

# Bulletin

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## A CONVENTION IS BORN

ON 23 JUNE a wildlife Convention was born which in due time may come to rank with CITES as one of the main international bulwarks against continuing depletion of species.

A 2-week Diplomatic Conference in Bonn, West Germany, culminated in the adoption of a *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*. It will come into force when 15 nations have ratified.

Migratory species are defined as 'the entire population or any geographically separate part of the population of any species or lower taxon of wild animals, a significant proportion of whose members cyclically and predictably cross national jurisdictional boundaries'.

The revolutionary breadth of the Convention may not immediately be plain from this somewhat ponderous language. All migratory animals throughout the world are in principle covered; there are no exceptions.

Admittedly this all-embracing view did not prevail without a long, hard and ultimately costly fight. 24 hours before the treaty in its final form was signed, a vote was taken as to whether 'marine mammals, fish, crustacea and molluscs' should be excluded.

41 said No and only 9 said Yes. This represented a dramatic turnabout since the international meeting in Bonn in July 1976 to discuss the draft. At that stage the necessary two-thirds majority to include all marine species did not exist.

Defeated on this issue the 9 - Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, South Africa, Uruguay, USA, USSR - along with certain others including Argentina, did not endorse the Convention in the final vote. Bearing in mind that attempts to exclude the polar regions had also been rebuffed, it is significant that 8 of the 10 countries named above are members of the Antarctic Treaty and that all 10 are already catching krill.

With 'non-supporters' comprising so many of the rich and the powerful, possessing *in toto* such an enormous land-mass and coastline, it might seem that the Convention was not so much born as still-born.



Photo: FAO

*An Indian gharial takes a first look at what should soon be a safer world for its kind. Found in rivers of the Indian subcontinent, *Gavialis gangeticus* is in Appendix I of the Migratory Species Convention — and also of CITES.*

This would be a mis-reading. The Convention is a strong one and several of the more prominent backsliders will surely be shamed into reassessing their current posture. Where necessary they can rely on a little help from their NGOs!

A most heartening aspect of the conference was the strong conservationist stand taken by the Third World and western Europe. Pride of place must go to the African nations. They intervened often and eloquently to bring the conference back on course. A *Declaration by the African States* issued half-way through the meeting made it clear that Africans were only interested in a Convention which included all migratory species everywhere.

The Declaration was seconded by over 30

delegations and thereafter it was plain that the majority would not compromise in order to 'buy' the support of a handful of wealthy countries more concerned about their own fishing interests than with protecting the 'common heritage of humanity'. The minority was not going to be let off the hook so that they could emerge with the appearance of being good conservationists without sacrificing any of their 'proprietary rights'.

The dispute highlighted the two opposing concepts of migratory species: national property versus shared resources. It bodes well for the conservation cause that in Bonn the enlightened view triumphed - with the developing world taking the lead.

**THE concept of shared resources is, of course, implicit in a Convention covering species which cross national boundaries. And the appendices spell it out. While Appendix I is for endangered species requiring immediate protection at the national level, Appendix II is for species with 'an unfavourable conservation status' requiring the protection of international agreements.**

**It can therefore happen that a species is listed in both appendices. The Mediterranean monk seal gets a double entry; so does the vicuña. The appendices at present contain no marine fish and are in other respects incomplete. For the time being their primary purpose is to serve as examples.**

