Annual Report 1997
Messages from IUCN

The new Council voted into office by the members at the very successful Montreal Congress has picked up and run with many of the initiatives advanced in Montreal. Beginning our term with a "getting to know you" retreat in the Swiss mountains, we have built on the revised Statutes of the Union by, for example, further refining the criteria for setting up Regional and National Committees. Recognised formally for the first time, these new membership structures flourished and spread during the year, bringing nearer the objective of giving members more say in putting together the Union’s programme.

Some interim results of the Council’s own reflections on how it might work more efficiently during the triennium are setting a multi-year calendar for Council meetings and issues on which it might concentrate, defining a more active role for the Bureau between Council sessions and reinvigorating the Committee process. There remains much to do on this front; the objective is to reduce the time spent on formal processes in order to expand the time available to address substantive conservation policy questions.

The strength of the Union lies to a marked degree with the volunteers. New mandates and membership rolls have been drawn up for two reshaped and renamed Commissions. The Commission on Ecosystem Management and the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy were making good progress by the year’s end.

The members’ instruction from Congress to make up for lost time over the previous decades by reaching out to and influencing that element of society which manages or owns much of the world’s natural resources — the private or corporate sector — has been followed up, through a joint Task Force with senior corporate representation. The Task Force worked on principles and criteria for IUCN-private sector interaction and on initial elements of an IUCN strategy to cover this sensitive but important new area for Union action.

In the drive for an ecologically sustainable world both genders must be fully engaged, informed and consulted. Much of the Union’s field work involves both genders — given the daily impact of women on resource use and the growing tendency to work with and through communities — but this is not yet fully reflected in the Union’s governing bodies, its Secretariat or its procedures.

Components like the Environmental Law Commission and the Commission on Education and Communication have make remarkable progress in recent years in bringing women into their roles and their governance. A joint Council/Secretariat team, with the active support of David McGowen and myself, is to bring new policy recommendations to Council shortly in order to ensure that all elements of the Union recognise the practical advantages of such moves.

Looking ahead to the next Congress – which Council has decided should be in the year 2000 — I am concerned to ensure that a more integrated process for determining that the members’ wishes as reflected in their resolutions are incorporated into the programming process during the meeting itself. We are working on proposals to secure coherence and integration.

We are now into the year of our fiftieth Anniversary. The Union has registered a long list of impressive credits over this half-century; we should pay generous tribute to our predecessors who achieved this, often without the resources or the structures which are now in place. But let us remember that while progress is being made in individual countries it cannot be claimed that a truly sustainable approach to development on a global basis is in sight. If this Union has one basic message for the world from its decades of endeavour it is that though removing human poverty and ensuring a decent quality of life for all is an imperative, unless development cares for the renewable natural resources of the planet it will not endure. That is a lesson we have to hammer home over the next fifty years.

My greetings to all.

Yolanda Kakabadse
President
This annual report to members focuses on the eight thematic goals for the Union’s programme. These agreed goals, taken together with a set of new global initiatives, are a response to the calls made by the Montreal Congress for the Union to sharpen the focus of the programme and reorient it to address emerging issues. High priority areas where the Council agreed current efforts should be strengthened are field and policy work in biodiversity, environmental economics, sustainable use of natural resources and social impacts. Emerging issues identified include fresh water, fisheries, invasive species, ecosystem planning and management, and — an intriguing and sensitive new area — land tenure.

This action on the programmatic level illustrates that Congressional injunctions have guided the Secretariat and Council to a marked degree in 1997. The full integration of the parallel processes of programme formulation and resolution adoption is a must for the second Congress, but the membership should know that a good proportion of their desired initiatives — though not all as yet — has been incorporated into the revised Union programme for the triennium. Monitoring and evaluation of such assessments is one of the eight agreed goals, so new techniques for mainstreaming assessment work are evolving through experimentation in the field in Eastern and Southern Africa and Meso and South America. The first results of this serious attempt to turn the Union into a “learning” organisation are promising.

The Council’s work on fostering regional approaches through membership structures has its reflection at the global Secretariat level where a Management Board with an inbuilt majority of participants from the regions has been set up. The Board is charged inter alia with making proposals to Council on the annual programme and budget. The new body has been given decision-making powers to the degree feasible under the Statutes. The experiment continues.

One of the more direct instructions from Congress was that we ensure growth of the IUCN programme and pursue fundraising aggressively. Programme growth in the field has been ensured by the vigour of the newly empowered regional networks and the fact that decentralisation of decision-making powers in the Union has been paralleled by similar decentralisations by many donor agencies. Thus there has been exponential growth in the resources available in the regions over the last year or two. Regrettably there has been no matching expansion in the volume of those flexible funds which help us innovate in areas like membership servicing, network building and strengthening of technical capacity in the centre. The year ended with 20 per cent higher overall expenditure than in 1996, but with the need to accelerate plans to refocus and fine down some headquarters activity.

So what were some of the cutting-edge activities during the year? There were many. Several are mentioned in this report but three examples suffice here:

- Innovative work by the small but growing network of environmental economists in the Union designed to raise awareness among decision-makers of new ways of assessing the value of natural resources and ecosystem services and incorporating these into economic assessments and systems of national accounts;

- IUCN’s co-sponsorship with the World Bank of a representative multi-stakeholders meeting which led to the setting up in early 1998 of a World Commission on Dams to address the social, environmental and economic impacts of these human interventions in the processes of nature. The Commission reports in July 2000;

- Facilitation by the Species Survival Programme of a meeting among African elephant range states designed to move towards a consensus on conservation of this magnificent example of mega-fauna.

Let’s mobilise our networks to multiply the number of successful initiatives like these in our second half-century.

David McDowell
Director General
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Introduction

The conservation of the biological diversity of this planet ultimately depends on the sustainable use of living natural resources. Sustainable use ultimately depends on people and their interaction with nature. The interaction of people with their environment is influenced by a myriad of social, political and natural factors. These range from human induced factors like legislative and policy frameworks, markets, cultural forces and conflict, to the fluctuations of nature — far from immune to humans — seen in climate change and ecosystem functions.

IUCN – The World Conservation Union – combines its traditional expertise in fostering species survival, protected areas and ecosystem management with an expanding tool kit of social, economic and advocacy skills to promote the sustainable use of living natural resources. By creating dialogue and understanding IUCN brings people together to share knowledge and experience and build a common future.

The Union’s work can best be summarised as exercising influence. IUCN communicates the knowledge of its networks of experts to decision makers – government and international decision makers as well as local communities. It facilitates communication between groups of different backgrounds and cultural outlooks. The meetings IUCN convenes or facilitates allow opposing groups to convey and discuss their different perspectives and interests. Communication promotes understanding and helps people to work together for a common future.

By influencing all those with an interest in the use of biodiversity – scientists, developers, business, government and conservationists – to communicate and work together, IUCN is helping develop a global force for the truly sustainable use of natural resources.

This Annual Report sets out ways in which the Union achieves this in terms of the eight goals for its work set by the IUCN Council.

Expanding Skills for Conservation

IUCN promotes training and education

To ensure the long term sustainable use of natural resources, local communities need to develop skills in managing their resources and organising themselves to share benefits and profits and to influence government bodies (see page 9). In turn, governments need to learn how to collaborate effectively with local communities as well as improving their skills for the development of effective policy and legislation (see pages 4 & 6). Non-governmental organisations also need to improve their skills in working with both government and local communities (see page 8).

Policies for Sustainable Use

IUCN brings people together to plan the future

Disputes over the use of natural resources are widespread and rarely beneficial to those resources and the people who depend on them. Dialogue can promote understanding and ultimately agreement on how to use resources for mutual benefit. To promote dialogue, IUCN brings together opposing sides and helps them reach agreement (see pages 10 & 15). The Union promotes knowledge and systems for sharing resources, even between nation states (see page 13), and promotes mechanisms for effective communication between governments and local people (see page 14).

Influencing Society

IUCN shows different sectors of society how they can benefit from sustainable living

In a world of diminishing natural resources, traditional practices of sustainable use
are often forgotten as social and economic forces push people to overexploit nature. IUCN strives to help people understand the benefits of sustainable use. To do this, the Union works at several levels. It promotes sustainable use among local communities (see page 20). It brings all those with an interest in biodiversity together at the Global Biodiversity Forum so that international conventions can better understand how ecological sustainability can be achieved (see page 16). IUCN plans also to collaborate with business to promote the sustainable use of commercially exploited natural resources (see pages 18-19).

Supporting Members

IUCN helps its members develop their potential for conservation

Through cooperation, individual organisations can become more effective in their work. The Union brings its nine-hundred-plus organisational members together to share knowledge and experience, to collaborate on projects, and to develop a common agenda for the future. With a common approach and enlarged pool of knowledge, IUCN members can achieve more together than in isolation (see page 22). The Union also strengthens member organisations by helping develop their communication and networking skills (see page 40) by ensuring that members can meet with and learn from their peers (see page 24), and by improving the working relations between member organisations and multilateral organisations (see page 25).

Sharing Knowledge

IUCN brings its knowledge of species and ecosystems to bear

IUCN gathers, synthesises and disseminates information on endangered species and habitats through its expert networks. It delivers the best available information to decision-makers and practical information such as guidelines and case studies to conservationists and local communities worldwide (see pages 28-31). It is improving markedly these services by convening and participating in a consortium of IUCN Commissions, Programmes and Members dedicated to opening access to and availability of their collective wealth of data, information and expertise (see page 26).

Using Natural Resources Sensibly

IUCN helps societies use their natural resources more sensibly

IUCN initiates practical projects for sustainability (see page 32) and promotes the use of innovative methods for assessing the value of natural ecosystems (see page 36). Through TRAFFIC, IUCN helps to monitor and evaluate the sustainability of trade in wildlife products and species, and works with those exploiting natural resources to encourage sustainability (see page 34).

Mobilising the Union

IUCN: a global union for sustainable living

All elements of the Union – Commissions, Members and the secretariat – work together to pool their respective skills and influence. IUCN thus represents a significant constituency for nature which allows the organisation to use its influence and expertise around the world. IUCN is a truly global union for sustainability. It believes in sound science, socially delivered (see pages 38-39).

Working for Change

Assessing IUCN's work in favour of society and nature

The Union consistently measures and evaluates the effectiveness of its work to see how it can improve its efficiency and capacity to ensure the sustainable use of natural resources.
capacity building for

National Wetland Policies

Uganda is one of the first countries in the world to develop a national wetland policy. This action, taken by the government, represents a milestone in freshwater conservation and management in Africa.

WITNESSING considerable damage to some of the country's most important wetland ecosystems, the government decided in 1986 to stop further drainage of wetlands— for the extension of pasture or crops— until a policy for conservation and sustainable use had been established. Over the past 10 years IUCN has been working with the Government of Uganda to develop and implement this wetland policy.

Comprising 13 percent of the country's land area, Uganda's wetlands have traditionally played an important role for rural communities— providing food, fresh water, and building and thatching materials. Floodplains, in particular, are important grazing and seasonal agricultural zones. However, in recent years, vegetation has become overgrazed, swamp products such as papyrus have been over-harvested, and the capacity of some wetlands to purify agricultural run-off and sewage has been reduced.
With rising population and increasing pressure upon upland resources, these goods and services are probably of even greater value to communities today than they might have been in the past. Conserving the most important wetlands in Uganda is therefore of paramount importance.

The National Wetlands Programme, established in 1989 to assist the government develop its policy for managing wetland habitats and to seek alternatives to the unsustainable use of wetlands, has been a major partnership undertaken between several government and non-governmental bodies, including the IUCN Uganda Country Office and Eastern Africa Regional Office as technical advisers, and the Netherlands government as a major donor.

Among the main objectives of this programme are to help strengthen the working capacity of government ministries, district administrations and rural communities in order to develop and implement appropriate wetland management policies, and to establish wetland management guidelines for the variety of wetlands and their uses in Uganda.

