

4.108 Open access to biodiversity data and information

RECALLING that *Principle 10* of the *Rio Declaration* notes that environmental issues are best handled with participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level, and that at the national level each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes;

FURTHER RECALLING that Article 17 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) addresses "... the exchange of information, from all publicly available sources, relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity...";

RECOGNIZING that Article 8(j) of the CBD states that, subject to national legislation, all efforts must be made to "preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity...";

AGREEING with the Joint Statements from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and the Conservation Commons to the 8th Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the CBD (Curitiba, 2006), which called on all Parties to ensure, wherever possible, open access to biodiversity data from all publicly funded sources and research;

ACKNOWLEDGING that open access to, and effective use of, conservation data, information and knowledge resources by all sectors of society is essential both to enable effective decision making and to empower those concerned with the conservation of biodiversity and the natural world; and

CONSIDERING the *Principles of the Conservation Commons*, urging open access to biodiversity data and information, along with fair and responsible use of these assets;

The World Conservation Congress at its 4th Session in Barcelona, Spain, 5-14 October 2008:

1. CALLS ON IUCN's members to:
 - (a) endorse the *Principles of the Conservation Commons*; and
 - (b) ensure open access to all non-sensitive biodiversity data collected through conservation efforts and scientific research;
2. RECOMMENDS that IUCN's members:
 - (a) take full advantage of existing global, regional or national open-access mechanisms for publishing biodiversity data (e.g. GBIF, Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN), and the Reference Centre on Environmental Information (CRIA), among many others); and
 - (b) ensure that species/specimen-level data, geospatial data, associated metadata, and information on conservation results are made available through open-access mechanisms; and
3. RECOMMENDS that a biodiversity data and information management plan, which supports open access to monitoring and research results and a long-term policy for archiving this data, accompany all new proposals for biodiversity assessments, conservation and research.