

Press Release

Dana Declaration Supports Mobile Indigenous Peoples' Promotion of New Approach to Conservation at the IUCN 5th World Parks Congress

The University of Oxford (RSC), in its ongoing effort to promote the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation (Dana, Jordan, 2002) was represented at the 5th World Parks Congress (WPC) held in Durban, South Africa by Dr. Dawn Chatty. Held only once every ten years, the WPC set out future priorities and practical measures related to protected areas policy in the coming decade

The Dana Declaration is the outcome of an Oxford-led initiative, an international conference of concerned professionals in the social and natural sciences as well as conservation practitioners and policy makers. The Declaration calls for a new approach to Mobile Peoples¹ and conservation based upon a partnership between the two groups who are, in fact, unrecognized allies.

In Durban, Dr. Chatty helped facilitate a unique forum for representatives of Mobile Indigenous Peoples from 16 countries, to make their voices heard among the 2,500 environmental experts and scientists in attendance.

On September 6th and 7th, in a pre-meeting of the WPC, these representatives of Mobile Peoples met to decide a strategy for making their concerns known to the WPC. The workshop was supported by the Standing Committee of the Dana Declaration on Mobile Peoples and Conservation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) of the IUCN and the Ad Hoc Working Group of Indigenous Peoples.

Together the representatives of Mobile Peoples identified common concerns shared by indigenous peoples. They agreed to integrate the term 'indigenous' into their official group name rather than leave it as a footnote definition, thus expressing their solidarity with the larger and well-established Indigenous and tribal peoples movement world-wide. The Mobile Indigenous Peoples pointed to the unique needs and perspectives derived from their mobility, arguing that mobility is a way of life, a management strategy for sustainable land use and conservation, and a distinct source of cultural identity.

Based largely on the Dana Declaration, they succeeded in getting their recommendations, on Mobile Indigenous Peoples and Conservation (5.27) for the Durban Accord and Plan of Action adopted by the Congress by consensus (full details below). They also fully shared and endorsed the recommendations adopted at the Congress on Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas (5.24).

Finalized on the 17th of September the Durban Accord and Plan of Action are the primary outreach products of the Congress representing a new paradigm for protected areas management. These will be taken forward to the VIIth meeting of the Congress

of the Parties (COP7) to the Convention of Biological Diversity where the signatory states will be formally requested to make a strong political commitment to “put in place mechanisms to ensure necessary participation and equitable sharing of the benefits of protected areas, particularly with indigenous and mobile peoples, as well as local communities.” (IUCN-WPC).

Having met for the first time at the WPC, representatives of Mobile Indigenous Peoples pledged to continue the work, and initiated the creation of the World Alliance for Mobile Indigenous Peoples (WAMIP).

Vth IUCN World Parks Congress Recommendation 5.27

The Mobile Indigenous Peoples’ Recommendation 5.27 urges governments, NGOs, local communities, civil society, international organizations and inter-governmental bodies to give due recognition to Mobile Indigenous Peoples’ rights and special capacities and needs and thereby:

1. ENSURE that Mobile Indigenous Peoples have secure and full rights to co-manage and self-manage their lands, that they can derive equitable benefits from the use of natural resources, including eco-tourism, and that their customary law is respected and recognized in national law;
2. RECOGNIZE collective and customary rights of mobile communities and respect the integrity of the Mobile Indigenous Peoples’ resource management systems;
3. ESTABLISH Mobile Indigenous Peoples’ community conserved areas recognising traditional and evolving institutions and customary norms as a protected area governance type;
4. PROMOTE policies to facilitate cross-border mobility and trade in transboundary protected areas by Mobile Indigenous Peoples who have traditionally lived in and used those areas;
5. ADOPT and promote adaptive management approaches that recognize the dependence of Mobile Indigenous Peoples on common property resources and build on their mobility and different lifestyles, livelihoods, resource rights and tenure, customary laws, and dynamic scales of land use;
6. ADAPT protected area and community conserved area management to the special needs of mobile communities, including their use rights, resource management practices, seasonal and temporal rights, corridors for movement, and targeting mobile use to achieve conservation objectives;
7. RESPECT, promote and integrate the use of traditional knowledge, institutions and customary laws and resource management practices of Mobile Indigenous Peoples alongside mainstream science on a complimentary basis. Develop common conservation objectives. Ensure that development of protected areas and related interventions are evaluated on the basis of local knowledge and are implemented through Mobile Indigenous Peoples’ institutions;

8. RECOGNIZE and guarantee the rights of Mobile Indigenous Peoples to the restitution of their lands, territories and resources, conserved and traditionally occupied and used sustainably by them, that have been incorporated within protected areas without their free, prior and informed consent; mobility should be restored where appropriate;
9. PROMOTE cross-cultural dialogue and conflict resolution within and between mobile and sedentary people around and in protected areas;
10. ADOPT and promote the Action Plan that has been developed at the World Parks Congress, and implement the Dana Declaration; and
11. APPROVE the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as adopted in 1994 by the now UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, and for those peoples who want it, to ratify and effectively implement ILO Convention 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries.

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For more information on the Dana Declaration, see www.danadeclaration.org.

ⁱ The term mobile peoples (i.e., transhumant and “nomadic” pastoralists, hunter-gatherer, shifting agriculturalists and other peoples with dynamic regular changing patterns of land use) encompasses a subset of indigenous peoples whose livelihoods depend on extensive common property use of natural resources and whose mobility is both a management strategy for dealing with sustainable use and conservation and a distinctive source of cultural identity.