Implemented by the National Wetlands Programme in the Ministry of Lands, Water and Environment, the National Policy for the Conservation and Management of Wetland Resources (NWP) was adopted by the Ugandan government in 1995. Development of a coherent wetlands policy that would serve the needs of people and conservation has been the main focus of work to date. Ultimately it is expected that the results from this initiative will serve as a model for application elsewhere in Africa and beyond.

A Wetlands Unit in government and an Inter-ministerial Wetlands Committee have been established by the government and the implementation of a wide range of awareness-raising activities is underway. These include a primary school programme, extensive data collection and analysis through geographical information systems, an inventory of the country’s wetlands that now covers more than a third of the districts, and training for technical officers and administrative staff. Three demonstration sites for the wise use of wetlands have been established and management committees set up at each to oversee the development of activities.

In the third programme phase, which started in January 1997, the main objectives have been to strengthen the national capacity for wetland conservation and management, develop this capacity (especially at the district level), and develop and extend methodologies for wetland resource management by local communities. Emphasis in project activities will now shift from policy formulation and awareness raising to the implementation of wetland conservation and management at district and community levels.

In the absence of guidelines for the wise use of wetlands in tropical Africa, the NWP is often the main source of learning. Continuing to work closely with government counterparts and local community members will help ensure that people’s immediate and longer term needs can be built into management responses, for what is one of the country’s most valuable natural resources. Testing new initiatives will continue to stimulate action among the different parties, while close monitoring of the many components of this complex project will help bring practical solutions to all major stakeholders.

In 1988, a decision was taken to stop further drainage of wetlands – for the extension of pasture or crops – until a policy for conservation and sustainable use had been established. Over the past 10 years, IUCN has been working with the Government of Uganda to develop and implement this wetland policy.
"One of my relatives in the village was caught cutting live branches from a tree in a nearby sacred forest. The local guard made him return the wood and confiscated his bamboo basket and khukuri, a knife used to cut wood. Before my village had ever heard about national parks or protected areas, they possessed a highly developed, locally regulated forest management system."

Mingma Norbu Sherpa, 1993

Local customs and taboos have helped protect the natural environment for millennia. But for how much longer can these simple practices guarantee the wise use of natural resources?

Respect for such local traditions still runs deep in people's minds, but many communities are no longer capable of enforcing the rules. In some instances, these customs have already been forgotten or, as in the village of Norbu Sherpa, in the remote Khumbu area on the southern slopes of Sagarmatha (Mount Everest), the influence of the outside world is making traditional laws ineffective. Some 12,000 tourists flood into Khumbu each year, tempting people to break age-old customs and sell wood for fires.

Since it was founded, almost 50 years ago, IUCN has placed considerable emphasis on the legal basis of protecting nature. Today, IUCN's Commission on Environmental Law (CEL) supports the development of environmental law worldwide. Traditional systems of natural resource management receive particular attention in CEL's work through a special Working Group of Commission members.

National laws can help support traditional customs for protecting nature. Unfortunately many countries lack the expertise and resources to legislate effectively. In response to this weakness, CEL has been building government capacity to create and implement legislation in nature's favour, encouraging universities to make environmental law part of their curricula and using the expertise to help governments refine, create and enforce their respective legislation.
In June of 1997, a four-week capacity-building course was held at the National University of Singapore for law professors and teachers, providing essential information to equip practitioners with the most up-to-date information on environmental statutes and practices. Breaking new ground (this was the first course of its kind in the world) the syllabus was developed over three years by a team of CEL members led by Professor Koh Kheng Lian, Director of the Asia Pacific Centre for Environmental Law, and CEL Chair, Nicholas Robinson. Funded by the Asian Development Bank and organised by CEL's Asian members with the help of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations University, the course was attended by 70 participants from 15 Asian and Pacific countries. Commenting on the "tremendous success' of the course, Professor Koh Kheng Lian, added that "the training course will translate into action one aspect of capacity-building envisaged in Agenda 21". Similar courses, which will be supported by the World Bank, are planned for 1998 at the International Natural Law College in Bangalore, India.

Keeping up to date with current environmental legislation has become an ordeal for many organisations. With support from the Government of the Netherlands, a new project will allow UNEP to access the wealth of environmental law information assembled by IUCN and held in IUCN's Environmental Law Centre in Bonn, Germany. This joint IUCN/UNEP project will ultimately result in a joint network comprising a pool of core data on environmental law and policy, with access via the Internet. IUCN's database, the Environmental Law Information System (ELIS), a joint effort of IUCN and CEL, is a repository of worldwide information on the law and policy of environmental conservation. With more than 400 international treaties, 50,000 national laws and regulations, and information on local customary laws about the environment, access to this central repository on environmental legislation is welcomed by lawyers and conservationists worldwide.

The challenge that IUCN faces is to connect ELIS to the growing number of new databases on environmental law available on the Internet. As the new millennium opens, the world will have a global library of environmental law and trained environmental specialists to advance biological conservation and environmentally sustainable development.

Members donate thousands of hours of their expertise to build legislation and treaties. Without this input, we would not be in such a strong position to offer assistance to governments when they request our help.

Professor Nicholas Robinson
Chair, Commission on Environmental Law
The Natural Resource Management Regional Conference held at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe from 25 to 29 August, 1997, was organised by a consortium under the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Natural Resources Management Programme led by IUCN's regional office in Harare, and included representatives from the Africa Resources Trust and the World Wide Fund for Nature. Eight of the 12 SADC countries sent a total of 230 delegates to the conference.

Much of the discussion focused on the relationship between the implementation of Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) and its constraints and opportunities, leading to:

- strong acknowledgement of the opportunity for networking between communities and policy/decision-makers;
- commitments from individuals and institutions to implement activities in support of CBNRM;
- recognition for the private sector being brought into the process of CBNRM by forming partnerships with communities;
- recognition of the need to facilitate the development of resource-based enterprises within communities to become part of the economies of their countries.

The stimulus for this workshop grew from a previous meeting in Kasane, Botswana, in 1995, which highlighted a number of key issues on watershed management. The Zimbabwe Conference provided a valuable platform for those organisations, including local communities, which had already started to deal with these issues to share experiences and assess progress.

The conference led to the reorientation of the SADC Natural Resources Management Programme to focus more directly on decision-makers across the region in order to create an enabling environment nationally in member states and, where possible, regionally through SADC governance processes. Through the project's Coordinating Committee, countries will now be encouraged to carry out the commitments they made during the conference.

Women working at a milling station developed as part of a sustainable use programme in Zambia.
A People’s Initiative

“TCHUMA TCHATO’’ in the Chichewa language means “Our Wealth”. That is the expression chosen by a community in Tete Province, Mozambique to summarise their new responsibilities for managing their natural resources.

Something had to be done about the growing conflict over access to resources that had long provided subsistence and commercial and cultural benefits to local people. A new hunting concession in the region was effectively depriving people of their hereditary rights. Hunting of meat and ivory by the local administration was placing an additional strain on the patience and well-being of local communities.

A new initiative proposed by two wildlife officers, Luis Namanha and Antonio José Abacar, created the opening for change. Rather than further alienating the community by imposing additional regulations, Abacar and Namanha set out to include the community in managing local resources, creating a framework from which they would all benefit. Although the notion was alien to the state, many local people were familiar with the concept. As refugees in Zimbabwe during Mozambique’s civil war, many had gained experience of similar community-based resource management programmes, such as CAMPFIRE.

A pilot project was launched in the Magoe district in late 1994. Implemented by the National Directorate of Forestry and Wildlife and the Provincial Services for Forestry and Wildlife, the project benefited from logistical and technical advice provided by IUCN, and funding provided by The Ford Foundation and the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Building confidence and organising communities as well as local institutions was a major obstacle which had to be overcome, but the time invested has paid off. Having worked together over the years, the stakeholders saw the project enter a new phase in 1997 as activities started to be replicated in other parts of Tete Province and in other provinces such as Niassa. New initiatives such as commercial and sport fishing and eco-tourism are now being planned – a clear indication that the community and other stakeholders feel confident of developing additional innovative ways of managing diverse natural resources. Revenue sharing from taxes on fish exports from the Magoe/Zumbo area, for example, are expected to provide additional income of around US$30,000 to the local community.

In a country re-building after years of civil war, this initiative has not gone unnoticed. To witness the experience at first hand, the President of Mozambique, accompanied by various government ministers and the Governor of Tete Province, visited the region and affiliated at the handing over of the first dividend, US$12,000, from a safari company to the community and the local administration.

As members of the community stated at a recently held workshop: “Government is becoming a partner in our development and officials in our area are starting to feel that they should work for our benefit”. Gaining such recognition is important to the people of Magoe: “In the eyes of our neighbours in Zimbabwe and Zambia, we are no longer refugees, poor cousins whose land is no-man’s land, where anyone can do as they want. We are now people in our own right.”

Project biologist monitors catch with local fishermen, Bazaruto Archipelago, Mozambique.
bridging the gaps on

Large Dams

We look to the Commission to address the difficult trade-offs that affect the biodiversity value of ecosystems, and the daily life of communities when decisions about water resources and development are made.

David McDowell
Director General, IUCN

King Menes of Egypt could not have imagined the anguish his actions would ultimately cause when he commissioned what is thought to have been the world's first dam.

FIVE thousand years after the waters of the Nile were first tamed by an artificial barrier, two men whose lives have been caught up in the debate on large dams sat together to try and determine a strategy governing dam construction. Shirpad Dharmadhikary fights against the Sardar Sarovar dam in his native India and encourages other activists to protest against large dams. Australian David Iverach is director of a consortium of international companies planning the Nam Theun Two dam in Laos, one of many dams now planned or under construction in the Mekong watershed.

Their viewpoints differ, but Dharmadhikary and Iverach are prepared to work together towards resolving some of the controversial issues associated with large dams. In this quest, they were joined in April 1997 by 35 other representatives of government, industry, environmental organisations and communities affected by dams. Organised jointly by IUCN and the World

"Let the Ganges flow free" Sant Kukal Baviyana recovering from his 50 day fast of prayer to dissuade the government from building the Tehri Dam near the source of the Ganges River in Uttar Pradesh, India
Bank, and held at IUCN Headquarters in Switzerland, a workshop on large dams: **Learning from the Past, Looking at the Future**, was an important stimulus for change. Within two days, the disparate group agreed to establish a World Commission on Dams, charged with developing a consensus on whether and how large dams might contribute to sustainable development. An important start had been made in breaking the deadlock which had proved a major obstacle to collaboration between the many stakeholders affected by dams worldwide.

**The Dam Controversy**

Although dams have been constructed for thousands of years, concern has grown over the increasing number being built – 35,000 dams were built from 1950 to the late 1980s. Much controversy has arisen over the role of large dams in development. Various groups have argued that expected economic benefits were not materialising and that the social, economic and environmental costs associated with dams were not adequately taken into account.

Proponents of dams highlight that hydroelectricity is a clean source of energy and argue the need for more dams to meet the expected doubling of demand for the period 1990-2020. They also point to irrigation and flood control functions of dams. Opponents say it's not so clear cut and point to the many social and environmental impacts of such major interventions in natural ecosystems.

There is clearly a role for dams in managing natural resources in certain cases, but much greater attention needs to be given to where and how dams are built. Siting and design, as well as their positive and negative impacts on local communities and natural resources, need to be closely studied. As George Greene, IUCN Assistant Director General, summarises: "IUCN doesn’t have a philosophy for or against dams... they just have to be used where they are the best option for meeting the water and energy needs of a country and its people, but the environmental and social considerations must be taken into account."

**Solving Problems by Addressing Needs**

Given a common understanding and a favourable working relationship, solutions can be found. In Cameroon, for example, construction of a dam on the Waza-Logone to promote intensive rice production upstream meant that the downstream water flow was reduced by 80 percent. Thousands of people who depended on floodplain agriculture plus fish protein, were forced to leave their homes.