# Mexico: the turtles are gathering for their nesting season massacre

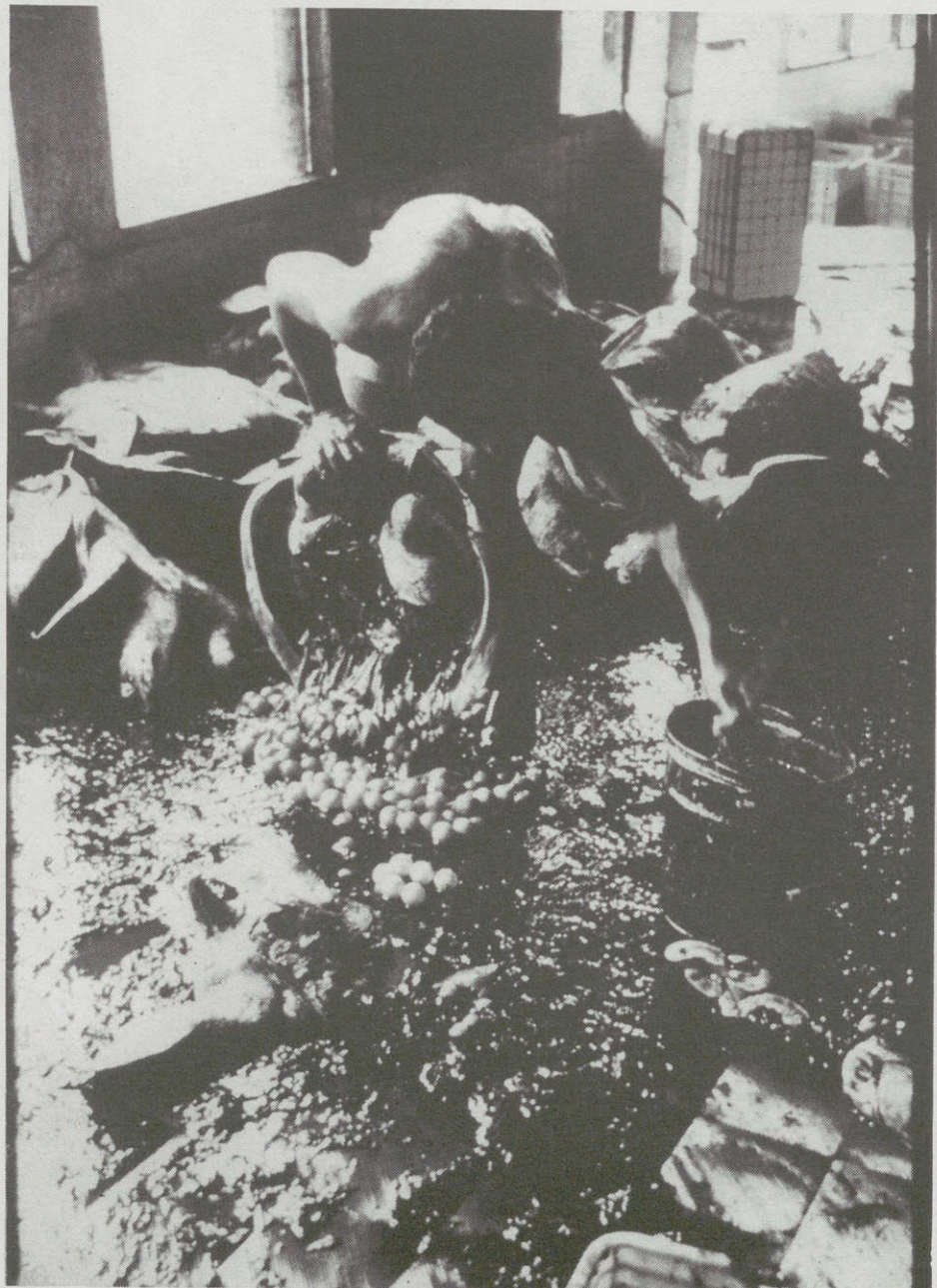
SEA turtles coming ashore to nest on Mexico's Pacific coast continue to be exploited far above sustainable limits.

This year as in former years the notorious commercial fishery *Pesqueria Industrial de Oaxaca* (PIOSA), has extracted a quota from the Mexican Department of Fisheries which bears no relation to the real - and steeply nose-diving - populations as estimated by Mexico's own *Instituto Nacional de Pesca*.

Until very recently olive ridley and green turtles were superabundant in these waters.

Now they are almost rare. Not many years ago La Escobilla in the state of Oaxaca had six olive ridley *arribadas* (mass nestings) annually - one for each lunar cycle of the July-December breeding season. By 1977 the number had sunk to two.

A *Bulletin* article recounting this sad saga 18 months ago (January/February 1978) concluded by saying that Mexican and other biologists would foregather that August at La Escobilla 'to document an event which has been occurring for millions of years in Mexico but which may then be occurring for the last time - the olive ridley *arribada*'.



During the 1978 season the PIOISA plant at San Augustinillo, was 'processing' 350-500 olive ridleys a day. The industry was given a 34,000-turtle quota for July-October.

