Antarctic Resolution at the 10th World Wilderness Congress
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Introduction

Approximately every four years, the WILD Foundation hosts the World Wilderness Congress. From October 3-10, 2013, the Tenth Congress (hereafter called “WILD10”) was convened in Salamanca, Spain. Dedicated professionals from national, regional, and local governments, national and international non-governmental indigenous people, students, and researchers met to share how their communities and programs are protecting wilderness. At WILD10, the idea of protecting wilderness was wide-ranging, and included traditional conservation and preservation, as well as “rewilding,” wild cities, and community-based management.

In addition to inspirational and scholarly presentations, the Congress attendees passed a series of resolutions relating to wilderness practices and places around the world. One of the resolutions directly addresses the Antarctic, and we urge the Parties to take practical steps to put this resolution into practice.

The Antarctic Treaty Area Resolution at 2013 World Wilderness Congress

WILD10 delegates passed the following resolution regarding the Antarctic. The text is succinct enough to provide in full, though the full resolution is included as an attachment:

The Antarctic Treaty Area as a Contiguous Wilderness Area

WHEREAS: The Antarctic continent and the Southern Ocean remain one of the few areas on the planet which have been relatively little impacted from direct human activities, hence possessing immense global value as one of the world’s last remaining large contiguous wildernesses.

NOTING: That the Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty have committed to the long-term protection of the intrinsic and wilderness values of the Antarctic Treaty area under the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty and its Annexes.

That Members of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources have committed to the overall conservation of the Southern Ocean within their area of jurisdiction and to allow rational use of some species only according to strict criteria.

AWARE: That human activities are continuing to expand, diversify and intensify in Antarctica, threatening to fragment the Antarctic wilderness into numerous smaller pieces.

THEREFORE: The 10th World Wilderness Congress recognizes that proactive actions to limit the expansion of the human footprint in Antarctica are necessary to protect the Antarctic wilderness from erosion and fragmentation.

RESOLVES to recommend that Consultative Parties to the Antarctic Treaty:

1) Reaffirm their commitments to take actions to protect the entire Antarctic Treaty Area as wilderness, by 2016, the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Protocol.
2) Adopt concrete measures to prevent the further increase of the human footprint in Antarctica.

1 Lead Author Dr. Jessica O’Reilly, with comments from James Barnes, Jill Barrett, Dr. Ricardo Roura and Dr. Rodolfo Werner.
**Conclusion and Policy Implications for the ATCM**

Antarctica is widely appreciated for its wilderness values and the Antarctic Treaty System can be regarded as an example of international cooperation for wilderness preservation and management. By reaffirming the commitment to protect Antarctica as a wilderness, and taking concrete steps to minimize the area and intensity of the human footprint in the Antarctic, the Antarctic Treaty System can continue to be a strong model for international wilderness protection, with the ATCM playing a key role to ensure effective management.

ASOC urges the ATCPs to take particular steps towards protecting the Antarctic wilderness and minimizing human impact in the region, including:

1) Continuing wilderness mapping projects;
2) Identifying inviolate areas and wilderness areas, in accordance to Annex V, Art. 3 (2), with management plans and permit conditions that emphasise the preservation of those areas;
3) Performing remediation at affected sites;
4) Taking steps to decrease human impact, including minimizing shipping and logistics travel, and minimizing new base construction (including through e.g. replacing with retrofits, remodels, recycling of old bases, and station sharing); and
5) Educating the global public about the unparalleled wilderness values of Antarctica and promoting its protection.