Since 1994, IUCN has been working with the...
Government of Cameroon to test artificial flooding of the Waza-Logone floodplain. Though still in an experimental phase, artificial flooding has restored farmland and wetlands downstream without significantly reducing the amount of water available for irrigation elsewhere. Identifying the needs of people living downstream of dams is important. Many problems can be solved by including stakeholders in the decision-making processes and enabling them to have some degree of control over local natural resources.

**To Build or Not to Build?**

In some instances, not building a dam can be as damaging for wildlife as constructing a dam. As the human population multiplies there is a need for greater food production — forests and savannahs are increasingly being converted to agricultural land. Small dams which provide a year-round supply of water can help communities get better crop yields from the same area, year after year. With attention to soil fertility, there is less need to clear new areas of land.

The IUCN/World Bank workshop was an historic event in that a consensus was reached to assess the pros and cons of large dams through setting up an independent international commission. Starting May 1998, the 12-member Commission, under the leadership of Professor Kader Asmal, South Africa’s Minister of Water Affairs and Forestry, will review the effectiveness of large dams and assess alternatives for water resources and energy production. By 2000, the Commission, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, will have reviewed the experience in building large dams around the world, developed decision-making criteria for water and energy projects, and laid the basis for internationally accepted standards for the planning, construction, operation and decommissioning of large dams.

There is much to be done, but it is hoped that the spirit of cooperation generated by the IUCN/World Bank workshop will continue to mature and that solutions suitable to all stakeholders can be found — solutions which will enhance social well-being and help ensure that dams will, in future, play a significant role in promoting and sustaining development.
Cooperating Across Frontiers

Encouraged by IUCN and its members, decision-makers are increasingly realising the benefits of cross-border cooperation in managing shared ecosystems.

Transfrontier reserves serve as important buffer zones for conservation and encourage governments to forge relationships with neighbouring countries through shared management programmes protecting critical ecosystems. International and regional cooperation on protected areas can also help reduce tension along historically disputed borders. A step towards the development of a global network of "Parks for Peace" was the hosting of an international conference in South Africa, organised by the IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), in September 1997.

"The Commission saw a unique opportunity to bring together those with a conservation perspective and those with concern for international peace and understanding," says WCPA Chair Adrian Phillips. The 72 conference participants from 32 countries adopted a Declaration of Principles. "The Declaration contains messages for national governments as well as for the international community and places protected areas firmly in the context of peace-keeping and building international collaboration between states", Phillips says.

Room to Roam

Plants and animals do not recognise international boundaries. Large mammals in particular, require extensive hunting and feeding grounds — many species roam thousands of miles each year often crossing from one country to another and back again. Preventing disruption to such movements and traditional migration patterns calls for a special effort to conserve habitats to ensure viable populations of these species.

This need has inspired the development of biological corridors such as the Meso-American Biological Corridor which aims to link protected areas with wildlife-friendly forms of agriculture and forestry. This project, to which IUCN's Meso-American office and WCPA members lent their expertise, brought the governments of the region together on a common agenda of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. In 1997, the presidents of Central American countries and Mexico signed an agreement to make the corridor part of their economic development strategies.

Establishing a Network of Protected Areas

Whether on land or at sea, it is increasingly recognised that there is a need for large protected areas to be established. Often, careful zoning of such areas is desirable to enable local communities and indigenous peoples to continue traditional practices, many of which are based on the extraction of natural resources. Only with careful planning and management can such results be achieved without damaging the resource base itself.

In November 1997, WCPA convened a conference on Protected Areas in the 21st Century: From Islands to Networks in Albany, Australia, to promote the integration of protected areas into regional planning. Participants agreed that protected areas must be placed in their broader context to demonstrate that they substantially contribute to national and local economies whilst enhancing biodiversity conservation as part of a productive and secure environment. The Commission aims to expand its role from one of establishing and managing protected areas, to developing the wise management of surrounding areas, and connecting protected areas with nature-friendly corridors. Looking to the future, WCPA is calling for "a new alliance among all stakeholders at the local, national, regional and global levels to pool their talents to realise a new vision for protected areas in the bioregional context."
Connecting People to Conservation

Increasingly, governments understand that policies governing the use of natural resources need to be developed with the people whose livelihoods they will affect. If civil servants, scientists and local people are to work together to develop environmental policies, they need to understand and learn from each other. Effective education and communication promotes understanding and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and experience. It allows local people to become involved in conservation so that practical policies and incentives for conservation can be developed. In short, education and communication connects people to conservation.

The importance of education and communication to conservation was highlighted by a group of 30 education and communication specialists, from around the world, in their message to those implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity. The group met in September 1997, at the Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF) workshop on Communication and Education.

The GBF was held in Montreal, immediately before the meeting of SBSTTA – the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technical Advice. Mostly from developing countries, the workshop participants represented a variety of professional backgrounds including government, NGOs, the private sector and grassroots community groups. Organised by IUCN’s South American office, IUCN Headquarters, and the Commission on Education and Communication, the drive behind the workshop was to alert national governments and delegates at the SBSTTA meeting as to how crucial education and communication are to the effective implementation of the Convention.

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognises the role of education and communication in protecting the environment. But since the Convention entered into force in 1993, the bodies concerned with its implementation – the Conference of the Parties (COP) and SBSTTA – have not given education and communication adequate consideration. The workshop recommended that education and communication be used with legislation and economic incentives to encourage people to protect biodiversity, and that the issue be given priority at the next meeting of the COP.

As a result, SBSTTA recommended that education and communication be urgently addressed at the COP meeting in Bratislava in 1998.

The workshop also prompted the Canadian government to undertake a study on Learning about Biodiversity: A first look at the theory and practice of biodiversity education, awareness and training in Canada.

Children learning to plant trees as part of a reforestation project in Brazil.

F. Anthony
An African Consensus on Elephants

While still under threat from poaching and encroachment throughout much of their range, populations of the African elephant are increasing in the southern African countries of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe. This is an encouraging sign in terms of overall management, but in some areas elephant populations may need to be culled to prevent the destruction of habitat. Conservationists in southern Africa argue that the limited sale of ivory from legally killed animals would help pay for conservation in their respective countries, while those from some other African countries see any relaxation of the international trade ban as encouraging poaching and increasing the pressure on their own elephant populations.

The Issue

Since the ban on the international trade in ivory came into force in 1990, southern African countries have tried unsuccessfully to have their elephant populations transferred from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II, which would allow controlled trade in ivory. These attempts to “down-list” populations of elephant have led to heated debate among representatives at CITES meetings. Following the 9th Conference of the Parties to CITES, IUCN was asked to facilitate a meeting of the African elephant range states to discuss issues of mutual concern.

Searching for a Solution

The first African Elephant Range States Dialogue took place in Dakar, Senegal in late 1996. Delegates considered many topics including proposals from Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe for the resumption of trade in ivory, and debated the implications for other range states. There was much discussion of the proposals from southern Africa, the occasion allowing each country to hear the different perspectives and concerns from around the continent. This represented a significant step forward. The need for an African consensus on elephant conservation was expressed and IUCN was requested to facilitate the organization of a second meeting. The follow-up Dialogue meeting took place in Darwendale, Zimbabwe, in June 1997, just prior to the 10th Conference of the Parties to CITES.

The elephant populations of Botswana, Namibia and Zimbabwe were transferred from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II at the 10th CITES meeting, allowing limited trade in ivory between these countries and Japan in 1999. Trade, however, will be subject to certain conditions including active participation in international monitoring systems for illegal killing of elephants and the illegal ivory trade. Delegates asked IUCN’s Species Survival Commission its African and Asian Elephant Specialist Groups and its TRAFFIC Network to help develop and implement these systems.

In response, in December 1997, IUCN, SSC and TRAFFIC convened a workshop of experts in elephant biology, conservation, ivory trade, wildlife law enforcement, population modeling and statistics. The advice of these experts helped IUCN/SSC and TRAFFIC to draw up an outline of the design and implementation of monitoring systems for poaching and the illegal ivory trade.

IUCN will continue its role as facilitator at the upcoming Third Dialogue of the African Elephant Range states to be held in Tanzania in September 1998.
I find the GBF interesting because it focuses on specific issues relevant not only to the Convention on Biological Diversity process but also to national and international actions on biodiversity in general. Also, it provides one of the few occasions for people from a wide range of sectors to discuss biodiversity issues.

Ashish Kothari
Indian Institute of Public Administration, and regular participant at GBF sessions.

Managed by IUCN to address the conservation of biodiversity in the context of international conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), and the Ramsar (Wetlands) Convention, the GBF is one of the few open technical meetings on biodiversity and therefore represents a major opportunity to advise governments and decision makers.

More than 30 workshops have been staged during the 10 sessions of the GBF, addressing topics such as Communication and Education for Biodiversity, Economic Incentives for Biodiversity, Marine and Coastal Biodiversity, and Community-Based Resource Management.

By 1997, the GBF had brought together 1,550 people from more than 100 countries, helping inter alia to ensure that the concerns of villagers and communities are reflected in the conventions. Forum sessions are also an important informal gathering place for conservationists, members of the private sector and decision-makers. Seen as biodiversity brain-storming sessions, the resulting ideas and suggestions help guide and stimulate the state Parties and Secretariats which implement the relevant conventions.

“Sharing experience, knowledge and ideas is what the Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF) is all about. Whatever your background or whoever you work for, as long as you have an interest in biodiversity issues you can contribute to the GBF.”

Caroline Martinet
IUCN, Biodiversity Policy Coordination Division
Climate Change and Biodiversity

1997 was the warmest year of the 20th century. It was also the year that the first legally binding agreement to alleviate climate change was signed in Kyoto, Japan. Agreed by 171 nations, the Kyoto Protocol committed governments to specific reductions of greenhouse gases. Since the original signing of the climate change and biodiversity treaties in 1992, the effects of climate change on biodiversity loss and vice versa have become clearer. Research has shown that the predicted effects of global warming on some species have already taken place.

GBF-Kyoto served to highlight the effects of climate change on biodiversity and looked for ways in which the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) could work more effectively together. It also allowed IUCN to identify a set of partners in the climate change and biodiversity communities to work with in the future.

One result of the meeting was that NGOs decided to work together to highlight the links between climate change and biodiversity at meetings of the FCCC during 1998.

Call for Action from Harare

Participants at GBF-Harare noted that while the CBD and CITES – both of which deal with trade in natural products – operate at the national and international level, “conservation is implemented and assured at the local level.” This is recognised in the texts of the conventions, but local communities have yet to see the benefits. Participants saw there was potential for conflict between the different approaches to trade advocated by both conventions and pressed CITES and the CBD to develop a joint approach to trade in natural resources. CITES was called upon to recognise the value of the sustainable use of species as an incentive for conservation, and to seek advice from local communities when making decisions on banning or legalising trade in given species.
Engaging Business

The world's biological resources represent huge economic potential. Natural resources are the basis for agriculture, pharmaceutical and forestry industries. At the same time, there is growing awareness within the private sector that the Earth's resources are limited and realisation that the rate and way in which these resources are being exploited will have dire consequences for business. Businesses are already beginning to face:

- reduced access to land and biological resources;
- increasingly stringent environmental impact assessments and legislation;
- restrictions on the trade in biological products;
- negative attitudes among investors and other stakeholders.

As a result, there has never been a time more conducive to dialogue and collaboration between the conservation community and businesses, in the management of the planet's biological resources.

"Whether we are dealing with policy issues, such as climate change or the interaction of trade and the environment, whether we are defining the management practices that business must embrace, if it is to progress in its aim of improvement, or whether we are addressing the challenge of helping enterprises in developing countries to achieve their own environmental goals — in each of these we do better if we work together; if we act in concert with like-minded companies who see the common agenda and are willing to share their experience and their thinking."