Alas, even this bleak prediction turned out to be over-optimistic. There was no *arribada* in 1978.

## 'Scientific' enterprise

Mexico's turtle fishery in the Pacific is virtually a monopoly - tightly, even ruthlessly controlled by PIOISA. Señor Antonio Suárez, the owner, purports to run his enterprise along strictly scientific lines. In October 1977, with much panoply and a fine show of scientific expertise, he opened a spanking new laboratory which he claimed would return to the sea no less than 5,000,000 hatchlings.

The age-old conundrum of how to have your cake (or turtle) and eat it was to be solved in a drastically novel manner. Adult females swimming ashore to nest would be caught and killed, their meat and hides sold and the eggs extracted and hatched and the hatchlings returned to the sea.

The first stage of this 2-stage operation went very satisfactorily - from the company's viewpoint. On the basis of a PIOISA population estimate that was 15 times bigger than that of the *Instituto Nacional de Pesca*, the Department of Fisheries granted an olive ridley quota of 112,000. 90% of the subsequent catch consisted of egg-laden females.

From any viewpoint the second stage of the operation was not a happy one. Ignorance and negligence combined to cut the number of hatchlings to less than 15% of the target. These were then poured into the sea at the same hour and place daily, prompting a hungry build-up of off-shore predators at 'feeding time'.

But even if elementary errors are avoided the 'biologic' of such an exercise is highly dubious. Imprinting in turtles, vital to the species' survival, is poorly understood. Yet it does not seem very likely that the mechanism will be triggered in turtles artificially hatched miles from their true nesting beach and then denied their self-propelled march from nest to sea. And unimprinted turtles will lack that superbly designed inner compass which, 10 years and thousands of swimming miles later, when now at last mature animals, brings them with pin-point precision back to their birth beach, perhaps the one stretch of suitable nesting terrain along hundreds of miles of shoreline.

## Recommendations rejected

The green turtle in Mexico is in an even more endangered state than the olive ridley. An IUCN/WWF project team is striving to rebuild its shattered populations. Early in 1978 the Marine Turtle Division of the *Instituto de Pesca*, primed by the investigations of the project team, recommended:

- a) a total ban on green turtle hunting for 10 years in Jalisco, Colima and Michoacan;
- b) the establishment of protected natural reserves on the chief breeding beaches and the routing of the coastal highway away from these beaches;

- c) the confiscation of shark and turtle nets in nesting areas during the nesting season.

All these recommendations were ignored by the Department of Fisheries. In the main green turtle nesting areas PIOSA was given a handsome quota. Off-shore nets took most of the catch - with the result that only about 4% of the eggs extracted from these drowned turtles were 'live'.

The total catch for the 1978 season - olive ridleys and greens - was 55,000. PIOSA claims that 500,000 hatchlings were returned to the sea.

Following a resolution at the Ashkhabad General Assembly calling on Mexico to act promptly to save its remaining turtle populations, IUCN's Director General, David Munro, wrote to the President of Mexico on 10 April requesting his personal intervention in the matter. The specific recommendations were:

- a) total moratorium in all the territory of Mexico on the commercial take of sea turtles;
- b) intensive protection of the nesting beaches in keeping with the recommendations of the *Instituto Nacional de Pesca*;
- c) control of the commercial development of the nesting beach area;
- d) intensive research of population dynamics to establish a new model for long-range economic exploitation of the sea turtle.

We learn that the request was passed to the Department of Fisheries which has once again authorized PIOSA - in the person of Señor Suárez - to drive Mexico's surviving turtles still closer to annihilation. The quota for the 1979 season is 24,000 from July until the end of October. November and December are 'open season' with no fixed quota. Señor Suárez has said that this year 'green turtles will not be taken'.

Will this statement turn out to be true - and, if true, is it useful? Last year for Colola and Maruata Bay the green-turtle quota was only 20% of the whole, but the



catch was 90% greens. The reason, as a PIOSA spokesman obligingly explained, was that 'ridleys are now very scarce in the area'.

