

Press Release
Refugee Studies Centre (RSC), University of Oxford, December 2004

IUCN World Conservation Congress recognizes the specific needs of Mobile Indigenous Peoples.

Adopted resolution number RESWCC3.018 "*Mobile Peoples and Conservation*" was ratified at the World Conservation Congress in Bangkok, 17-25 November. Organised every 3-4 years by IUCN - the World Conservation Union - the Congress helps define conservation policy worldwide. The Resolution is based largely on collaboration between Dr Dawn Chatty of the Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford and others and notes the *Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation* (www.danadeclaration.org) which is the outcome of an Oxford-led initiative to increase collaboration between social and natural scientists, conservation practitioners and policy makers and sets out five principles to guide a new approach to the relationship between mobile peoples and conservation.¹

Resolution 068 promotes issues of mobile peoples (e.g., nomadic pastoralists, shifting agriculturalists, hunter-gatherers) and conservation.² It recognizes for the first time that mobility has been a highly effective component of community strategies for conservation of wild and domestic biodiversity, promotion of environmental integrity and sustainable use of natural resources. It also notes that policies of mobility restriction and sedentarization deprive mobile indigenous peoples of cultural identity, access to and capacity to manage natural resources, and have frequently led to destitution and abject poverty. Often their very mobility has precluded their involvement in wider discussions concerning natural resource use and local conservation policies.

To counter this lack of visibility the Standing Committee of the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation sponsored the participation at the Congress of mobile indigenous peoples' representatives from Jordan, Syria, Namibia, Tanzania, and Iran. Dr. Chatty facilitated a key forum at the Indigenous Peoples' Preparatory Meeting assisting the involvement of representatives in the main Congress and the successful passing of Resolution 608.

A programme of support to the World Alliance of Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP) is now being developed to ensure that the new Resolution is translated into practice.

For further details, contact Dr. Dawn Chatty, Refugee Studies Centre, University of Oxford, at dawn.chatty@geh.ox.ac.uk

A draft of Resolution 068 is available at www.iucn.org/congress/members/submitted_motions.htm

¹ Other supporting groups included: Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology, University of Kent at Canterbury, the World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN), the World Wide Fund for Nature, Indigenous Peoples' Ad Hoc Working Group (AHWG), Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact Foundation (AIPP), Forest Peoples Programme (FPP), Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) of the IUCN, and the World Alliance for Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP).

² The resolution builds on progress made at the World Parks Congress in Durban, South Africa in September 2003 and at the meeting of the Convention of Biological Diversity in Kuala Lumpur in February 2004 where a political commitment was made to "to ensure necessary participation and equitable sharing of the benefits of protected areas, particularly with indigenous and mobile peoples, as well as local communities."