Managing Director,
The British Petroleum Company

This enlightened senior corporate executive might have added, "like-minded governments and non-governmental organisations" which, with the private sector, are often described as the three pillars of society. IUCN, since its early stages, has been actively engaged with the first two categories; and, while IUCN has created many positive links with individual corporations, it has not approached its private sector relations in a structured and strategic way. Given rapid globalisation and the increasing importance of market mechanisms, it is no longer conceivable for IUCN to achieve its mission without working closely and productively with corporations and other private sector organisations.

This message was articulated by the IUCN membership when it adopted Resolution 1.81 at the 1996 World Conservation Congress, Montreal. The members encouraged IUCN to be creative in exploring opportunities to achieve its mission more successfully by influencing the private sector. The resolution is the foundation of what has become the IUCN private sector initiative, which includes the Private Sector Task Force, established by IUCN's Council as the means to implement this new approach.

The goal of the Task Force, in which all the major components of the Union, and private sector companies, are represented, is to advance the Union's mission by exploring opportunities for constructive interaction with the private sector. In 1997, the Task Force established the objectives and criteria for such interaction, and agreed on a limited number of specific targets. A first meeting gave the broad orientation to this work. A second elaborated a draft policy framework and examined a number of options for initial action, including helping to develop environmentally sound business practices.

IUCN is now firmly engaged in a process leading to innovative partnerships with the private sector. This should generate practical joint ventures to address issues such as resource depletion and the sustainable management of the Earth's biological resources.

IUCN Private Sector Task Force

Linda Fisher, Vice President, Worldwide Government and Public Affairs, Monsanto;
Michael LaGraff, Head of Health, Safety, Environment, British Petroleum;
Juan Rada, Managing Director, The Environment Partnership;
Bjorn Stigson, Executive Director, World Business Council on Sustainable Development.
business and conservation

A Sustainable Union

The links between business and conservation are many. Peruvian potato farmers and Indian rice growers have more in common with some of the world's giant enterprises than either side may suspect. Increasingly, members of these different communities are seeking to forge a closer working relationship which will benefit each other and society at large.

As a sign of changing times and attitudes, new and innovative working partnerships are emerging around the world. Demonstrating the benefits which come from working together in carefully planned and managed programmes. Many of these initiatives demonstrate the combined efforts being taken to help ensure the sustainable use and management of biological resources.

To draw attention to some of these developments and to encourage further collaboration with the business community, IUCN, in 1997, teamed up with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD) in publishing Business and Biodiversity — A Guide for the Private Sector.

The main focus of this publication is to build on the impetus of the Earth Summit where the first real efforts to strengthen collaboration between the conservation world and the business community were expressed. In particular, Business and Biodiversity outlines the key principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity — one of the main outcomes of the Summit — demonstrating how business might become more actively engaged in implementing the Convention, and encouraging the private sector to contribute its valuable experience to ongoing discussions and developments.

Failure of the private sector to become involved in the Convention process will mean business runs the risk of being left out of the process. This could have serious impacts for the entire private sector.

Among the shared concerns of businesses are: long-term access to and availability of biological resources; access restrictions for exploration and development; sovereign risk for development if a business project harms biodiversity; more stringent requirements for environmental impact assessments; restrictions on trade in products if determined to be "biodiversity unfriendly"; liability for not protecting biodiversity; strict codes for ensuring safety in biotechnology and public perception in the marketing of "biodiversity friendly" products.

As Business and Biodiversity demonstrates, there are many windows of opportunity for private organisations to become involved with the Convention on Biological Diversity. However, unless these opportunities are seized, private enterprises and even whole sectors of the business community risk being excluded from the policy debates currently underway.

IUCN and its members recognise the important contributions businesses have to make to the future development and implementation of the Convention — through active participation, involvement and a sharing of responsibility. Continued support from all sectors is essential for the long-term conservation of biodiversity.

Many businesses have already laid the groundwork to ensure that this does happen. Business and Biodiversity highlights a range of initiatives that already demonstrate the effectiveness of business partners working together towards a common goal.

IUCN and its members share the Business Council's concern that unless universal action is taken now to safeguard natural resources and to manage these in a sustainable manner, future generations will not benefit in the same way as we have done. The conservation and sustainable management of biological diversity is a major challenge which will continue well into the next century. It is a challenge which everyone must meet.
Natural Resources for Life

Set up in 1995, IUCN’s Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) is examining the reasons why societies over-exploit their resources, particularly the underlying social, cultural and economic forces which drive this process. In 1997, operating through a global system of regional specialist groups, the SUI continued to undertake specific case studies, make policy recommendations and advocate these recommendations to governments.

“Sustainable use is about local people making commitments to conserve wild resources. It addresses human value systems independent of real estate”, says Steve Edwards, SUI director. “Sustainable use can be, but is not always, about a change in people’s attitudes — often it simply serves to reinforce an existing value system which was previously not acted upon because it was not contributing to economic development.”

In Niger, since the early 1990s, IUCN has been helping implement a transfer of user rights from government control to local people — be they landowners or rural villagers. At the heart of this initiative is the ron palm, a versatile species that provides timber for construction, fruit for human consumption, fodder for livestock and raw materials for weaving.

“The first step in the transfer process was to build trust between the people and IUCN”, says Amoda Tiega, Head of IUCN Niger. “Then we nurtured villagers’ self-confidence by helping them develop technical capacities to manage the trees, so that they could take the lead in deciding how they want to use their own resources.” At the same time, IUCN staff in the capital of Niamey were talking to government officials about how much power could be devolved to the village level, and just how much support would be given by the government.

It soon became clear that management plans were proving most effective in villages where all of the villagers participated in deciding how their resources would be used. Where only the chiefs and a few close advisers were responsible for drawing up the plans, progress was not nearly as effective. In other words, an important indicator of success was the degree of democratic decision-making in the village.

Starting with management of just a single tree species, IUCN has seen the results of this initiative spread not only to wildlife, water and fisheries resources, but also to other villages in the region. Even where resources are shared between two villages, people have been coming together to discuss needs and possibilities, striving to find a consensus for management of common areas. In one case, development of one village’s management plan for fish in the Niger River led to international negotiations with sister villages across the river in Benin and Nigeria.

Planting garlic as part of a sustainable development project, Thailand.
countries share the river, fishermen from the three nations came together to develop a fisheries management plan, agreeing on protecting key areas where fish breed.

For sustainable use to work, a common experience is that governments must be prepared to allow communities to manage their own wild resources. This helps ensure that benefits from the use of resources go directly to local people providing the incentives for them to maintain their natural environment. The environment has more meaning to local people when it can feed and clothe their children.

Cultural Values of SUI

Following the June 1997 SUI Steering Committee meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the Washington-based SUI unit began revamping its system of specialist groups in Latin America. Four regional specialist groups will be set up in Latin America representing Central America, the Andes, the Amazon and the Southern Cone. In late 1997, the specialist group for the Southern Cone was set up with members from Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. Work has begun analysing case studies of natural resource use in the Southern Cone with the aim of formulating policy recommendations which will then be promoted for adoption by governments in the region. The Central American group has completed an extensive review of the role sustainable use plays in conservation and policy in its region. The other Latin American regional specialist groups will be in place by early 1998.

The sustainable use concept is deeply embedded in many local cultures, and we need to learn from indigenous peoples. They have cultures with a well developed knowledge of their natural surroundings, and respect plants and animals as other forms of life, and not just as resources to be exploited.

Eduardo Fernandez
Social Development Officer, IUCN

Medicinal plants on sale in a market in the Philippines
IUCN National and Regional Committees

How do They Work?

IUCN’s members – a growing network of over 900 states, government agencies, non-governmental organisations, and affiliates – are increasingly participating in the Union’s work through the formal establishment of National and Regional Committees in their respective countries and regions.

Although National Committees have existed in some countries for many years, a revision of IUCN’s Statutes and Regulations at the 1996 World Conservation Congress now allows National Committees to be recognised formally within the Union’s structure. Such recognition brings added value to members and assurance that their Committee is in line with the Statutes, the mission and the objectives of the Union to which they belong. This will help engender greater cooperation among members, improve coordination of IUCN’s work, and assure the integration of members’ viewpoints in the programme and governance of IUCN. The National Committees also build links with IUCN’s Commissions, and work closely with the respective National and Regional IUCN Offices. Four committees were officially recognised by Council in early 1997, with another seven being added by year-end. Many more are expected to join the growing network of National Committees in 1998.

Althou

Bolivia’s National Committee
In 1997, the Bolivian National Committee completed the revision of the IUCN-Bolivia Programme through an internal workshop. The Committee is actively collaborating with the government to prepare a National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy. A network of Bolivian experts has been assembled to compile relevant information on various taxonomic groups. Publications stemming from this initiative include a Bibliography on Biodiversity in Bolivia, a Directory of Flora and Fauna Specialists in Bolivia, and a Directory of National Institutions Concerned with Biodiversity.

IUCN’s National Committee in the United Kingdom
Established in 1975 the UK National Committee was formally recognised by IUCN Council in April 1997. Providing the only UK-wide nature conservation forum for government departments, statutory agencies and voluntary bodies, as well as members of IUCN Commissions and relevant international organisations, about 70 member organisations currently support the Committee. Two of its key roles are to support IUCN by improving communication among UK members, and to explore programme issues where the UK can deploy a particular expertise – at either the national, regional or global level. Issues being addressed are:
- sustainable management of fisheries;
- agricultural practices and landscape management;
- super-quarries and sustainable mountain development; and
- Parks for Life – the UK Task Force.

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The structure of IUCN is unique. It is a union of volunteer and full-time technical experts, governments, government agencies and non-governmental organisations. But it also works at the inter-governmental, sub-national and community levels. Given this make-up, IUCN is unrivalled in its ability to forge a truly comprehensive alliance for nature conservation. Helping the various elements of the Union develop consensus and work together is one of the Union's primary tasks. To marry the technical skills of Commission members with the work of governments, member organisations and the Secretariat, members are setting up Regional Committees. Committees bring together the various elements of the Union – the Secretariat, the Commissions and the members – to work towards common goals.

Meso-America

The Regional Committee for Meso-America was set up in 1992 following the second regional Members' Meeting in Panama. Consisting of the presidents of the eight National Committees in Meso-America, the regional vice-chairs of the six IUCN Commissions, and the IUCN Regional Representative, the Regional Committee mirrors to a degree the structure of the Union's governing body – the IUCN Council. The Regional Committee developed the MesoAmerican Programme 1997-2000, which sets out IUCN's goals and objectives for conservation and joint work priorities for IUCN members in the region. The implementation of this programme is overseen by the Committee. The Committee also represents IUCN members at regional fora.

In 1997, the Committee began an assessment of the impacts of mining in the region. The study is being carried out by member organisations and Commission members in each country in the region. The final report will make recommendations to decision-makers on open-pit mining in protected areas.

Southern Africa

The Regional Advisory Committee for Southern Africa works in partnership with the IUCN Secretariat and Commissions to coordinate programme development and implementation. Originally set up to provide advice to the IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa (ROSA) and to broaden the knowledge base available to the Secretariat, the Committee's terms of reference were broadened in 1995 to include the monitoring and evaluation of ROSA's programmes and the facilitation of IUCN's networking activities. The eight-member Committee is made up of representatives of IUCN staff, member organisations and IUCN National Committee members from Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The Committee meets twice a year to assist in prioritising ROSA programmes and acts as a think-tank, proposing new concepts and ideas to the Secretariat. It also provides support and advice to ROSA on finance and budget management issues. Regional Committees are helping the Union attain its true potential. They help members and Commissions work together towards common goals, drawing on each other's strengths and sharing knowledge and experience. IUCN expects that Regional Committees will be set up in most regions by the next World Conservation Congress in 2000.
Broadening Representation at Regional Meetings

A key role of IUCN is to continuously provide transboundary fora for analysing, discussing and debating priority ecological, economic, institutional and social issues relating to the conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of biological resources.

