

98.3 ENSURING BIODIVERSITY/BIOSECURITY IN CANADA

Whereas, the Government of Canada support the principle of ensuring preservation of the local Biota, as called for in Agenda 21, Chapter 15, Conservation of Biological Diversity, thus ensuring bio-security; and

Whereas, development and exploitation of natural resources in Canada, on land, in or under her waters, by developers/exploiters (i.e. agricultural lands, forests, fisheries, minerals, ores, oil) have often been carried out in ways that destroy for or fragment the necessary habitat for a species to survive, particularly those on the endangered list, and

Whereas, in Canada, much of the exploitation of natural resources takes place in areas remote from population centres, in territory where the Biota exists in spite of naturally-occurring adverse conditions; and

Whereas, the mandate of Environment Canada to monitor various ecosystems and species has been severely restricted in the last decade due to cutbacks in operating funds, forcing the cancellation of useful surveillance programs such as the Herring Gull Contaminants Monitoring Programme and the Porcupine Caribou Study, as well as the reduction of staff required to implement the constant review necessary to ensure compliance with regulations designed to protect local bio-systems; and

Whereas, it is estimated that up to 100 species world-wide become extinct every day due to habitat destruction and pollution; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to:

1. Enact strong and enforceable Federal Endangered Species Legislation, which will provide a national safety net for endangered species making it applicable to everyone regardless of race or country of origin; and
2. Provide the necessary funding to enable Environment Canada to inspect and enforce an Endangered Species Act; and
3. Develop and actively pursue a programme of constant surveillance of bio-systems in areas of natural resource exploitation to ensure preservation of the local biota as called for in Agenda 21, Chapter 15, Conservation of Biological Diversity, thus ensuring bio-security.