#### Grounds for hope

This report should not be allowed to close on a wholly depressing note. Despite all obstacles, the IUCN/WWF project team has persisted in its efforts to save Mexico's green turtles - and with some gratifying results. During last year's nesting season the team purchased (often, of necessity, on the black market) 100,000 green turtle eggs and released a total of 70,000

hatchlings. This success could not have been gained without the active help of the local inhabitants - a fact which gives grounds for hope that even at this late hour the situation can be turned around.

Another cause for satisfaction is the rebuff administered to Señor Suárez when he turned up at the CITES meeting in San José to propose extending his operation to Costa Rica. Although offering a number of high-sounding inducements - described by Russel Train, president of the World Wildlife Fund US, as 'window dressing for slaughterhouses' - the owner of PIOSA returned home empty-handed.



In August 1978 75,000 eggs were disposed of because they had been taken from turtles dead for over 24 hours - deliberately drowned in shark nets.



Bones, shells, entrails and uncalcified eggs were all fed into a macerator which ground them into pulp.

# Missing factor in whaling equation

ONE aspect of the whaling issue - whether whaling, as practised by modern man is an ethical act - seems to be overlooked or routinely dismissed as 'emotionalism'. As a professional wildlife biologist/administrator, I suggest the question of ethics is a legitimate factor in the whaling equation and that the killing of whales for profit by modern, urbanized man is unethical.

Webster's dictionary defines ethics as: "1) the discipline dealing with what is good and bad and with moral duty and obligations; 2) a set of moral principles or values".

If one accepts that 'international species', such as whales, are not the property of any individual or any single nation but rather are a part of the 'commons' and therefore 'belong' (if that word can be used correctly in this context) to *all* people - both present and future generations - then it seems logically to follow that gross exploitation by today's generation, who thereby 'steal' from future generations, is not an ethical act. When such over-exploitation threatens the permanent and unnecessary destruction of the resource, the lack of ethics is even more apparent. Especially is this true when the 'theft' or 'destruction' is carried out over the strong protest of others who have equal interest in the item being destroyed or stolen.

Our increasing knowledge of the mental ability (or 'intelligence', depending upon one's definition of that term) possessed by the cetaceans causes me concern when considering the modern, mechanized, commercial killing of these mammals. I am not as sure as some of my more religious colleagues that God did, in fact, give man total "dominion over the beasts" and have distinct reservations about the morality of killing mammals, some of which probably are no less (and perhaps more) 'intelligent' than certain individuals of our own species -

## comment

for example mentally deficient persons. If 'intelligence' is one of the criteria used to elevate man above other taxa, it seems this criterion should at least be considered in our relations with them - in which case the killing-for-profit of mammals with the apparent intelligence of the cetaceans would seem to be an unethical act.

Aesthetic and humane considerations fall within the definition of ethics. The manner in which whales are slaughtered - the use of modern vessels, aircraft, electronic gear and all the rest - removes any vestige of 'sportsmanship' or 'romance of the sea' and leaves only a commercial exploitation of a resource - an operation very analogous to strip mining. If one examines the means by which a living whale is killed to provide oil, fertilizer and other products (none essential to man's wellbeing), one must conclude that the process results in extreme stress to the animal prior to death and is nearly as stressful to those pursued but not killed.

While I realize those of us involved in the biological sciences must avoid anthropomorphism, I find it difficult to describe that process - applied as it is to a species with a complex and highly-evolved nervous system - without using words like "terror, agony, pain, brutality".

It is very unlikely that any 'advanced' nation would tolerate the use of such stressful methods in disposing of unwanted dogs or cats or in the slaughter of domestic livestock. To the contrary, methods producing such stress would be illegal in most US communities. It also would be informative to observe the reaction of ordinary people to a demonstration of whale killing carried out, for example, on a gray whale in San Francisco Bay! I suspect that modern

man's acceptance of whaling is due largely to his ignorance thereof.

Thus, it seems that commercial whaling by modern man is:

- carried out only for the sake of profit;
- without sufficient regard for the maintenance of exploited stocks or the 'rights' of future generations;
- an activity from which a few reap a profit from the abuse of common property over the protest of others with equal interest in that property; and
- is carried out with no vestige of 'sportsmanship' in a manner irreconcilable with Webster's definition of humane ("marked by compassion, sympathy or consideration for other human beings or animals"); and which results in a very stressful death of highly sensitive and intelligent mammals by methods that would be illegal or unacceptable if applied to stray dogs, cats, the slaughter of domestic livestock or if carried out in sight of the general populace of most modern, urban communities.

