

DEFINITION OF NATIONAL PARKS

Considering the importance given by the United Nations to the National Park concept, as a sensible use of natural resources, *and considering* the increasing use which has been made during these last few years in some countries of the term "National Park" to designate areas with increasingly different status and objectives, the 10th General Assembly of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources meeting in New Delhi in November, 1969 *recommended* that all governments agree to reserve the term "National Park" to areas answering the following characteristics and to ensure that their local authorities and private organisations wishing to set aside nature reserves do the same:

A National Park is a relatively large area (1) where one or several ecosystems are not materially altered by human exploitation and occupation, where plant and animal species, geomorphological sites and habitats are of special scientific, educative and recreative interest or which contains a natural landscape of great beauty and (2) where the highest competent authority of the country has taken steps to prevent or to eliminate as soon as possible exploitation or occupation in the whole area and to enforce effectively the respect of ecological, geomorphological or aesthetic features which have led to its establishment and (3) where visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes.

Governments have accordingly been requested not to designate as "National Park":

1. A scientific reserve which can be entered only by special permission (strict nature reserve);

2. A natural reserve managed by a private institution or a lower authority without some type of recognition and control by the highest competent authority of the country;

3. A "special reserve" as defined in the African Convention of 1968 (fauna or flora reserve, game reserve, bird sanctuary, geological or forest reserve, etc.);

4. An inhabited and exploited area where landscape planning and measures taken for the development of tourism have led to the setting up of "recreation areas" where industrialisation and urbanization are controlled and where public outdoor recreation takes priority over the conservation of ecosystems (parc naturel régional, nature park, Naturpark, etc.). Areas of this description which may have been established as "National Parks" should be redesignated in due course.