With the intention of enhancing discussions and dialogues due to take place in Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF7) just prior to the CITES Conference of the Parties (CITES COP10), IUCN’s Southern Africa Office embarked on a series of projects to strengthen representation from various groups throughout the region. These projects included national meetings and financial support for participation in COP10 and GBF7.

For instance, NETCAB, IUCN-ROSA’s Regional Networking and Capacity Building Initiative, provided financial support to the Africa Resources Trust, enabling the latter to bring together NGOs and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) from seven Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries – Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe – to work together on two global environmental conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and CITES.

NETCAB’s main objective is to enhance the capacity of Southern Africa’s government institutions and NGOs to address environmental policy and management issues relevant to increasing natural resource productivity through coordinated regional initiatives and networks. The programme is committed to:

- increasing institutional management, technical and networking capacity in specific fields including community-based natural resource management and terrestrial and aquatic biodiversity conservation;
- strengthening national and regional capacity for environmental policy, strategy development and implementation;
- increasing dialogue, linkages and collaboration between stakeholder groups within countries and throughout the region;
- improving environmental information, communication and education products and processes which enhance the outreach to a broad range of target groups and raise public awareness.

National meetings were held between NGO and CBO groups to foster consensus prior to their participation at the GBF7 and CITES conferences. A meeting was held one day before the GBF7 to foster better understanding of the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES, build solidarity and articulate a SADC perspective on related issues. The meetings emphasised resource conservation and sustainable use, equitable distribution of resources and international trade.

The project also supported 10 NGO facilitators to be part of the group involved in the CITES Conference.

The overall goal was to enhance the capacity of NGOs/CBOs to make strategic inputs into selected regional and international policy and regulatory instruments which affect the success of conservation-based community development in the SADC region through a coordinated network.

Among the main outputs were:

- NGOs and CBOs networking with each other as well as with other people and learning to advocate;
- SADC communities speaking with one voice;
- CBOs assisting in convincing the Conference of the Parties to vote in favour of the downlisting of the African elephant for three SADC countries;
- a CBO representative, making a presentation to the CITES plenary session.

Approaches such as this are clearly valuable in helping influence today’s policy agenda. The importance of fair participation in decision-making fora was clearly recognised, as was evident from the consequent participation of some Malawian CBO representatives in an Environmental Coordination Conference at the national level.

In view of this, IUCN-ROSA will continue NGO/CBO networking through a strategic planning process aimed at supporting national and regional NGO/CBO networks.

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Opening Doors

Since the early 1990s, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been implementing multilateral aid projects on a large scale. Multilateral institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank now view NGOs as valuable partners in environment and development projects. In fact, NGO involvement is often seen as critical to project success. However, multilaterals and their client governments usually rely on traditional, commercial procurement procedures when entering into agreements with NGOs, treating them as commercial consulting firms rather than non-profit organisations. This has caused tremendous difficulties for NGOs and discouraged many from entering into agreements on multilateral projects.

NGOs seek collaboration with multilaterals in the pursuit of common objectives. They are not commercial suppliers of services. Moreover, NGOs have their own perspectives on development that may not coincide with the funder. But they are seldom engaged as real partners and are expected to follow the development objectives of the multilateral donor or loan agency.

Many NGOs lack the necessary legal capacity or financial stability to deal with multilateral procurement procedures which often involve formal systems of bidding for contracts, strict contractual obligations, complex legal language and commercial methods of payment. These lost opportunities hurt multilateral organisations, their client governments and NGOs alike.

Some multilaterals understand the difficulties of NGOs and have made changes to their procedures but they still need to establish comprehensive frameworks which could reduce complexity and enhance transparency.

In 1997, IUCN-US, along with The Nature Conservancy, InterAction and WWF-US, established an ad hoc NGO working group, generously assisted by counsel Scott Overall, to examine the difficulties of NGOs working with multilateral-financed environment and development projects. The group set out to encourage procedural change within multilateral organisations and borrowing governments.

The working group received input from numerous NGOs, including developing country NGOs, which was incorporated into their report: Partners or Hired Hands? Procurement Reform for Effective Collaboration Between NGOs and Multilateral Institutions.

The report made a series of recommendations to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and multilateral organisations in general, on how to enhance partnerships with NGOs. The report has been circulated within the GEF, the World Bank and other multilaterals. “This is a significant step in opening the doors of multilateral organisations to collaboration with NGOs,” says Scott Hajost, Executive Director of IUCN-US. It is hoped the report will continue to encourage and give direction to the development of new procedures for NGO-multilateral partnerships.
“Better Data for Better Decisions” is the motto of the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS), a consortium of twelve leading conservation networks and organisations. BCIS members seek to pool their data, information and expertise to better support biodiversity conservation action on the ground and influence policy and decision-making at the global level.

Lack of access to reliable information on and expertise about biodiversity is a major constraint to environmentally sound decision-making. Although data and information are collected by hundreds of conservation organisations worldwide, these efforts are dispersed and uncoordinated. No guide exists on available data, information and expertise. Access to such resources is often ad hoc, or consumed by arduous negotiations associated with data access agreements, and the quality of available data and information is frequently unknown.

The need for a large-scale consortium approach to information was recognised by the BCIS founding members when the BCIS concept first emerged in 1995. It was agreed that the conservation community’s most important assets are information and expertise. If these valuable resources could be harnessed, harmonised and made available over the Internet, their value would increase enormously. The BCIS members thus agreed to:

- create a global alliance for linking information and expertise;
- establish a system based on standards and harmonised information;
- build capacity of members to contribute to the system;
- develop information delivery systems for data, information and expertise.

With support from BCIS, decision-makers — on the ground or in the national capitals — will be assured of making more informed decisions. As Kevin Grose, Chair of the BCIS Steering Committee and Head of IUCN’s Information Management Group notes, “BCIS can provide
the world with a “one-stop shop” for information held by the conservation community that complements and enriches other initiatives like the Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).”

BCIS services, available in electronic format through the Internet, should help promote biodiversity conservation by monitoring indicators of change in the status of biodiversity, and in setting conservation priorities. Data and expertise drawn from BCIS member networks will also assist the conservation and development communities with risk assessments and emergency responses.

During 1997, the consortium focused on strengthening the alliance, including establishing relationships with other biodiversity initiatives. Conservation International and The Nature Conservancy joined the founding members; BirdLife International; Botanic Gardens Conservation International; IUCN’s Commission on Ecosystem Management, Environmental Law Programme, Species Survival Commission; World Commission on Protected Areas; TRAFFIC International; WETLANDS International; and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Membership of the International Species Information System was given preliminary approval. A small secretariat was created and co-located with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre in Cambridge, UK.

BCIS supported the implementation of the CBD Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) and was named a Thematic Focal Point and member of the CHM Informal Advisory Committee. Through the CHM, BCIS will offer Parties to the Convention conservation data standards, such as the IUCN Red List Categories of Threat, as well as information. BCIS shared its experience with the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN), a regionally-based government initiative, and began building another alliance that links governments and NGOs.

Work on the system began with a daunting challenge: how to get network members to pool their data, information and expertise. “This issue is frequently overlooked but is critical for success,” says Gross. “People want assurance that their contribution will be recognized and their intellectual property rights safeguarded.” A Policy Framework for Information Sharing was, therefore, the first step. In 1997, the BCIS Data Principles and Procedures Manual was released and guidelines drawn up resulting in the Data Custodianship Handbook. These and other documents are available on the BCIS Web Site: http://biodiversity.org

Given this foundation, it will soon be possible for data sets to be integrated with one another and then summarised in an easily understandable format such as a map or table. By superimposing different layers of information, such as the number of threatened species, vulnerable habitats, disaster-prone sites and human demographics, scientists and planners will have access to different data sets which will help identify areas in need of protection and enable the conservation movement to become more proactive in its work. “BCIS is making sure that quality information resources are available for first-class decision-making,” says John Busby, BCIS Programme Manager. “Via the Internet, decision-makers will soon be able to access a broad spectrum of reliable information at home or in their offices, providing them with a solid background of information on which to act.”

BCIS will start making information more accessible in 1998 when the BCIS Metadatabase, now in development, will be available. This “electronic catalogue” will provide user-friendly means of tapping the data, information, specialised information products and services held by BCIS member initiatives. Examples include: data standards, biodiversity assessment techniques; raw data and information; and services such as early warning, emergency response and risk assessment. The BCIS Expert Network Systems (ENS) will also be tested in 1998. ENS will create an index of experts from which to draw small pools of experts to respond to specific queries about conserving or developing habitats. In this way, by helping the conservation community use technology effectively, IUCN and the BCIS members are helping to shape the future of conservation.
A Global Network for Species Conservation

For the Species Survival Commission (SSC), 1997 stands out as a year of partnerships. SSC contributed substantially to development of the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) consortium in 1997 and the advanced planning for its own Species Information Service (SIS). SIS will develop the information management capacities of SSC Specialist Groups, increase the efficiency with which existing and new SSC information products are produced, and contribute to integrated products through BCIS.

At the heart of SSC's contribution to the conservation and development communities are the IUCN Red Lists of Threatened Species. In 1997 the Commission re-designed the system to strengthen the utility and scientific validity of IUCN Red Lists. To help develop national capacity for biodiversity assessment, work began on designing a regional training programme and guidelines for applying the Red List methodology at the national level. As part of a larger process to review the IUCN Categories and Criteria – the underpinning of the IUCN Red Lists – application of the Categories and Criteria to marine species, and in particular fish, was assessed. This consultative process continues.

In 1997, plant conservation issues were highlighted as never before. The first ever IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants, compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), went to press. Work continued on The World List of Threatened Trees, carried out as a joint project between SSC and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Volume III of Centres of Plant Diversity, covering the Americas, was co-published by IUCN and the World Wildlife Fund and distributed by the Smithsonian Institution.

The fourth plant Action Plan, on Cacti and Succulent Plants, was published, in addition to seven other Action Plans on: Wild Sheep, Goats and their Relatives; Asian Rhinos (2nd edition); African Wild Dogs; Grebes; Dragonflies; Ethiopian Wolves; and Tapirs.

The 1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals confirmed that freshwater species suffer from higher...
levels of threat compared to terrestrial species. In response, an SSC Freshwater Biodiversity Initiative was conceived to identify indicator species for ecosystem health, freshwater hot-spots which are priorities for conservation, and threatening processes (e.g., dams, invasive species). The Cetacean, Mollusc, and Inland Water Crustacean Specialist Groups, among others, are well on their way in this work. In 1997, SSC also joined forces with Fauna and Flora International and Conservation International to explore a joint response to the rapid loss of amphibian diversity. The partners are strengthening their current amphibian conservation activities such as the study of links between amphibian declines and processes of global environmental change, and identifying priority conservation needs.

SSC works to ensure that the use of wild species is sustainable. For the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, convened in Zimbabwe in June 1997, SSC produced in English, French and Spanish two tools for the Parties: Analysis of Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices, a technical document prepared with TRAFFIC to inform decisions on listing proposals; and CITES: A Conservation Tool, A Guide to Amending the Appendices to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. SSC members from the Bear, Cat, African Elephant, Asian Elephant, African Rhino, Shark, Marine Turtle, Crocodile and Sustainable Use Specialist Groups were on hand at COP 10 to provide advice and guidance to the delegates during their deliberations. At the request of the African Elephant Range States, IUCN through SSC also continued to facilitate the African Elephant Range States Dialogue, a consensus-building process to address the complex issues related to African elephant conservation.

Throughout the year, SSC Specialist Groups provided a wide variety of services to the conservation and development communities. Examples include: organising a workshop in Bangladesh to develop guidelines to mitigate the impact of dams on river dolphins and supporting a management plan for a species of lichen threatened by proposed road construction.

The sustainable use of Caiman for their hides has helped preserve the habitat of this species on the Orinoco floodplain of Venezuela.

