

DECLARATION 1

Bangkok, Tailand, november 18 2004.

National Chilean IUCN Committee

WE NEED YOUR HELP

The nature sanctuary Carlos Andwandter of the Cruces River constitutes the first Ramsar Site in Chile. This wetland system extends over an area of more than 4.500 hectares. The area hosts a large variety of flora and fauna species, especially birds, and includes the largest population in Chile of black neck swans (*Cygnus melancoryphus*), a regional emblematic specie. As well, it is an important historic site and one the most relevant tourist attractions in the South of Chile.

In February 2004, a pulp plant started to operate about 15 km upstream of the protected wetland system, draining its industrial waste water into the river. Recently, the environmental authorities of the country have detected severe irregularities in gas and liquid emissions of this industry. In addition, a possible significant increase of mortality of the black neck swans has been registered and this has alarmed people and authorities in the region and the national conservation community.

We need the international community to manifest their concern, asking information about this situation to the Chilean authorities, as well request them urgently to investigate profoundly the effects and causes of the detected problems, like pollution and swan mortality.

Please, endorse this declaration of the National IUCN Committee of Chile and contact the Chilean authorities at following e-mail addresses:

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Ambassador Sr. Jose Manuel Ovalle Bravo – Direction of Environment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Sr. Jose Luis Garcia-Huidobro – Regional Director of the National Commission of Environment (CONAMA, Region de Los Lagos). E Mail: msanhueza.10@conama.cl

For further information please contact the following members of the IUCN chilean Committee.

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