SPECIAL CHIEFS ASSEMBLY
DECEMBER 6, 7 & 8, 2011, OTTAWA, ON

Resolution no.63/2011

TITLE:	Protection and Conservation of Lands and Waters
SUBJECT:	Environmental Stewardship
MOVED BY:	Steven Nitah, Proxy, Lutsel K-e Dene Band, NWT
SECONDED BY:	Bill Erasmus, Proxy, Yellowknives Dene First Nation (Dettah), NWT
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. First Nations rights of self-determination are recognized in the International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including the rights to maintain and strengthen their own distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions and to own, use, develop and control their lands, territories and resources.

B. The Declaration requires States to consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free and informed consent prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources.

C. The fifth World Parks Congress (Durban, Sept. 2003) stated that national and international recognition of indigenous and community conserved areas is an urgent necessity, and called on signatories to the Convention on Biodiversity to recognize and support indigenous conservation areas.

D. The Programme of Work on Protected Areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) requires signatories to recognize and promote protected area governance to achieve the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the management of existing protected areas and the establishment and management of new protected areas.

E. First Nations have been fulfilling their responsibilities to protect lands, waters, wildlife and sacred sites within their homelands under their own laws and customs for millennia;

F. Canada is a signatory to the International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 8th day of December, 2011 in Ottawa, Ontario

SHAWN A-IN-CHUT ATLEO, NATIONAL CHIEF

G. First Nations laws, customs and institutions for the protection and conservation of lands are not fully recognized in the current laws and policies of the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, which provide only limited recognition for the exercise of constitutionally protected Aboriginal and treaty rights and advisory roles for First Nations in the management and establishment of protected areas such as National Parks.

H. The free and informed consent and full and effective participation of First Nations in the management of existing and proposed protected areas in Canada has not yet been achieved.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Mandate the National Chief and Assembly of First Nations to communicate to the federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments the urgent need for the specific recognition of First Nations laws, customs and institutions for the protection and conservation of lands in legislation and policy, including provisions for the designation and establishment of new indigenous protected areas and true partnerships on a government-to-government basis for existing protected areas.

2. Continue to support the efforts of First Nations to protect lands, waters, wildlife and sacred sites within their homelands in accordance their own laws and customs.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 8th day of December, 2011 in Ottawa, Ontario

SHAWN A-IN-CHUT ATLEO, NATIONAL CHIEF