatened by their deterioration;
2. that man in many cases no longer enriches but degrades the semi-natural, man-made landscape, as a result of developments in transport and industry;

Having taken into account the report presented by the Netherlands;

The Ministers recommend to Governments:

1. that with regard to all land-use policies, they promote an approach which takes account of ecological considerations;
2. that measures for the safeguarding and management of the countryside should be strengthened;
3. that opportunities should be developed for those who, by their profession or otherwise, are able to play an active role in safeguarding and maintaining the values of the countryside and particularly of the agricultural landscape.

RESOLUTION N° 2

ON PROTECTION OF WILDLIFE

The Ministers attending the second European Ministerial Conference on the Environment ;

Having regard to the three-fold importance - cultural, ecological and economic - of wild flora and fauna ;

Affirming the need to maintain the diversity of wildlife, an irreplaceable genetic reserve, be it in natural surroundings both terrestrial and marine, where man's influence is negligible, in areas under cultivation or even in urban surroundings ;

Noting that an abundance of wildlife can be an economic asset, particularly in regions that are at a disadvantage ;

Considering that the observation of wildlife in its natural habitat is likely to develop respect for all forms of life, especially in young people ;

Having taken into consideration the report presented by Switzerland ;

Recommend that Governments promote measures at national level in order :

1. to protect natural habitats, restore those that have been damaged and create new habitats where appropriate ;
2. to provide wild species with the space necessary for their subsistence, migration and reproduction ;
3. to make sure that the maximum capacity of habitats is not exceeded by certain types of activities ;
4. to protect species that are either rare or endangered by changes to their habitat, picking, collecting, trading, hunting, snaring or egg-collecting ;
5. to impose suitably stringent controls on the use and discharge of substances which might be harmful to wildlife and natural habitats ;

Recommend that governments examine the possibility of their States ratifying, if they have not already done so, the international conventions relevant to the work of the Conference, and in particular the Convention on international trade in endangered species of wild flora and fauna signed in Washington on 3 March 1973.

Recommend that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe :

1. speed up the work in the medium-term plan (1976 - 1980) concerning :
 - (i) the drawing up of lists of animal and plant species, and also the biocenoses to which they belong, threatened with extinction and in need of urgent protective measures ;
 - (ii) the studies on natural and semi-natural ecosystems of Europe ;
 - (iii) the setting up of the network of biogenetic reserves, by giving priority to the listing of biotopes which are of special value for threatened, endemic and migratory species, as a contribution to the UNESCO world network of biosphere reserves (MAB programme, project 8) ;
 - (iv) the devising of measures to protect natural habitats, particularly wetlands, which are the subject of the campaign conducted in 1976 and 1977 by the European Information Centre for Nature Conservation ;
2. Set up within the Council of Europe an ad hoc committee of experts, with instructions to draft a legal instrument on the conservation of wildlife, with particular reference to migratory species, and natural habitats in Europe, which would obviate the difficulties encountered in the implementation of existing conventions, to be submitted as soon as possible to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, who would examine the most expedient procedures for the final adoption of this instrument, preferably by the convening of a conference of government plenipotentiaries ; this work should be guided inter alia by the following considerations ;

(i) General principles

- a. provision should be made for :
- controls on activities and on the use of substances that could prove harmful to the natural environment and wildlife ;
 - creation of reserves particularly representative of habitats subject to modification ;
- b. research and the preparation of inventories concerning the conservation of European flora and fauna and their habitats, with particular reference to threatened, endemic or migratory species, should be co-ordinated and where desirable carried out in common ;
- c. it is important not to overlook species which are not yet either rare or threatened but which may become so if not protected by special measures. In principle the introduction of foreign species into Europe should be discouraged. It should only be authorised when justified ;

(ii) Special provisions

- d. special attention should be paid to the problems of migratory species and threatened and endemic species and their habitats ;
- e. migratory species whose living space includes part of the territory of two or more states should be regarded as a common resource and subject to concerted conservation measures ;
- Protection zones should be established in such a way that migration is unimpeded ;
- Obstacles to migration should be removed whenever possible ;
- f. the parties should do their utmost to prevent threatened and endemic species from becoming extinct through man's activities and to eliminate the causes of their scarcity ;

They should co-operate with other states in exchanging information and in better safeguarding this part of Europe's natural heritage ;

- g. representative habitats in Europe should be conserved in sufficient quality, quantity and area, so as to ensure the survival of animal and plant species and the communities they form.

RESOLUTION No 3

ON VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION IN NATURE CONSERVATION

The Ministers taking part in the European Ministerial Conference on the Environment;

Considering that private organisations can make a valuable contribution in the field of nature conservation and the environment, in particular by arousing public awareness of these problems and by taking practical conservation measures;

Noting that in certain countries private organisations working in the field of nature conservation and the environment have been given legal status by reason of the contribution they make to the drawing up of plans for the natural environment and to the protection of animal and plant species;

Acknowledging the report presented by the United Kingdom;

Recommend that Governments:

1. foster co-operation between official bodies and private organisations working in the field of nature conservation and the natural environment;
2. facilitate the work of private organisations playing an active part in nature conservation by giving them appropriate support;
3. foster active participation by individuals and groups in nature conservation and evaluate their considerations and alternative plans as a contribution to comprehensive environmental planning.

Recommend that the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe foster co-operation between the competent Council of Europe bodies on the one hand and, on the other, non-governmental international organisations working in the field of nature conservation and the natural environment and national private organisations co-operating with national official bodies, especially in connection with the information campaigns organised by the European Information Centre for Nature Conservation at the Council of Europe, which must play a co-ordinating role.