



September 10, 2012

EMERGENCY STATEMENT
regarding
SDCC's Delegates being Denied Entry to South Korea

On September 6, 2012, Delegates of the Save the Dugong Campaign Center (SDCC), a Japanese NGO, arrived at Jeju International Airport in order to participate in the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Jeju, South Korea. Two of the Delegates, Mr. Yutaka Umisedo, Representative of SDCC, and Mr. Yosuke Matsushima, a Staff member, were denied entry into the country without explanation by the Korean authorities.

The Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Consulate in Jeju, and IUCN-Japan have requested the Korean government and the Korean Organizing Committee for IUCN to allow the two Delegates to enter the country for the IUCN Congress. Also, IUCN has requested the Korean government and Korean Organizing Committee for IUCN to allow the Delegates to enter the country, on the bases of the IUCN Statutes and Contractual Obligations for hosting the Congress. The requests have not been met by the Korean government, which claims that Mr. Umisedo and Mr. Matsushima have violated immigration regulations.

We find the Korean government and the Korean Organizing Committee for IUCN's denial of the Delegates' entry to the country without clear explanation unacceptable. We also find the Korean government and Korean Organizing Committee for IUCN's refusal of the requests made by IUCN and the Japanese government extremely problematic.

All the Delegates of SDCC have worked hard to prepare for and have looked forward to the IUCN Congress, determined to play our role as an IUCN NGO "to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable." Mr. Umisedo and Mr. Matsushima should be playing important roles in our Booth presentation, Poster and Knowledge Café Sessions, and Press Conference.

It should be mentioned Mr. Umisedo, an Okinawan musician, has been working to help create a better understanding and a better relationship between Korea, Japan and Okinawa. His songs include *Torajino hana* (A Bellflower), which addresses the issues of Korean comfort women and *Halla san* [Halla Mountain], which is about the tragedy of the April 3 Incident in Jeju. Mr. Umisedo has expressed his deepest disappointment with the Korean government and the Korean IUCN Organizing Committee as he considers himself "a friend of Korea."

SDCC requests the Korean government and the Korean IUCN Organizing Committee to

provide clear explanations why Mr. Umisedo and Mr. Matsushima were denied entry to the country. SDCC also requests the Korean government and the Korean IUCN Organizing Committee to allow the delegates to participate in the IUCN Congress.

Finally, SDCC would like to express sincere appreciation to IUCN for showing concerns and taking immediate and appropriate action regarding this urgent matter.

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