It is difficult for me to conclude that such an activity falls within Webster's definition of ethical.

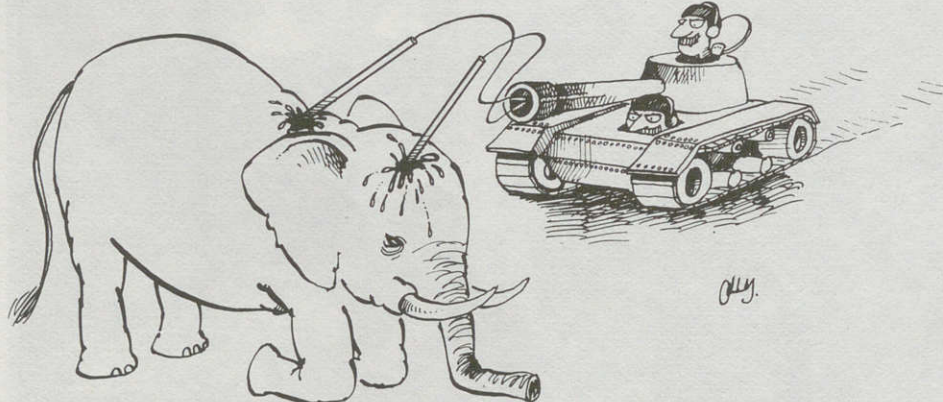
I am aware that the scientific community involved in the whaling issue goes to great lengths to ensure that 'emotionalism' does not creep into what is regarded as 'scientific truth'. I agree with that concern but feel it is not completely germane when dealing with the ethical aspects of the whaling issue. Ethics are the product of man's abstract reasoning which is influenced by his emotions. In other words, the answer to the technical question of how many whales can be killed without obliterating the stock is only a *part* of the question that should be considered in assessing man's relations with these species.

I hasten to add that my views are a bit less clear on 'subsistence taking'. I fully accept that all life is dependent upon the destruction of other life and that the concept of what is or is not 'ethical' depends very much on the individual's own background and the society in which he has developed. Thus I would argue that an Inuit living in a traditional manner and in tune with his environment is not 'unethical' when he leaves his camp armed with harpoon and lance, drives his dog sled to his umiak and returns with a whale which he uses to feed and clothe himself and his community.

But what if the theoretical Inuit leaves a modern house, rides his snowmobile to his power boat and uses a modern grenade-harpoon to kill a whale which is then converted into curios for sale to the tourist?

I submit that the question of ethics is an essential element in the process of deciding man's relationship with his fellow creatures - particularly the cetaceans - and that this question is just as valid and important as those dealing with economics and environmental politics.

*Earl Baysinger - Executive Officer,  
Survival Service Commission.*



"What an outcry there would be if we hunted elephants with explosive harpoons fired from a tank and then played the wounded beasts upon a line." *Professor Alistair Hardy*

## Pirate Whaling

# The pirates - and Japan's connection

INVESTIGATIONS into pirate whaling under flags of convenience began in March 1975. In October that year the findings were sent to all International Whaling Commissioners. In March 1976 Japan officially rejected the findings.

Despite subsequent IWC resolutions to restrict non-IWC whaling, the evidence shows it has increased and that Japanese

finance, vessels and personnel are involved. Earlier this year one operation, managed from South Africa, appeared to have acquired two more whaling vessels in addition to *Sierra* — which under a variety of names and flags has been a 'pirate whaler' since 1968.

The *People's Trust for Endangered Species* therefore asked the South African government to institute an urgent official enquiry and to report the results to

the 1979 annual meeting of the IWC as required by the Commission's most recent resolutions on non-IWC whaling.

Since then it has been learned that another 'new' vessel, a former Japanese trawler, has just been refitted for whaling purposes. The ship left South Africa on 9 May and arrived in Las Palmas, Canaries, on 26 May. She sailed again on 7 June — "Destination Fishing".



