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RESOLUTIONS

Adopted at the meeting of the International Committee of Natural History Museums in Mexico City on 29 October 1980

Resolution 1

Be it resolved that the International Committee of Natural History Museums of ICOM continue its efforts to develop an International Code of Ethics for Natural History Museums throughout the world, and specifically that the basic document, presented at this meeting, be more widely distributed so that additional comments can be sought from museum colleagues not able to attend this meeting; that all who took part in this meeting be encouraged to prepare, in writing, specific comments for the use of the sub-committee on ethics in their effort to revise the document; and, finally, that this sub-committee, after considering all comments, present a final draft of an International Code of Ethics for Natural History Museums at the next meeting of this ICOM Committee.

Resolution 2

Recognising the urgency of the present and projected loss of the world's heritage of natural habitats and species, described and undescribed;

Recognising the vital role museums have in monitoring that loss;

Realising that such environmental management, determined from ecological studies, can be biologically sound only if based on adequate taxonomic and systematic studies;

Recognising that a number of reports have recently been published in various countries drawing attention to serious gaps in our knowledge of the biotas of major geographical regions and of habitats being destroyed or adversely affected;

Recognising that the same reports note that the teaching and training of taxonomists is seriously insufficient for present and future requirements; and

Recognising the essential and fundamental role of Natural History Museums and departments in providing adequate facilities through the collections and libraries for the present and future training of curators, taxonomists and systematics;

Be it resolved that the International Committee of Natural History Museums of ICOM:

1. Establish a working group to examine anew and to co-ordinate existing information on collections and future curatorial needs, especially those pertinent to the conservation of the world's natural resources,
2. Urges all countries to institute or expand training programs in their natural history museums, departments and research institutes; and
3. Urges countries to provide greater employment opportunities for biological taxonomists and systematists, especially in museums.

Resolution 3

The International Committee of Natural History Museums of ICOM resolves that:

1. Palaeontological collections should be in the charge of specialist curators. Museums without such staff should seek advice, and should consider passing important collections to institutions where they will be properly curated.
2. Organisations, such as Museums Associations and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), should be urged to establish courses for specialist training in all aspects of geological curating and specimen conservation.
3. Type and other described and cited fossil specimens should be deposited in a reputable and publicly accessible museum, and Editors of journals should accept papers for publication only when this condition is satisfied. Types should be made freely available for research purposes; in some cases

preparation of such specimens may be necessary and if curators are in any doubt about granting permission they should consult other specialists in the field for advice.

4. Museums with stated acquisition policies should be encouraged to make them widely known.
5. Palaeontological sites and especially type sections, should be treated with respect through following recommended Codes of Conduct; where necessary sites should be protected by legislation to prevent over-collecting.
6. In addition to computer technologies and data-formats, terminology and hierarchies require standardisation if computerised cataloguing techniques are to become widely used and effective for indexing and data-exchange in palaeontology.

Resolution 4

Recognising that museums have a fundamental role to play in environmental education, especially with respect to promoting the objectives of the World Conservation Strategy; and

Recognising that there are an increasing number of museums that are developing exhibitions and education programs in the field of environmental education and that many more are keen to do so;

Be it resolved that the Natural History Committee expresses its support of the working group on Environmental Education formed at the May, 1979 meeting in Vienna whose role is to support and promote the work of museums in environmental education.

The working group's objectives include:

1. Development of ways to encourage natural support and exchange of ideas,
2. Promotion of co-operation and co-ordination between museums and other organisations involved in environmental education, e.g. the IUCN.
3. Preparation of a series of brief guidelines to help those initiating projects of environmental education in museums.
4. Encouragement of the development of joint proposals between museums in the field of environmental education.
5. Provision of consultancy service to museums where needed.

Resolution 5

Recognising that many environments and biota of the world are undergoing destruction, and that the role of natural history museums is to preserve examples of such biota for the future.

Be it resolved that the International Committee of Natural History Museums of ICOM recommends that:

1. ICOM, UNESCO and other pertinent world organisations establish as an urgent priority the conservation of natural resources in endangered environments of the world;
2. Natural History Museums and their programs be established in those areas where destruction constitutes a threat to natural patrimony;
3. When the formation of new natural history museums is impossible, action be taken to implement the international co-operation necessary for salvaging representative collections of flora and fauna for permanent preservation in pre-existing museums of natural history.

Resolution 6

That the International Committee of Natural History Museums adopt as a continuing project the compilation and dissemination of the histories of natural history museums in ICOM's participating countries, each history to feature a narrative historical account, to include accompanying illustrations, diagrams of the "model(s)" of the museums showing the relationship between collecting, exhibiting, and educating; and a schematic synopsis of its initial design and execution, and projected plans for the future.