

RESWCC3.007 A moratorium on the further release of genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

Congress Reference: CGR3.RES011-REV1

RECALLING that the IUCN Intersessional Programme Framework adopted at the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000) included a request to play a major role in identifying and defining issues that affect biodiversity and that attention be paid to environmental impacts of biotechnology;

APPRECIATING that Resolution 2.31 *Genetically Modified Organisms and biodiversity*, which was adopted at the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000), noted two key concerns regarding GMOs, namely:

(a) the potential for significant reduction or loss of biodiversity as a result of releases of GMOs into the environment; and

(b) the potential role of GMOs in “achieving global food security” which it notes “have not been adequately demonstrated so far”;

NOTING that there has been introduction and promotion of GMO products worldwide, especially in developing countries, with inadequate controls on their entry into national or regional markets, and that there is growing concern over their safety for biodiversity, human and animal health;

AWARE that the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety has incorporated the precautionary approach as set out in Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in determining risk management as to what is an acceptable level of risk;

OBSERVING that GMO introduction and promotion are driven primarily by the private sector, whose interests in development and marketing may be greater than in assessing potential risks to biodiversity, human and animal health;

AWARE of the broad public concern about GMOs and their potential risks to biodiversity, human and animal health; and

WELCOMING the Key Result Areas in the draft IUCN Intersessional Programme 2005–2008 which take into consideration the impact of GMOs on biodiversity, such as calling upon key private sector companies to integrate biodiversity into their corporate social responsibilities and actions;

The World Conservation Congress at its 3rd Session in Bangkok, Thailand, 17-25 November 2004:

1. CALLS for a moratorium on further environmental releases of GMOs until this can be demonstrated to be safe for biodiversity, human and animal health beyond reasonable doubt;
2. REQUESTS IUCN to promote information and communication on GMOs, especially in developing countries, and to support initiatives to ratify and implement the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; and
3. URGES the Director General to compile and disseminate within one year from the adoption of this resolution a report on current knowledge of the dispersal and impacts of GMOs on biodiversity and human health.

The delegations of Japan, The Netherlands and Sweden indicated that they were unable to support this Resolution.

State and agency members United States refrained from engaging in deliberations on this motion and took no national government position on the motion as adopted for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolution Process.