

13th Session

Agenda Item: A

**Securing Natural World Heritage Sites
Protecting Endangered Natural World Heritage Sites**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization General Conference,

Concerned about the lack of awareness of protecting Natural World Heritage sites around the world,

Alarmed by the fact that the African region takes up almost 70% of endangered sites despite their precious wildlife and rich biodiversity,

Regretting strongly that UNESCO does not provide measures for protecting all Natural World Heritage sites in the same way,

Acknowledging World Heritage educational resource kit for teachers World Heritage in Young Hands launched by Finland with the aim of promoting World Heritage education among the younger generation, stakeholders, and heritage specialists, which eventually led to some financial support from local stakeholders,

Recalling the General Assembly of States Parties to the World Heritage Convention in its Resolution 19 GA 8 to increase the standard percentage used in the calculation of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund from 1% to 2%,

Acknowledging the lack of financial funding for developing Member States to protect their Natural World Heritage sites,

Noting with deep concern about how some of the funding provided to some Member States is not specifically used for Natural World Heritage sites but instead gets embezzled or used misappropriately,

Recognizing the importance of Member States checking on other Member States to use their allocated funding on the protection of Natural World Heritage sites effectively, including management, maintenance and development of sites,

Recalling the benefits of increasing the Natural World Heritage quota which will increase the number of tourists and improve the economic conditions of Member States and thus will give additional funds for Member States to continue protecting Natural World Heritage sites,

Recognizing the existence of the Rapid Response Facility has successfully supported 31 World Heritage sites and protected 30 million hectares of natural sites by focusing on emergency situations such as forest fires, although some Natural World Heritage sites are in danger due to the lack of and slow process of fund allocation,

Noting with regret how the natural environment has been decreasing between 2015 and 2020, the rate of deforestation was estimated at 10 million hectares per year, down from 16 million hectares per year in the 1990s,

Deeply concerned about the huge impact of climate change on Natural World Heritage sites are increasing the percentage of threatened Natural World Heritage Sites from 26% in 2017 to 33% in 2020,

Concerned with the fact that climate change is promoting the drying of organic matter in forests to be resulted in doubling the number of large forest fires from 1984 to 2015,

Concerned with how non-renewable energy is affecting Natural World Heritage sites as it leads to deforestation to make areas for mining to produce necessary resources,

Being aware that the number of Natural Heritage sites in danger is still increasing in spite of the fact that 19 National World Heritage sites have been eliminated from the list of World Heritage sites in danger due to Member State's efforts,

Taking note that UNESCO Co-operation Agreement was designed to support UNESCO's actions to protect and enhance Natural World Heritage sites through technical and financial aid to acknowledge expertise in heritage conservation,

Acknowledging that International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) announced that the number of endangered species in the world has increased by 196% between 2007 and 2020,

Taking note that maintenance of ecosystem resilience is essential for maintaining resilient socio-economic systems for protecting habitats, and an expanded connected network of well-managed conservation areas is the most robust proven solution to confront these problems,

Acknowledging that professionals and experts are requesting assistance from Member States to contribute to the fieldwork ,

Deeply concerned by the fact that poaching and wildlife trafficking by poachers are severely threatening the survival of some of the most vulnerable species on the planet and is one of the main reasons causing animal extinction,

Recalling the document of Monitoring of the State of Conservation of World Heritage Natural Properties the in 11th session of the World Heritage Committee in 1987,