A dugong grazes off the Philippine coast. This species was designated as globally vulnerable to extinction in the 1996 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals.
forewarned is forearmed –

Closing the Door on Invasive Species

Animals and plants introduced into non-native habitats pose insidious and ever-increasing threats to global biodiversity. The movement of plants and animals is a natural feature of evolution. However, with the ease of international travel, the timespan of these movements has been reduced from millennia to hours in some cases. Animals stow away in boats and aeroplanes, seeds become embedded in people’s clothing, and people (sometimes illegally) import plants and animals for a variety of purposes.

Alien plants and animals may become destructive invaders. Native species are often unable to adapt to these invasive species. Small predators, for example cats and rats, wipe out ground-nesting birds, lizards and other fauna. Weeds out-compete native flora. A single fish species introduced for game or food eliminates hundreds of endemic species.

Invasive species, warn scientists, may cause more destruction to ecosystems than habitat loss and degradation. Together, IUCN and its members hold a wealth of biological, legal and policy information and expertise about preventing the introduction of invasive species and managing them when they do arrive. They have joined forces with a number of partners to implement the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP). This collaborative global approach aims to mitigate the devastating biological, social and economic impacts of invasive species.

With growing concern over the number and range of invasive species being reported, IUCN first responded to this issue in the early 1990s by establishing the Species Survival Commission’s Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG). ISSG works to reduce threats to natural ecosystems and the native species they contain by increasing awareness of invasions and ways to prevent, control or eradicate them. Concurrently, the IUCN Environmental Law Programme has actively studied ways to address the legal issues inherent in this growing problem.

In July 1996, the Norway-UN Conference on Alien Species (Trondheim) gave heightened visibility to the issue and, as governments around the world recognised the gravity of the situation, the GISP emerged as a cooperative effort of many bodies including IUCN, the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Diversitas, and CAB International. The GISP partnership will draw together the best management approaches for prevention and control of invasive species and make these readily accessible to all nations. It will also lay the groundwork for new tools in science, information management, education, and policy that must be developed through collaborative international action.

IUCN also brings to this global effort an understanding of the impacts of biological alterations to ecosystems such as forests and wetlands. As important, via its Regional and Country Offices, IUCN is linked to the countries and communities grappling with the devastating biological, social and economic effects of invasive species.

IUCN has mobilised the expertise of its Commissions, Global Programmes and Regional and Country offices. A draft Guidelines for the Prevention of Biodiversity Loss due to Biological Invasions sets out recommendations for reducing the risks of biodiversity loss caused by invasive species and is designed in part to assist governments to meet their obligations under Article 8(h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
An early warning system for invasive species is being designed to assist natural resource managers and policymakers who deal with invasive species issues every day. A review of national and international laws relating to invasive species will enable IUCN to advise national governments and the international community in developing or improving legislation relating to the introduction, control and eradication of invasive species. IUCN has also begun to explore the human dimension of this problem through a project on people and invasive species.

By examining the many dimensions of the invasive species debate and working in tandem with the wide range of GISP partners, IUCN will make an important contribution to mitigating the devastating impacts of alien invasive species.

Biodiversity is not just a scientific concept; it is also an economic concept. Economic considerations are often powerful arguments to convince decision-makers to adopt sustainable management practices. Biodiversity is about sustainable use and it is about the sharing of benefits. But too little is known about the economics of biodiversity conservation. This is about to change following the launch of IUCN’s Internet site on the Economics of Biodiversity — http://economics.iucn.org.

The site, which provides a wealth of information on economic incentives, biodiversity finance and impact assessment, was officially launched in September 1997 at the meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Created by the Biodiversity Policy Coordination Division and the newly formed IUCN Economics Services Unit, one of the main functions of this website is to collect and share practical information on economic tools for conservation.

“The Internet provides a platform for sharing information and experiences in support of the Convention on Biological Diversity,” says IUCN’s Sebastian Winkler who did much of the programming for the site. “In particular, it serves as a global filing cabinet for the increasing amount of interesting and useful information on the economics of biodiversity.”

The site is structured around six themes: incentive measures; financial resources; international trade; impact assessment; economic valuation; and the private sector. It includes an extensive selection of case studies and analyses, which provide insights and lessons about the political economy of biodiversity. In the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the site provides a clearing-house service for the IUCN and CBD communities on the economic aspects of implementing the Convention.

“We believe,” says IUCN’s Environmental Economist, Frank Vorhies, “that the site will stimulate new thinking and new actions to conserve biodiversity. It will also strengthen our ability to manage biodiversity in the context of economic globalisation.”
Before, we women spent all day at home while our husbands fished," said one of the women behind this initiative, "now we work together to bring money to our village.

With a Little Help...

Ten years ago, Rio Grande de Buba, a long deep inlet on the south-west coast of Guinea-Bissau, was dotted with small, bustling fishing villages. Within a few years, all of this had changed. Uncontrolled fishing by well-equipped boats from neighbouring Senegal and Guinea had led to overfishing. Refugee settlers were cutting down patches of forest to smoke fish for export. The people of Rio Grande de Buba were in danger of losing their livelihood and their main source of protein. It seemed as if there was nothing they could do.

RESPONDING to the people's predicament and the obvious need for measures to protect the coastal mangroves and offshore fisheries, IUCN proposed a project based on the sustainable use of fish resources and participatory management of artisanal fisheries. By involving local people from the beginning, the project has been successful in improving local livelihoods based on sustainable fishing. Women are especially enthusiastic about the project which has led to their empowerment as income-earners within the community.

Many communities were wary at first of outside intervention so IUCN was obliged to start from basics. Two interested local people were soon identified and working through these intermediaries IUCN quickly

Making more by using less has been the result of the IUCN Guinea-Bissau project. Salted fish is packaged by a community group and sold for seven times the price of fresh fish.
helped communities demonstrate their capacity to organise themselves, decide what they wanted to do and effectively manage the programme.

"IUCN has shown us how to stand, but now we need to walk," said one of the women at a regular community meeting held to promote open discussion among the various stakeholders of the Swiss-funded Buba River Artisanal Fisheries Project.

Under normal circumstances, the waters of Rio Grande de Buba are extremely productive. Artisanal fishing has long been a mainstay of people's livelihoods. Fishermen used crude fish traps and dug-out canoes. Occasionally fish were sold, but usually fishermen took only what they and their families could eat. But the influx of commercial fishermen from Guinea, Senegal and other countries in the 1980s, threatened the delicately-balanced existence of the people of Buba and other communities within their riverine ecosystem.

More commercially-oriented than the local people, the refugees began smoking fish for export to markets in the Sahel. False patches appeared in the forest where refugees cut wood for smoking fish. Rio Grande de Buba was heading for trouble. Its waters were becoming over-fished and deforestation of the hinterland meant that soil was smothering vital spawning areas.

As important as gaining the confidence of communities participating in the project was IUCN's intervention as a brokering agent, acting as a go-between for local people and government institutions. Fishermen from Buba started working with IUCN and a national research institution to develop their own management plan which permitted fishing only at specific times of the year, with particular restrictions during the spawning season. The villagers also sought help from the government to implement laws protecting the bay. Local fishermen groups would inform authorities of local and foreign vessels breaking the rules.

Step by step, local people became more confident in their initiatives and ambitious for the future. At the villagers' request, IUCN organised local NGOs to teach some basic skills. Fishermen were trained to build plank boats that last longer than traditional dug-out canoes which need replacing after two or three years. Settlers around the village who had previously cut coastal forests for wood to smoke fish were shown more fuel efficient techniques of smoking. This helped reduce the level of deforestation.

To maintain the impetus, the fishermen of Buba needed money to buy equipment, so an interest-free loan was arranged for villages participating in the scheme. It was the responsibility of each village to lend this money as they saw fit. Profits from these credit schemes are used to build schools and huts for processing fish.

The greatest impact of the project was on the lives of women. Salt was imported from Mali and the women were taught to salt fish. Women began growing vegetables for sale and cultivating peppers used in a traditional method of preserving fish. The women sold their salted and peppered fish but soon realised that to be effective in their new enterprise they needed to learn to read and write. They approached project staff and the Ministry of Education agreed to IUCN's suggestion to organise classes in basic literacy and arithmetic which ultimately helped the women develop their capacity as traders.

With help from IUCN, the women developed a plan for a market, which was even advertised on Bissau radio. Now, on market days, merchants come from Bissau and leave with their trucks filled with fish. Before the project began, women worked alone in their homes. Today, they work communally salting, packing and selling fish and are generators of income for their villages. They now buy fish from their husbands for sale at the local market. This has earned women a great deal of respect within the local community.

"Before we women spent all day at home while our husbands fished," said one of the women behind this initiative, "now we work together to bring money to our village."

It is obvious that an important moment has been reached in the Rio Grande de Buba. People clearly recognise the value of the partnerships they have formed – with outside agencies as well as between the community members. Their uncertain future has been transformed through basic training, recognition of their rights and encouragement for their organisational and commercial skills. In the spirit of learning to work together it is telling to note that one of the main concerns of the women in this region is how they may share their experiences with other communities so they too may have a chance to help themselves and their local environment."
Trade in Wildlife Products

Estimated to be worth billions of dollars and involve hundreds of millions of plants and animals every year, the trade in wild species and their derivatives is big business. Most trade is legal but a significant portion of it is not. This illegal trade is not sustainable and is considered a serious threat to many species which are already under pressure due to loss of habitat and other factors.

In 1976 IUCN established TRAFFIC to monitor trade in wild plants and animals and to help implement CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Today, the TRAFFIC Network, a joint programme of IUCN and WWF, is the world's largest wildlife trade monitoring programme and a global expert on wildlife trade issues. It has offices or representatives in 20 countries and is coordinated by TRAFFIC International, based in the United Kingdom.

With an increasing demand for wildlife derivatives in medicine, overfishing, continued demand for tropical hardwoods and the 1997 CITES decision to consider allowing limited commercial sales of ivory in the near future, TRAFFIC faces an increasing demand for its expertise and monitoring services. "TRAFFIC's work is neither easier nor closer to completion than it was in the 1970s," says Bobbie Jo Kelso from TRAFFIC International. "We face ever more complex issues in determining how best to ensure that trade does not threaten the survival of species."

During the year, the TRAFFIC Network was particularly active on two fronts: the medicinal trade in wildlife and promoting the effectiveness of CITES.

**Medicine**

Wild plants and animals are widely used in traditional medicines and increasingly valued as raw materials in modern medicines and herbal remedies around the globe. The demand for wildlife medicinals is rising and has led to increased and often unsustainable rates of over-exploitation. In western Europe, for example, more people are turning to natural remedies and medicinal plant consumption is estimated to have doubled in the past decade.

In East Asia, TRAFFIC has taken the pioneering approach of working directly with traditional medicine communities to foster understanding of conservation issues. In December 1997, TRAFFIC co-hosted the...
First International Symposium on Endangered Species Used in Traditional East Asia Medicine (TEAM). More than 110 participants from 16 countries attended the symposium, co-hosted by the Chinese Material Medicinal Research Centre of the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The gathering underscored a consensus between traditional medicine specialists and wildlife conservationists about the need for medicinal substitutes for animals and plants that are or may soon be at risk in the wild. Both TEAM representatives and conservationists voiced their desire to continue the new dialogue for the sake of endangered species as well as the traditional medicine industry.

