

**WORKSHOP: RURAL WOMEN-BIODIVERSITY-DEVELOPMENT
IN NORTH AFRICA
MARRAKESH 25-28 APRIL 1995**

DECLARATION OF MARRAKESH

- 1) Considering Biodiversity as the variety of genes, species and ecosystems in the land and water environment and that it covers these components in their natural states and modified by human activity,
- 2) Considering the fact that biological diversity has an interesting value and constitutes the basis for sustainable development,
- 3) Considering genetic diversity as a potential with an economic value for agriculture, industry and medicine,
- 4) Considering that the different forms of life maintain the chemical and physical equilibrium of the surface of the earth,
- 5) Considering biological resources as a whole,
- 6) Recognizing the double function of rural women as managers of the family and environment,
- 7) Considering the close relationship between women and natural resources as well as the paramount importance that they can play in the safeguard of biodiversity,
- 8) Recognizing the value of knowledge and technology developed by rural women for the sustainable use and conservation of biological resources,
- 9) Considering the threats of all kinds that menace biodiversity and in particular those posed by poverty

The participants at the workshop on Rural Women, Biodiversity and Development in North Africa, organized by IUCN in collaboration with the IUCN members in North Africa declare that:

- 1) Biodiversity is an invaluable wealth for our countries,
- 2) Its preservation and its sustainable use constitute a duty and a responsibility for all sectors of Society, Governments and Non-Governmental organizations and requests therefore a close collaboration between them,
- 3) Its preservation and sustainable use involving our responsibility at the individual and collective levels,
- 4) Women and in particular rural women are part and parcel in this safeguard,
- 5) Women as unwilling actors of the degradation of biodiversity but also victims of its consequences can be mobilized for its safeguard,
- 6) The safeguard can only be achieved within the framework of an integrated educational and training policy fostered by consciousness,
- 7) An educational, training and consciousness Policy has necessarily to be built on alternatives of sustainable development from the ecological, economic and social points of view,
- 8) The participations of women at the decision making process is a necessary condition in order to ensure their mobilization for the protection of biological diversity as well as for the improvement of their living condition, and
- 9) This participation has to be the core of the preoccupations of all projects launched by governments and non-governmental organizations at the national and international levels.