Noting with concern that poaching and poverty are highly interconnected,

1. *Requests* all Member States to hold annual UNESCO World Heritage Day on April 18th to resolve the problem of Natural World Heritage sites in danger and raise awareness by:
 - a. Welcoming the work of leaders, scientists, and experts to actively protect Natural World Heritage sites of Member States;
 - b. Holding workshops to encourage people, especially the younger generation, from all over the world to teach and share the importance of preserving Natural World Heritage sites;
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2. *Recommends* Member States to make some actions on how to protect and promote Natural World Heritage sites to citizens such as but not limited to:
 - a. Actively use “World Heritage in Young Hands”;
 - b. Make credible posts about Natural World Heritage Sites on Social Networking Services
 - c. Publish quiz sections in magazines or newspapers;
 - d. Create effective and powerful TV commercials;
 - e. Produce class textbooks containing clear visual images and simple text;
3. *Encourages* Member States to increase the standard percentage used in the calculation of the contributions to the World Heritage Fund from 2% up to 5% due to the significant lack of funding in certain Endangered Natural World Heritage sites that will allow Member States to save Endangered Natural World Heritage, by maintaining, developing, managing, and preserving the Endangered Natural World Heritage sites;
4. *Further encourages* Member States to make reports of the usage of the World Heritage Fund every 3 to 6 months to more easily track the use of funds to and avoid corruption or embezzlement.
5. *Recommends* developed Member States to share their financial knowledge to allocate their funding properly into the protection of the Endangered Natural World Heritage sites by matching developing Member States situation, such as but not limited to:
 - a. Giving guidelines and protocol;
 - b. Conducting workshops from the Ministry of Culture and Heritage or Ministry of Finance;
6. *Further recommends* all Member States to increase the number of Natural World Heritage sites in order to promote more tourism to Natural World Heritage sites that would increase the country’s economy with the conditions that Member States:
 - a. Regulate tourist behavior and conduct strict surveillance with the support of local authorities;
 - b. Protect a part of Natural World Heritage Sites that will not influence the cycle of life within the Natural World Heritage Sites;
 - c. Follow sustainable policies and SDGs on Natural Heritage Sites;
7. *Invites* all Member States to prioritize Member States who are in need of immediate funds and whose Natural World Heritage sites are in danger, such as natural disasters, conflicts, increasing numbers of endangered animals and plants;

8. *Encourages* Member States to transition from non-renewable to renewable energy in order to mitigate climate change and protect Natural World Heritage Sites in ways such as:
 - a. Creating guidelines of transition from non-renewable to renewable energy and submitting them to UNESCO by 2030;
 - b. Joining an annual workshop held by Member States who have successfully installed renewable energy and share their knowledge;
9. *Recommends* Member States to exchange knowledge from experts about protecting habitats between developed Member States and developing Member States by:
 - a. Holding an annual conference to talk about the current situation of Endangered Natural World Heritage sites;
 - b. Holding technical workshops which include field visits to provide a platform for participants to discuss and learn from the Member State's intense efforts to reverse the negative environmental trends in the site successfully;
10. *Encourages* developed Member States to provide additional financial aid to nations that are combating illegal poaching and wildlife trafficking, in order to upgrade security in Natural World Heritage sites through ways such as:
 - a. Increasing security personnel through training programmes;
 - b. Increasing finance of firearms and surveillance technology;
 - c. Building infrastructure that could be used to guard Natural World Heritage Sites;
11. *Suggests* technologically or economically Developed Member States to provide necessary systems and technology to monitor wildlife and illegal activities including poaching, illegal logging and illegal mining, in ways such as:
 - a. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) in Natural World Heritage sites to monitor wildlife in their habitats;
 - b. Video surveillance using drones;
 - c. Accurate radiological tests in airports, and ports;
12. *Recommends* Member States with Natural World Heritage sites which are affected by poaching to support alternative sustainable income frameworks for the rural underprivileged living close to Natural World Heritage Sites, who are likely to turn to poaching for basic necessities and income, in order to reduce the number of poachers and illegal wildlife trade, in ways such as but not limited to:
 - a. Government supported agricultural programs;
 - b. Non-farming household enterprises;
 - c. Manufacturing industries;
13. *Further requests* Member States to establish a geographical space, managed through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of natural heritage, ecosystems, and cultural values, to be called "Protected Areas", that are focused around Natural World Heritage sites, to measure progress towards the attainment of biodiversity conservation targets.