



RESOLUTION #24

TITLE:

Conservation and enhancement of the great ecosystem of Western Iberia, the cross-border area of the Iberian Peninsula



WHEREAS

The West Iberian Peninsula is the largest strip of continuous natural area of Western Europe: an enormous transnational transboundary? area of more than 2.5 million acres, spanning the Portuguese-Spanish border in the central-western part of the Iberian Peninsula, with Salamanca-Portalegre in the North and Caceres-Castelo Branco in the South, encompassing areas such as the Campo Charro, the Sierra de Gata, Malcata, Peña de Francia, La Batuecas, Arribes del Duero and Tajo Internacional *etc.*;

This area does not have clearly defined geographical boundaries along much of its borders. We have based our definition on a combination of geographic (mountains and rivers), socio-economic, infrastructural (lack of infrastructure disrupting ecological connectivity) and ecological criteria. The latter in particular represents one of the finest examples of Mediterranean agricultural systems of the Peninsula, hosting some of the most endangered European species such as the Iberian lynx, *Lynx pardinus*, imperial Iberian eagle, *Aquila adalberti*, the black vulture, *Aegypius monachus*, the Egyptian vulture, *Neophron percnopterus*, Bonelli's eagle, *Aquila fasciata* and the black stork, *Ciconia nigra*.

THEREFORE

As per the motion M060 on ecological transborder corridors of West Iberia as adopted by the World Congress of Wilderness by the IUCN in Jeju , 2012 that Congress recognises the "Hispanic fringe in the west of the Iberian Peninsula as one of the best examples of the agrosistema del monte mediterraneo, as being one of the most extensive and significant biodiversity hotspots in Europe."

CONCERNED by the development of new industrial initiatives in energy and open-pit mining in West Iberia.

COGNIZANT of the threat that such activities are irreversible within these ecosystems.

RECOGNIZING the severe threats that this territory faces, such as uncontrolled proliferation of human infrastructure and the fragmentation of ecosystems threatening its high level of biodiversity.

CONSCIOUS of the opportunities that the overall areas/territories included in the Red Natura 2000 might offer for the local population, not only from environmental but also from an economic point of view.

MINDFUL of the need to promote preventive strategies to avoid further fragmentation, in order to increase the resilience of the present ecosystems and human communities in the face of global change and encourage the restoration of key areas that have already been severely affected;

RECOGNIZING also the enormous business potential of the meadows and Western Iberia to become a premier ecological tourist destination in Europe which has the capacity to generate employment and settlement opportunities for the local population.

RESOLVED

We, the delegates of the 10th World Wilderness Congress (WILD10), propose to the Spanish and Portuguese Governments and the public administration responsible for environmental assessments to work together in a coordinated manner with the objective to:

- Keep West Iberia as a space without any external influences and irreversible transformation of the ecosystem.
- Protect Western Iberia of open-pit mining, in particular any plans relating to uranium mining in the province of Salamanca.
- Promote the restoration of inactive mining areas.
- Exclude the entire area from wind energy and other major infrastructural development, in particular dams, as a preventive mechanism and to safeguard its great wealth and biodiversity.
- Pass and promote legislation that protects the ecosystem of Iberian pastures, thus supporting the conservation of biodiversity.
- Define an area within West Iberia that could meet criteria to be declared a World Heritage site by UNESCO.
- Develop new business opportunities relating to the conservation of pastures and biodiversity such as ecotourism and the production of local high quality products that are socially and environmentally sustainable.

PROPOSER

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