

DECLARATION OF THE LATIN AMERICAN TECHNICAL COOPERATION NETWORK ON NATIONAL PARKS, OTHER PROTECTED AREAS, WILD FLORA AND FAUNA (REDPARQUES) ON THE CONTRIBUTION OF PROTECTED AREAS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN WELL-BEING- TO COP 13 OF THE CBD

Recognizing that the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held from 4 to 17 December 2016, in Cancún, Quintana Roo, Mexico, constitutes an arena to promote agreements and commitments that boost conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, putting forth their integration into sector and inter-sector plans, programs and policies with emphasis on agricultural, forestry, fisheries and tourism sectors.

Considering that REDPARQUES, comprised by 19 member states from Latin America and the Caribbean has undertaken since 1983 joint efforts in favor of conserving protected areas and sustainable use of their natural resources in order to positively contribute to society.

Considering that the Protected Areas Systems of the Region significantly contribute to sustainable development and human well-being, providing essential ecosystem services crucial for society, economy and biodiversity from local to global level, and that protected areas serve as support for its conservation.

Reaffirming that the Convention on Biological Diversity sets out the objectives agreed by the international community for the conservation of biological diversity and that it is the most important global instrument to promote and guarantee the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable distribution of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources;

Recognizing that the Strategic Plan for Biologic Diversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi goals provide a universally accepted framework to take action on biodiversity , and taking into account that greater efforts are required to achieve the goals by 2020;

Considering that the enforcement of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas adopted by means of Decision VII/28 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) must take place at national and regional level, and that Decision IX/18 of the CBD invited the Parties to "Promote the development and importance of ecological networks for both terrestrial and marine areas, at national, regional and sub regional levels, where appropriate";

Remembering that regional initiatives with regards to the ecosystem vision of conservation of biodiversity –as the one developed for the Amazon (Amazon Vision) - seek to support the implementation of the work plan of the CBD on protected areas of this region and achievement of the relevant Aichi Goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (2011-2020), agreed in COP 10 of the CBD;

Recognizing that protected areas provide important ecosystem services for protection and sustainable use of biodiversity, in particular in the agricultural, fishery, forestry and tourism sectors, contributing to food, water and energy security, which are essential to safeguard the

social, cultural and economic interests of society as a whole, and in particular those of the indigenous peoples and local communities.

Recognizing the declaration of REDPARQUES presented at COP 21 on Climate Change in Paris, in which 18 Latin American countries pointed out the importance of protected areas as effective natural and strategic solutions with regards to climate change, defining the importance of intensifying and improving the establishment, management and design of protected areas incorporating climate change criteria,

Following the effort to implement Aichi goals 11 and 12, in particular the ‘Curitiba Roadmap’, designed by each one of our countries through the focal points of the CBD, at training workshop S-CBD in Curitiba – Paraná, Brazil in October 2015,

Highlighting the importance of offering protected areas services to the social, cultural and economic interests of our countries and our region, a standpoint confirmed by the experts and the institutions at the VI World Parks Congress, held in 2014 in Sidney, Australia, which led to the “Sidney Promise”.

The members of REDPARQUES undertake to:

1. Continue with their commitment to the conservation of National Protected Areas Systems highlighting its contribution to sustainable development, linked to the Sustainable Development Objectives and the Paris Agreement (2015), and especially to human well-being, which comprises health, recreation, right to knowledge, cultural expressions of local and indigenous peoples, among others.
2. Establish and strengthen the integration of protected areas, biological diversity and ecosystem services with other economic sectors such as agriculture, forest economy, fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, among others, to contribute to sustainable development and human well-being.
3. Promote cooperation among our countries to successfully achieve the CBD Strategic Plan, in particular with regards to Aichi Goals 11 and 12, with special attention to all the elements including coverage, ecological representation, connectivity and integration of landscapes, effective management and equality in the management of protected areas and other effective conservation area-based instruments that contribute to preventing the extinction of threatened species and to improve their conservation , as well as contribute to other Aichi Goals and to the Work Plan of Protected Areas, in addition to the national goals of the member states.
 - a. Support the implementation of the ‘Curitiba Roadmap’ which was designed through focal points for the CBD at the S-CBD training workshop in Curitiba in October 2015,
 - b. Promote technical and financial cooperation mechanisms with strategic partners, including civil society, academia, local communities and multi-lateral institutions,
 - c. Promote the integration of related Conventions and their respective focal points, such as RAMSAR, UNFCCC, CITES, World Heritage, among others.

4. Strengthen and support regional initiatives on protected areas and other effective conservation measures, highlighting Amazon Vision, and others such as the Bioma Pampa, Selva Maya, Cordillera and Fosa of the Cayman Islands, Mesoamerican Reef System, High Andean Wetlands, Paraná Missions Corridor, Cuenca del Plata including Pantanal, Eastern Tropical Pacific Corridor (CEMAR), Trifinio Biosphere Reserve, Regional Initiative for the Conservation and Wise Use of Mangroves and Corals, among others and develop new initiatives that support and accelerate the implementation of the Aichi Goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as well as the national goals of the National Protected Areas Systems of the member states.

Latin America and the Caribbean join efforts for biodiversity conservation integrating protected areas into sustainable development and human well-being.