

The Bariloche Temperate Grasslands Declaration

VI Southern Connection Congress: "Gondwana reunited: a southern perspective for a changing world." February 2010 - Bariloche, Río Negro, Argentina

We, the contributors and/or participants of the all-day Symposium "Progress with conservation and sustainable management of the Southern Hemisphere's indigenous temperate grasslands: developing a strategic plan", organized by the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative (TGCi); an initiative of the World Commission of Protected Areas (WCPA) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), recognize that:

Agreeing that the Hohhot Declaration¹ (June, 2008) sets up a strong case for conservation and sustainable management of indigenous temperate grasslands and closely associated ecosystems at a global level, given that these ecosystems are currently considered among the most imperilled on the planet;

Recognizing that since the Hohhot Declaration, new pressures and threats to indigenous temperate grasslands preservation have emerged and former threats are now pressures;

Considering that indigenous temperate grasslands still occupy significant areas in the world, and play a key role in national economies;

Realizing that exploitation or replacement of indigenous temperate grasslands might have increased as a result of the global financial crisis and to counterbalance its impact on development and economy, although the link between cause and effect has not been analyzed on a global level;

Acknowledging that climate change can seriously affect biodiversity and the provision of goods and services by indigenous temperate grasslands, thus having a negative impact on people that depend on them for sustaining their lives and livelihoods;

Considering that mitigation recommendations made at the 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, Copenhagen, 2009) focus on the reduction of deforestation and restoration of degraded forests, but no mitigation approach deals with indigenous temperate grasslands whatsoever;

Realizing that indigenous temperate grasslands whether sustainably grazed or ungrazed have a great potential to mitigate climate change effects through significant carbon capture and storage, and that such potential has not been fully understood or explored;

¹ The Hohhot Declaration outlines the value of the world's temperate grasslands, why they are endangered and how important it is for citizens of the world to work together to protect them.. It was endorsed by the participants of the first global workshop of the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative (Hohhot, China, June 2008).

Considering that vulnerable communities living in temperate grasslands are already suffering from the impacts of climate change, and that urgent actions need to be taken to enhance their adaptation capability and to reduce their vulnerability to climate change effects;

Realizing that the exploitation of indigenous temperate grasslands to produce new/alternative energy sources (biofuels, wind farms, etc.) is sometimes essential for development and economic growth, but that the impact of such activities can further compromise the conservation and sustainable management of these grasslands;

Considering that at the 9th COP to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD, Buenos Aires, 2009) it was stated that sustainable land management can make a critical contribution to fortify our ability to adapt to a changing climate because it strengthens resilience and enhances agricultural production, food security and economic development through carbon sequestration and efforts to combat soil loss and restore plant cover;

Acknowledging that many indigenous temperate grasslands play an important role in poverty and hunger alleviation and food production, and thus they are strategic for the accomplishment of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) at a national level;

Considering that the 10th COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will soon be held (Nagoya, Japan, October 2010) and taking into account that we are celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity, which brings a new opportunity to raise awareness of society and decision makers on the relevance of biodiversity to human well-being ;

Therefore,

We the contributors and/or participants of the Temperate Grasslands Conservation Initiative Symposium in Bariloche from three continents and eight countries of the Southern Hemisphere, plus Canada, the United States of America and England:

Declare that the temperate indigenous grasslands require urgent and targeted action to protect, maintain and restore their many valuable social, cultural, economic and ecological services they provide to sustain human life and well-being;

Encourage the CBD Conference of the Parties reunited at the 10th meeting in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, to adopt specific measures to protect temperate grasslands within the revised and updated Strategic Plan for the Convention, including new targets for temperate grasslands conservation for the post-2010 period;

Recommend to the COP to increase funds through the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the funding mechanism of the CBD, for temperate grasslands conservation and sustainable management;

Encourage other donors to increase funding for temperate grasslands conservation and sustainable management;

Encourage the 16th COP for the UNFCCC to value the potential of temperate grasslands to mitigate climate change effects and to propose new mechanisms and tools for mitigation based on sustainable management;

Strongly suggest that, in light of the International Year of Biodiversity, IUCN Secretariat, institutional members and expert commissions adopt specific communication actions to raise the awareness of the need to improve the conservation and sustainable management of indigenous temperate grasslands of the world;

Encourage the United Nations to declare before 2012, a UN International Day of Temperate Grasslands for the promotion of conservation of the biome;

Recommend that the IUCN Secretariat, in preparation to the next World Conservation Congress (Jeju, Republic of Korea, 2012) include temperate grasslands as one of the key issues for the meeting;

Encourage government and non-government organizations working in temperate indigenous grasslands to design and/or test innovative tools, methodologies and research for sustainable management, stewardship, climate change adaptation, economic assessment and social well-being;

Encourage markets that commercialize goods and services produced from temperate indigenous grassland resources to utilize sustainable production practices that maintain ecosystem functions, connectivity and local identity, and restrict the spread of biosecurity threats.

We call upon all sectors of society to collaborate towards the implementation of the recommendations proposed herein.

Alan Mark, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Andrea Michelson, Quito, Ecuador.
Stephan Halloy, Santiago, Chile.
Juan Carlos Ledezma, La Paz, Bolivia.
Karina Yager, Washington D.C., USA.
William Bond, Cape Town, South Africa.
Nick Zaloumis, Cape Town, South Africa.
Richard Williams, Darwin, Australia.
James Camac, Melbourne, Australia.
Warwick Papst, Melbourne, Australia.
Keith McDougall, Queanbeyan, Australia.
Louise Gilfedder, Hobart, Australia.
Matt McGlone, Christchurch, New Zealand.
Michael Pirie, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
Javier Beltran, Bariloche, Argentina.

Bill Henwood, Vancouver, Canada.
Katharine Dickinson, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Stephan Beck, La Paz, Bolivia.
Mercedes Ibáñez, Santiago, Chile.
Donaldo Bran Bariloche, Argentina.
Emma Gray, Cape Town, South Africa.
Clinton Carbutt, Cascades, South Africa.
Ary Hoffman, Melbourne, Australia.
Carl-Henrik Wahren, Melbourne, Australia.
Ian Mansergh, Melbourne, Australia.
Fred Duncan, Hobart, Australia.
William Lee, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Geoffrey Rogers, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Kelvin Lloyd, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Andrea Noguez, Bariloche, Argentina.

Ana Cingolani, Cordoba, Argentina.
Ana Faggi, Buenos Aires, Argentina,
Marina Homberg, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Deigo Schell, Buenos, Aires, Argentina
Woutert Buyaert, London, England.
Glen Stewart, Christchurch, New Zealand.
Marcus Simons, Dunedin, New Zealand.
Conrado Tobón, Medellin, Colombia.
Daniel Renison, Cordoba, Argentina.
Javier Punteiri, Bariloche, Argentina.
Laura Malmierca, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Gustavo Iglesia, Bariloche, Argentina.
Maria Menvielle, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Melisa G. Renison, Cordoba, Argentina.
Gustavo Zuleta, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Barbara Johnson Guida, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Francisco Cuesta-Camacho, Quito, Ecuador.
Colin Meurk, Christchurch, New Zealand.
Mary K. Arroyo, Santiago, Chile.
Carolyn King, Hamilton, New Zealand.
Ivan Pedro Niveyro, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
Natalia Schroeder, Mendoza, Argentina.
Grace de Haro, Bariloche, Argentina.
Mercedes Ibanez, Santiago, Chile.
Esteban Kowaljow, Buenos Aires, Argentina.