

DECLARATION BY THE LATIN AMERICAN NETWORK FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION ON NATIONAL PARKS, OTHER PROTECTED AREAS, AND WILD FLORA AND FAUNA (REDPARQUES) TO THE 21ST CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (COP) OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Aware of the contribution of protected areas and other effective conservation measures based in areas to the achievement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's objective of stabilizing greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change (Art. 2), and of the role of protected areas in the Parties' commitment to promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs (Art. 4).

Deeply concerned by the current and future threat climate change poses to biodiversity, to the ecosystem services provided by protected areas, and to the communities that directly or indirectly depend on the areas,

Recognizing the links between climate change mitigation and adaptation actions required in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), particularly Aichi Target 11 that refers to terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine protected areas,

Welcoming with satisfaction that Ecosystem based Adaptation practices, including protected areas, have been recognized in the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), documenting significant co-benefits, synergies and links between adaptation and mitigation actions that are evidenced by strategies based on protected areas,

Welcoming also with satisfaction the conclusion of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice's (SBSTA) work on reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation along with measures to reinforce the conservation of forests,

Highlighting that protected areas contribute to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change by reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience of ecosystems during the stabilization and reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, specially in regards to biodiversity conservation, maintaining the flows, quality and quantity of water for human consumption and renewable energy generation, regulating local and regional climate, mitigating the impacts of extreme events and sea level rise, guaranteeing food, water and energy security, sustaining livelihoods by maintaining ecosystem services that contribute to poverty reduction, among others,

Recognizing that national protected areas systems are among the most effective strategies to avoid deforestation and ecosystem degradation and therefore contribute to the stabilization of greenhouse gases concentration in the atmosphere,

Recognizing that all terrestrial, fresh water, marine and coastal biomes, such as the Amazon, island systems, peatlands, the Mayan rainforest, temperate savannas, Andean paramos, the Mesoamerican reef system, forests and wetlands, are fundamental because of the ecosystem services they generate and to safeguard social, cultural and economic interests of society as a whole and specially of local communities, traditional populations and indigenous peoples that more directly depend on them,

Reaffirming the commitments undertaken through the Promise of Sydney¹, specifically in regards to the recognition of the increasing role played by protected areas and territories conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities to address climate change; which obliges to improve the diversity, quality and vitality of the governance and management of those areas, as well as to promote the appropriate recognition and support for areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities,

Reaffirming that strengthening protected areas in the face of climate change is a commitment with present and future generations, given that they are key for the conservation of biodiversity, the provision of spaces for the development of evolutionary processes and the co-adaptation with sociocultural systems, and for safeguarding the wellbeing of millions of people through their ecosystem services.

REDPARQUES decides to [ACTION]

Carry out additional efforts by national authorities, for the management of protected areas and other conservation measures based in areas, considering regional and sub regional interactions, in the planning of the global climate regime in the context of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Strengthen protected areas systems through the implementation of the Program of Work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as Aichi Target 11, in the framework of design and management with climate change adaptation and mitigation criteria, guaranteeing their conservation and the expansion of their coverage, for a more effective management, and a better integration to their national, sub regional and regional contexts, taking into account local development schemes and ecosystem connectivity,

Promote participative management with local communities, afro-descendent and indigenous peoples, among other actors, in the sustainable management of our countries' biodiversity,

Implement programs for education in values, working along and in alliance with indigenous peoples and local communities, recognizing the long tradition and knowledge, collective rights and responsibilities regarding land, water, natural resources and culture, among others,

Integrate protected areas as climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies that promote sustainable and climate friendly development, through:

- a. Strengthening protected areas in the actions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;
- b. Inclusion of national protected areas systems in the national adaptation strategies, including in the National Adaptation Programs of Action (NAPAs) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and other programmatic documents;
- c. National recognition of the role of protected areas as mitigation strategies to absorb, store and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as their benefits beyond carbon capture;
- d. Monitoring and reporting of the contribution of protected areas and other effective conservation measures for climate change adaptation and mitigation;

Promote awareness among citizens and decision makers about the key role protected areas play in adaptation, mitigation, resilience and sustainable development.

¹ World Parks Congress, November 2014.

REDPARQUES calls upon the international community to

Recognize national and regional efforts of countries to improve the contribution of protected areas and other effective conservation measures to the national strategies to address the adverse effects of climate change and accomplish existing goals.

Increase the attention given to protected areas and other effective conservation measures as an adequate response to the effects of climate change,

Respond to the need for greater scientific, technical, technological and financial assistance, among others, to achieve a more effective management of protected areas and ensure the strengthening, design and management, under climate change criteria, of protected areas systems in the context of the Program of Work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

Signatory countries: Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Francia (French Guyana), Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, México, Nicaragua, Peru, Panamá, Surinam, Uruguay y Venezuela.