CITES

Following the June 1997 CITES meeting and decision to allow limited commercial trade in ivory from Africa if strict and specific conditions are first met, TRAFFIC was requested to take a lead role in auditing Africa's ivory stocks and in establishing comprehensive monitoring systems to track international trade in elephant products and the illegal killing of elephants in both Africa and Asia. Following a TRAFFIC and IUCN Species Survival Commission workshop of experts in Kenya, in December 1997, it was decided that TRAFFIC's highly successful Bad Ivory Database System will become the basis of the information system concerned with the monitoring of trade in elephant products. Implementation of this and the system to monitor illegal killing of elephants are critical to help ensure that any limited trade in ivory will not endanger the survival of Africa's elephants.
Accounting for Nature

Nature's worth has been overlooked for too long. The economic costs of forest loss or degradation, soil erosion or species depletion have seldom been fully appreciated, partly because the full value of these resources has not been clearly demonstrated. As long as decision-makers remain unconvinced of the value of conserving natural resources and managing them sustainably, IUCN and its members will continue to struggle in their quest to protect biodiversity and the environment.

Greater emphasis needs to be given to demonstrating the economic value of natural resources and ecosystem services. In Fiji, for example, studies show that mangroves are more valuable for firewood, fishing and sewage disposal than when cleared for agricultural land. Economists in Canada have estimated that the nation spends $6.5 billion every year on wildlife-related leisure activities. All too often, however, considerations such as these are not taken into account when it comes to deciding to develop natural areas, even if a country's economic interests may be better served through their conservation and sustainable use.

Each country in the world has a set of national accounts, used to calculate gross national product, gross domestic product and other indicators employed to track a nation's economic growth. Governments use such data when taking decisions about economic development. However, government economists rarely calculate the role of the environment — such as the provision of ecosystem services — in the economy. As a result, development which appears to make sense may in fact be economically unsound when the cost of its impact on the environment is calculated. Other options, less damaging to ecosystems, will come to be seen as more viable with better returns on investment.

To address this deficiency, IUCN set up in 1997 a Green Accounting Initiative (GAI) to encourage decision-makers to factor the full value of the environment into their economic policy decisions. Currently working with the World Bank, United Nations agencies, national governments and non-governmental organisations, IUCN is striving to have the economic value of the environment and its services integrated into national accounting systems world-wide.

Considerable advances have already been made in developing activities at the national level through interested IUCN offices, particularly in Pakistan and Bangladesh, where economists were hired to inform decision-makers about the value of environmental accounting and related environmental economics tools. IUCN brought together policy-makers, public officials, economists and environmentalists to discuss how these tools can contribute to sustainable development. Case studies were commissioned to demonstrate the use of green accounting to address important national policy questions. In Pakistan, studies looked at the economic value of forests and mangroves, while in Bangladesh, the focus was on the willingness of people to pay for clean water. The findings of these studies will be published in 1998.

The GAI is also collaborating with the United Nations Statistical Department — the technical group that develops national accounting methodology — to prepare a practical guide to green accounting for national statistical offices.

"We have played a unique role in developing this manual," says Joy Hecht, Global Coordinator for the Green Accounting Initiative. "Because we come to the table as environmentalists rather than national accountants, we can anticipate how the manual's instructions will be understood by non-accountants, and how it may be used by ministries of environment." The manual is to be published and tested in a number of countries in 1998. This will coincide with the launch of the GAI's website, which will include papers describing the implementation of environmental accounts.
Community Forestry at the Crossroads

Networks of totally protected areas, even if they ultimately cover 10 or 15 percent of the earth's surface, will only conserve part of the world's forest biodiversity. The rest will have to survive in forests that are managed sustainably for a variety of goods and services. In an age of ever-decreasing government budgets, more and more local communities are becoming involved in forestry management. These can be communities that depend on the forest for wood and non-timber forest products or urban communities that use forests for recreation.

There have been some encouraging results of community forestry initiatives. In Nepal, for example, forests in the middle hills have regenerated rapidly once the local people were given the right to manage their forest lands. And in the USA, some of the best-managed forests are in reservations managed by native Americans.

In July 1997, a seminar entitled “Community Forestry at the Crossroads” was held in the Regional Community Forestry Training Centre (RECOFTC), an IUCN member based in Bangkok. The main objective of the seminar was to take stock of the current status of community forestry in Asia and the Pacific and identify priority issues to be addressed. More than 180 professionals from over 29 countries participated in the seminar and looked at the global evolution of community forestry, and the increasingly diverse forms it is taking.

The seminar presentations and discussions centred around two themes. The first was the need for a new professionalism and an organized body of knowledge on community forestry. The second theme was the contested nature of forest resources. It is not easy for forest authorities to give up their control of forest resources and have confidence in the management abilities of local communities. This can be a major barrier to effective community forestry.

"Governments, almost by their nature, lack the capacity to set up sustainable institutional structures at community level - and yet they continually try to do so,” explained Don Gilmour, former Coordinator of IUCN’s Forest Conservation Programme. “Experience has shown that most government and aid programmes experiments in managing local institutions are not sustainable. The most successful institutions have been those which have built on local models, and which have developed into a broad social and political movement, such as the Federation of Forest Users Groups in Nepal. But such political institutions are of course no longer controllable by government.”

Thus the key questions for community forestry which emerged from the RECOFTC seminar were how to get governments to initiate changes in the way forests are managed, and how to encourage governments to relinquish control once these changes have taken on a political life of their own. One thing at least is certain. Wherever community forestry develops into a broadly-based social movement, which has happened in Nepal, it is likely to outlive many other forest management approaches, and thus make an important contribution to forest conservation.

With financial help from the Ford Foundation and the British Department for International Development, (DFID) the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme is assisting the multi-stakeholder Working Group on Community Involvement in Forest Management to document the policies and operational mechanisms adopted worldwide to allow a more active role for local communities and indigenous peoples in sustainable forest management.

(Photograph: Planting trees as part of a reforestation project in Brazil.)
Creating and reinforcing collaborative partnerships is one of IUCN's greatest strengths. As a Union, it serves to help harmonise the policies and actions of hundreds of member organisations worldwide, providing a stimulating forum for debate and exchange of ideas and information. Brought together by the Union's convening power, individuals and organisations – small and large – are better equipped to deal with current circumstances and emerging developments which impact on conservation.

Much of IUCN's strength lies in the fact that it works with international agencies, governments, NGOs and community cooperatives, and increasingly, as noted elsewhere in this report, with the private sector. Evidence of the importance of the framework structure provided by IUCN is seen from the increasing number of applications for membership it continues to receive.

IUCN's global membership in 1997 totalled 913 members in 138 countries. Non-governmental organisations continue to predominate in IUCN's ranks, with 630 subscribing to IUCN in 1997 – an increase of 73 since 1994. More than 100 government agencies are also part of the partnership. In 1997, the Union was also pleased to welcome membership from four new countries – Ireland, Mauritania, the People's Republic of China and Syria – bringing the total number of state memberships to 73.

Volunteer specialists continue to form the backbone of IUCN's operations at field and policy levels.
Each year, more than 10,000 experts in conservation give their time to one or more of IUCN’s six commissions which are responsible for collecting and analysing data, executing many of IUCN’s programmes, providing advice and practical assistance to numerous field projects, as well as formulating essential input to shaping and implementing policies.

What should members expect from their Union? Among the benefits are the opportunity to influence the planning process which helps shape IUCN’s policies and programmes, access to some of the best conservation knowledge and data available, scientifically-based “endorsement” of projects and proposals, regular information either through direct contacts or from the broad spectrum of literature provided by IUCN – and the chance to rub shoulders with professional peers from around the globe. In return, the main expectation of IUCN is the active participation of its members – ensuring the continuing flow of new ideas, opinions and information which will help stimulate and shape future decisions and actions.

IUCN recognises that in order to further develop the unique basis of its membership structure, and to serve its members equally well, it must become more proactive and outreach-oriented. To achieve this, the Union is developing a forward-looking membership policy with clear guidelines on membership relations. The policy is likely to address the following priorities:

- Improved evaluation of members’ needs;
- Better and more frequent communications between members and IUCN;
- Technical assistance and advice through training in a range of fields;
- Establishment of structures to involve members more effectively in the IUCN programme planning and development process;
- Making members aware of established global policies.

As part of the Union’s efforts to improve direct communications between members and between IUCN and members, from 1999 the Membership Database will be available to all IUCN members, as well as to IUCN Regional and Country Offices, through the Internet, providing a fast and reliable form of communications.

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MEMBERSHIP

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Accessing the Information Highway in Southern Africa

CONTRIBUTING to the sustainable and equitable use of natural resources in Southern Africa through information exchange and communications is one of the larger programmes currently being implemented by IUCN’s Regional Office in Southern Africa (ROSA).

ROSA’s Environment Information and Communications Programme is integrating communication into IUCN’s programme design process, as well as its policy-making decisions. In collaboration with the Regional Networking and Capacity Building Initiative (NETCAB) and USAID’s AfricaLink, the programme is helping link IUCN members and SADC Natural Resources Management Programme partners to electronic mail and the Internet in order to facilitate electronic networking between the IUCN Secretariat, its members and partners.

The exercise was planned so that ROSA provided support for initial set-up and training, plus a three-month subscription to the service provider. After three months, beneficiaries were to renew their subscriptions themselves. Encouraging results show that of the 19 connections already established, only a few failed to renew their subscriptions, demonstrating that the service is proving beneficial.

To assist first-time users, a help desk was established at ROSA for trouble-shooting and to respond to member queries and problems related to their connections, most of which were due to the incompatibility of equipment. The help desk facilitated on-line tutorials and liaised with Internet Service Providers to remedy some of the problems that were out of the realm of the help desk.

A training session on the use of the Internet in support of natural resource management activities was held in Namibia in November 1997.

While this service will mainly benefit IUCN members and partners in Southern Africa, direct e-mail access will allow others to access information being gathered in Southern Africa and other parts of the world.

In 1998, a web page will be in place on community-based natural resource initiatives supported by IUCN-ROSA and other partners. ROSA is currently setting up an electronic discussion conference facility for IUCN members, commissions and partners. A separate conferencing facility may be established for IUCN managers within the region. Both aim at facilitating the flow of information among IUCN staff, members, commissions and partners.
The World Conservation Union Today

The World Conservation Union today is the world's largest conservation organisation:

✓ over 900 governmental and non-governmental members from 138 countries;

✓ has contributed to drafting major global conventions on biological diversity, wetlands, world heritage, trade in endangered species of flora and fauna;

✓ is a global network of networks: over 8,000 scientists and field practitioners from government and non-governmental organisations working voluntarily;

✓ has some 42 offices around the world employing approximately 900 permanent staff with an annual budget (1997) of over US$50 million;

✓ works with and through its members and strategic partners – grassroots, governmental, intergovernmental, academic, research, corporate;

✓ prides itself on "sound science, socially delivered".

The Union's Mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

... and the Union tomorrow?

The world conservation community is returning to Fontainebleau after half a century to debate where the movement should be going in the new millennium.

Data source: IUCN Membership list 1997/ October 1998
Are We Making a Difference?

Achieving results is what counts in conservation — results which contribute to the improvement of natural resources and to the lives of people who depend on them. But how do you know you are achieving? Or failing?

Since 1996 IUCN has invested in a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Initiative aimed at building the capacity of IUCN staff and members to assess whether they are making a difference in practices and policies related to the sustainability of natural resources. This means developing a more reflective and evaluative culture as well as improving the use of methods and tools for assessing progress at project/programme, systems and institutional level.

“We need to regard our project and programme actions as experiments rather than ends in themselves — and check regularly to see if the changes that we thought would come about have happened, and to assess why, or why not,” explains Nancy MacPherson, Coordinator of IUCN’s Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative. “Only then can we really learn from our experience. If we can assess what works and what does not under certain conditions, and resist the external and internal pressure for “success stories”, then we may be able to stand a chance of improving our work. If we are less rigorous and reflective about our work, and allow what is often called the “conspiracy of success” to dominate our thinking, then our learning is likely to be minimised. This is one of the most difficult aspects of trying to become a learning organisation — using failure as well as success as a resource for learning.”