The end product: Fresh Quick Frozen Whale Meat. (The inset picture shows the same message in Japanese.)

turn over

# Pirate Whaling

The following article is extracted from the report *Pirate Whaling produced and researched by Nick Carter of the People's Trust for Endangered Species.*

**IN October 1975 Sierra flew the Somali flag and was registered in Mogadishu, while operating mainly out of Mocammedes, Angola.**

Always aboard were four Japanese meat inspectors, employees of the Japanese company that bought all the meat from whales killed and processed by the vessel. Sei and Bryde's whales comprised the main catch but endangered blue, humpback and right whales were taken as chance offered.

From animals of 25-30 tons the Japanese inspectors selected only the most choice cuts of meat for freezing — on average 5-6 tons. The rest of the carcasses were dumped in the sea. The meat was then packed into paper/plastic containers labelled *Fresh Frozen Whale Meat: Produce of Spain.*

*Sierra's* holds have a capacity of 305 tons, though an extra 25-30 tons can be carried on the refrigeration plates. The ship operates in all seasons. Usually each trip lasts about six weeks, yielding an average catch of 40-45 whales.

In 1976 *Sierra* was discovered inside the Nigerian 3-mile limit cutting up a

whale. She escaped to sea by casting the whale adrift, making as if to run down the small Nigerian gunboat which had found her, and by threatening it with her harpoon.

In 1977 *Sierra's* registration was changed to Sierra Ltd, 225 Archbishop Makarios III Street, Limassol, Cyprus.

## Enter the Tonna

Early in 1978 *Sierra* was joined in Las Palmas by *MV Tonna*, a Japanese-built vessel. With *Tonna* acting as factory ship and *Sierra* as killer-factory, the two vessels took 102 whales in 42 days, processing them into 432 tons of meat — or about 4.2 tons per animal.

*Tonna* was then fitted with a harpoon gun. But shortly afterwards with 450 tons of meat on board the winching mechanism jammed while hauling up an 80-ton fin whale. The weight of the whale caused the ship to list so heavily that the engine room was flooded and — on 22 July — she sank.

The Norwegian master of *Tonna* was drowned. The survivors included three Japanese inspectors and 32

# The unmasking of the pirates

South African officers and crew; within a few months all were serving aboard *Sierra*.

At the enquiry into the sinking of the vessel it emerged that the Sierra Fishing Agency — the Cape Town agent for both *Sierra* and *Tonna* and a subsidiary of Andrew M. Behr (Pty) Ltd — had a contract with the Japanese, who bought all the catch. Payments were made in cash. The presence of Japanese inspectors aboard was explained by the need to retain only the quality meat. The Manager of the Sierra Fishing Agency, Richard H. Shepperd, was disinclined to answer questions "due to the sensitive nature of international whaling".

## The sister ships

*Sierra* left Leixoes, Portugal, on 23 May 1979 and put into Aveiro the next day for repairs. She sailed again on 30 May and re-entered Leixoes on 31

May, there discharging 25 tons of whale oil. On 1 June *Sierra* left for "High Seas".

Under the headline *Whalers refit for service* the August 1978 issue of the South African Shipping News and Fishing Industry Review announced that South Africa's last two whalers had been sold to foreign interests. In November it was discovered that the ships had been renamed *Susan* and *Theresa* — which happen to be the names of two of Andrew M. Behr's daughters.

While being refitted the ships were photographed by an observer with experience of whaling. He had no doubts that they were to be used for the same purposes as *Sierra*. They were expected to be ready for sea in the first half of May but on 9 April *Theresa* was badly damaged by fire. Repairs, estimated at 150,000 Rand, were immediately begun on a round-the-clock basis.

Apprised of these facts the *People's Trust for Endangered Species* acted in an attempt to stop *Susan* and *Theresa* putting to sea. On 26 April the Trust wrote to the South African Embassy in London with a file of supporting documents pointing to the need for an urgent official enquiry into the affairs of Andrew M. Behr (Pty) Ltd.

On the same day the evidence was copied to the Royal Norwegian Embassy together with a proposal that the government consider re-introducing a former section of Norwegian whaling law repealed in 1969. This law had prevented Norwegian whaling captains and gunners using their expertise for foreign whaling expeditions.

