



RESOLUTION #21

TITLE:

Seeking a status for non-intervention in nature conservation in England



WHEREAS

The Convention Relative to the Preservation of Fauna and Flora in their Natural State was adopted in London in 1933, as an agreement for the protection of African wildlife amongst colonial powers within territories in Africa. The significance of the Convention is that it marked an international agreement on protected areas as the primary goal for achieving wildlife preservation. The Convention defined a "strict natural reserve" very much in terms that can be recognized in present day protected area legislation in Europe and IUCN.

The UK legislated for its own protected areas in 1949, then in 1981, and in England and Wales in 2006. The basis of protection in this legislation is the conservation of flora, fauna and features (geological or physiographical) through a generalised prescription of limiting damage. There is no terminology that is descriptive of natural systems. In practice, conservation has taken a compositional approach requiring intervention to maintain stasis so that the features at designation remain unchanged. England's reserves are all classified as IUCN Category IV Managed Reserves under the obligation through the Convention on Biological Diversity of reporting on protected areas using the category system.

In 2009, the Chair of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas considered the UK to be lagging behind other European countries in the quality of its reporting of protected areas, requiring a more thorough use of the IUCN categories. A process of engagement with statutory agencies and stakeholders is underway, and which may result in reclassification of some protected areas in England that require an approach of non-intervention to maintain their presence in the new IUCN category.

THEREFORE

We recognize that there are a small number of protected areas in England where there is a locally originated policy of non-intervention.

We applaud local managers of these protected areas for their vision in allowing freedom to natural processes.

We are concerned that these protected areas are effectively in breach of the requirement to maintain stasis, and that the gains in wild nature in these areas could be lost if the local policy is over turned.

RESOLVED

Call upon the Joint Nature Conservation Committee, the public body that advises the UK Government and devolved administrations on UK-wide and international nature conservation, to use the opportunity of the proposed consolidation of wildlife law to consider carefully the need to give status for non-intervention in nature conservation in England.

Recognise that non-intervention areas would more roundly contribute to our undertaking to promote the protection of ecosystems and natural habitats under Article 8d of the Convention on Biological Diversity

PROPOSERS

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