Assessment and reflection at all levels are necessary

To improve IUCN’s ability to learn, the Initiative is working to improve M&E skills and capacity at three levels — the systems level (assessing and understanding baseline conditions of people and ecosystems against which we must take action); the project and programme level (designing actions relevant to the baseline); and the institutional level (effective, efficient organisation and management of our work). Working at only one of these levels, as often happens with M&E,
is not sufficient. For example, projects can be efficient and well-managed, but if not planned and assessed against the bigger picture, they can still be irrelevant to the broader context.

Understanding the bigger picture of baseline conditions of people and ecosystems is an important and often missed step in achieving greater clarity of what work is needed, why and how it should be carried out. Without a baseline against which to measure progress, we are not really in a position to monitor and assess whether we are making a difference. If we have a reasonable baseline, and a good understanding of the factors influencing the conditions of ecosystems and people, then we put ourselves in a better position to design relevant projects and programmes aimed at bringing about positive change, and to learn while in the process.

IUCN is also improving its skills in understanding the needs of implementing partners and stakeholders as an essential part of programme planning and M&E. Training in methods and tools for stakeholder analysis and gender analysis are becoming part of the toolkit that is needed to develop a common vision of problems but also potential solutions.

Starting in the field with programme staff and technical support teams, the Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative set out in late 1996 to develop a common understanding of what monitoring, evaluation and assessment means in the context of IUCN’s work, and to improve the use of methods and tools in M&E. Working in five regions – Eastern and Southern Africa, Central and South America and South and Southeast Asia – the first phase of the Initiative has demonstrated a clear need for improved methods and skills in programme/project design, implementation, monitoring and assessment, and reporting.

M&E can be perceived as a threat if seen as a "policing" function. While compliance (doing what we say we will) is part of M&E, the Initiative chose to introduce M&E to IUCN staff and members through a "learn by doing" approach, rather than a compliance/policing approach. Using facilitators in each region the Initiative works alongside staff and members in responding to their needs and interests in assessing key questions such as: How do we know if our work is relevant? How will we know if we are making progress towards our objectives? What methods and tools should we be using to do this? This has led staff to challenge original assumptions, improve the coherence of regional programme frameworks, and gain a clearer sense of what exactly they are to monitor and assess.

### Challenges

Working with a wide variety of development agencies and partners, IUCN has to cope with a variety of labels for M&E requirements, such as Results-Based Management, and various types of logical framework analyses. This can prove confusing to staff and create unnecessary anxiety and duplication of effort. The Initiative tries to address this by focusing on building a generic set of questions and methods that will also meet the needs of a variety of donor agencies. By starting from a series of basic questions and then methods to provide the answers, the confusion is minimised.

While starting the M&E Initiative at regional level has succeeded in positively engaging and motivating staff, the challenge remains for 1998-99 at global level to pull this experience together into an M&E system for IUCN union-wide.
Tailoring Approaches to Needs

The approach to M&E developed by the Monitoring and Evaluation Initiative seeks to develop an M&E system that is user-driven, as opposed to data- or compliance-driven, that treats people and ecosystems as the conceptual framework for assessment, and that provides a set of methods and tools for assessment at any level that users can adapt to their particular context and needs.

Putting the Approach into Practice, East Africa

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are not familiar tools to many people, even though the concept is basic common sense. Demonstrating the importance and benefits of M&E and encouraging staff to integrate it into their work as they go along is a major part of IUCN’s ongoing M&E facilitation work. In April 1997, IUCN organised a workshop on approaches to monitoring and evaluating collaborative management of natural resources in Eastern Africa, for programme staff of IUCN’s Eastern Africa Regional Office (EARO) and field project staff in the region. Participants were given an overview of M&E at project and systems level, along with an illustration of methods and tools for analysing baseline conditions of the area to better determine how local people perceive key issues of sustainability, and how they could select a manageable set of indicators that are appropriate, relevant and feasible for monitoring purposes.

EARO staff visiting the village of Moambani, a coastal fishing village, discovered that fishermen could easily identify two major concerns that they wished to assess and monitor—reef health and coastal health. For the latter, their main concern was the continuing loss of mangroves as a result of coastal erosion, an issue of particular concern as people depended on the mangroves as a source of fuelwood, but also in recognition of their importance as spawning grounds for fish and as a protection against further loss of coastline. With the help of the EARO team, villagers were also able to arrive at a selection of measurable indicators for key issues affecting the health of offshore reefs, such as destructive fishing practices (which included seine netting and dynamite fishing) and lack of government enforcement.

These assessments helped to focus on several key aspects of reef and coastal sustainability that could be monitored by villagers as well as project staff. Using these indicators over the course of the project, it appears that the incidents of dynamiting have decreased. Project and local staff have also documented their lessons learned as part of their learning process in this area. Recognising the significance of their progress, efforts are being made by the project team and EARO to transfer this learning to other coastal areas, and to a higher level of policy influence.

M&E at the Community Level, Nicaragua

Communities in Cosigüina, north-western Nicaragua are using the IUCN M&E approach, methods and tools to carry out an evaluation of the impact of a project on people and ecosystems in an area where 80% of the population is considered “very poor” and with high levels of child malnutrition. Locally available wildlife resources are an important source of food and income. Iguanas and brown lizards “garrobo” are an important source of protein—each family consuming one or two animals per week. Management of these lizards dates back to 1990 when the Cooperative Omar Baca was established to manage these species for food, medicinal and other traditional uses. One hundred hectares of land were set aside in the buffer zone of a wildlife refuge and cooperative members joined forces to map the area, prepare a management plan and construct enclosures for the iguanas.

Working with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MARENA), the National University in León (UNAN) and CATIE, during 1997, participants in the programme undertook an evaluation of the experiences learned to date. Analytical M&E methods were applied to determine basic needs, to describe the results of the programme from the participants’ perspectives and to develop a scale model which summarised the community’s vision in relation to their living standards and
use/availability of natural resources.

The findings have been of considerable importance to the community, improving their knowledge of the project, its achievements and limitations, and its impact on their lives. In particular, the organisation of the community effort has been greatly strengthened through this process, particularly as it has helped overcome certain conflicts which might otherwise have been damaging to the project. Changes in attitude have also now enabled women to become involved in management, while results also enable the development of a strategic plan involving national institutions and NGOs.

M&E – Institutional Experience

IUCN staff at the Office for South America (SUR) in Quito, Ecuador have been learning from experiences – success stories as well as failures. In contrast to the Cosigüina example, institutional assessment seeks to promote reflective processes in an institution around key questions of relevance, coherence of programme, feasibility and organisational capacities. Recognising that the implementation of its Triennial Plan (1997-1999) was fragmented, based on individually-focused activities rather than a coherent programme, the M&E Initiative began with a detailed review of the Triennial Plan's logical framework analysis and a rapid analysis of the needs and opportunities for IUCN in the region.

The findings have helped the SUR Office to address constraints of their programme structure which was organised around thematic areas, and provide guidance towards a more integrated programme that will serve to strengthen this Regional Office.

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are not familiar tools to many people... Demonstrating the importance and benefits of M&E, and encouraging staff to integrate it into their work as they go along, are a major part of IUCN's ongoing M&E facilitation work.
IUCN — 1997 Expenditure

By Programme:
Swiss Francs 76,119,000

- Natural Heritage 1%
- Sustainable Use of Wildlife 2%
- Environmental Assessment 2%
- Species 3%
- Networking 3%
- Marine and Coastal 3%
- Environmental Law 3%
- Socio-Economic Sustainability 4%
- Conservation Strategies 4%
- Communications and Environmental Education 4%
- Protected Areas 8%
- Institutional Development 9%

By Region:
Swiss Francs 76,119,000

- Headquarters and Global 33%
- North Africa & Central Asia 1%
- South America 2%
- Europe 3%
- Central America 4%
- Central Africa 5%
- Pakistan 6%
- North America 6%
- South & South East Asia 7%
- West Africa 10%
- Eastern Africa 10%
- Southern Africa 13%

IUCN Expenditure Managed from Headquarters and from Regional and Country Offices as a Percentage of IUCN's Total Budget
### WHO'S WHO AT IUCN

**Headquarters:** GLAND, SWITZERLAND

- **Director General:** DAVID McDOWELL
- **Assistant Director General:** GEORGE GREENE
- **Global Programme Director:** PATRICK DUGAN

**Management Directorate**

- **Administrative Services Head:** ANNA FERRÉRES
- **Finance Division Chief Financial Officer:** MARIA GRAZIA IORI
- **Human Resources Management Division Director:** JASON BERGREN
- **Information Management Group Head:** KEVIN GROSE
- **Communications Division Director:** JAVED AHMAD
- **Global Policy & Partnerships Division Director:** MARK HALLE

**Institutional Development Division Director:** PER BYSTED

**Governance and Membership Directorate**

- **Membership and Congress Affairs Unit Head:** URSULA HILBRUNNER
- **Council Affairs Head:** FIONA HANSON
- **Technical Programmes Directorate**

**Biodiversity Policy Coordination Division Head:** JEFFREY A. MCKEEN

**Ecosystems Management Group Coordinator:** JEAN-PIERRE PIROT

**Wetlands Programme Head:** JEAN-PIERRE PIROT

**Forest Conservation Programme Head:** BILL JACKSON

**Marine & Coastal Conservation Programme Coordinator:** MAGNUS NIGOLE

**Species Survival Programme:** SIMON STUART

**Protected Areas Programme:**

- **Head:** DAVID SHEPPARD
- **Natural Heritage Programme:**
  - **Senior Advisor:** JIM THOMSENN
  - **Director:** WENDY GOLSTEIN

**Environmental Education & Communication:**

- **Head:** NANCY MACPHERSON

**Social Policy Group:**

- **Head:** GRAZIA BORRINI-FEYEBRAND

**Regional Support Group**

- **West Asia, North Africa and Central Asia Programme:**
  - **Financial Coordinator:** FRANCIS PAKARATI
  - **South & South East Asia Coordinator:** PETER RESLAIR
  - **Latin America Coordinator:** FERNANDO GHERSI

**Regional & Country Offices**

- **Asia:**
  - **Regional Representative for South Asia:** ABHAR THAPA
  - **Regional Representative for Eastern Asia:** EDDAD TUKAHIRWA
  - **Regional Coordinator Office - Thailand:** HEAD OF OFFICE ZAKH HUSSAIN

- **Zambia:**
  - **Country Representative:** MASHABWI NFTITA

- **Western Africa:**
  - **Representative for West Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

- **Central Africa:**
  - **Representative for Central Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

- **Eastern Africa:**
  - **Representative for Eastern Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

- **Uganda:**
  - **Country Representative:** ALEX MWENDE

- **Southern Africa:**
  - **Regional Representative for Southern Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

- **Botswana:**
  - **Country Representative:** BUNTH JHAME

**Middle East, North Africa and Central Asia Programme**

- **Regional Coordinator for Central Africa:** FRANCIS PAKARATI

**Central Asia, Cameroon:**

- **Regional Coordinator for Central Africa:** FRANCIS PAKARATI

**East Africa:**

- **Regional Coordinator for Eastern Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

**Senegal:**

- **Country Representative:** ABOUVARE NDIAYE

**Mozambique, Tanzania:**

- **Representative for Southern Africa:** EMMANUEL SHAW

**Uganda:**

- **Country Representative:** ALEX MWENDE

**Russia:**

- **Country Representative:** ALEXEY KULIKOV

**Other IUCN Locations**

- **Belgium:**
  - **IUCN Representative in the European Union:** RACHEL RYKE

- **Canada:**
  - **Director:** MALCOLM MERCER

- **United States:**
  - **Executive Director:** SCOTT HUDDUS

- **Germany:**
  - **Head, Environmental Law Centre:** FRANCOISE BURKINNE-GULLAH

- **United Kingdom:**
  - **Head, Publications Services Unit:** ELAINE SHAUGHNESSY

- **Russian Federation:**
  - **Head, Confederation of Independent State Office:** VLADIMIR VLADIMIROVICH MISERKALU

- **Slovak Republic:**
  - **National Coordinator:** PETER SABO

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