Due to previous initiatives by the USA on non-IWC whaling at Commission meetings, this correspondence was also sent to the US Commissioner, Richard M. Frank. The Trust asked him to support, on behalf of the USA, its proposal for the institution of an official IWC Register of Whaling Vessels both of members and non-members of the Commission. The register should be publicly available and the Trust undertook to provide cooperation and the finance for it. The IWC cannot ensure implementation of its resolutions on non-IWC whaling without knowing the numbers and whereabouts of vessels involved. Nor can it monitor any transfers of them

without knowing their origins, ownership, equipment and capacities.

The Trust has also asked the USA to consider proposing that all IWC members introduce national legislation — in line with the former Norwegian law — to prevent their whaling personnel being used by non-IWC whaling interests.

In April 1978 the US conservation group *Monitor* obtained an affidavit from an American sea captain who had boarded *Sierra* in Las Palmas. He reported seeing 100-150 harpoons on the vessel, some of which were bent and defective. He was told harpoon supplies were replenished from Norway. In the freezing compartment he saw hundreds of paper sacks bearing labels in English and Japanese *Fresh Frozen Whalemeat*. He also saw teeth of young sperm whales. Under questioning the Japanese inspectors said freely that all whales were hunted, regardless of species or size.

A check for the *People's Trust for Endangered Species* has shown that harpoons suitable for killing great whales have not been made in Norway for 10 years; surplus stocks were sold to Iceland. If the smaller harpoons are used, death times must be greatly prolonged.

A former *Sierra* crewman has stated he saw one whale take three hours to die after harpooning. During one trip he saw six whales struck and lost. There is thus a high wastage rate to be considered when calculating *Sierra's* kills. Another crewman has confirmed that grenade-tipped harpoons are not used because "they ruin too much meat".

One of the crew of the *Tonna* estimates that of 94 whales he saw taken, the average death-time after harpooning was two hours. Dying whales alongside *Tonna* were 'gaffed', the compressed air lance inserted and the animals inflated while still alive. The inflation of dead whales to ensure they float until hauled aboard for butchering is normal procedure; to dispatch them by this means is not.

From 18 August 1978 it became possible to record *Sierra's* movements and to obtain proof that each whalemeat cargo goes to Japan. Between then and the end of May 1979 *Sierra* transferred seven cargoes of whale meat to vessels bound for Japan. There are details of one of these trans-

fers acquired by questioning the crew. On 18 December in Las Palmas 210 tons of whale fillets, processed from 55 fin whales (mostly females with calves), two humpback whales and one blue whale, were transferred to the cargo vessel *Yamato Reefer* bound for Yokohama.

At this period the crew of *Sierra* comprised: a Norwegian master and first officer, 26 South Africans, seven Portuguese, four Japanese and one British (radio officer).

## Yashima Maru joins in

On 29 April news of the Trust's request to the South African government appeared in the South African Sunday Times. Since then the Cape Times and the Argus have uncovered valuable additional evidence. On 2 May Stephen Wrottesley, for the Cape Times, confirmed the Trust's suspicions of the existence of additional vessels connected with pirate whaling. He reported that *Yashima Maru*, a 999-ton former Japanese trawler, was almost ready to sail after undergoing a refit in Table Bay docks. She had been newly named *Cape Fisher*. An ex-crewman of *Sierra* itemized six features of the alterations which had indicated intentions to use the vessel for whaling.

Minutes before the ship sailed on 9 May the 10 South African crewmen

*continued next page*



Sierra alongside the Japanese cargo ship Yamato Reefer



Japanese meat inspectors help dock Sierra.

# Pirate Whaling

were ordered ashore. One was identified as a former *Sierra* crewman, others as former crewmen of *Tonna*. Most of the crew remaining on board, including master and mate, are Portuguese. The radio officer is British (former *Sierra*), the electrician is Norwegian and there are four Japanese meat inspectors.

On 23 May the Trust learned that ownership of *Cape Fisher* had been transferred from Republican Fisheries, Panama to Sierra Limited, Limassol. On 26 May the vessel arrived at Las Palmas. She was anchored there, carrying out repairs, until midnight of 7 June when she sailed: "Destination Fishing".

The joint cargo capacities of *Sierra* and *Cape Fisher* are approximately 900 tons. Together they could make about six expeditions annually and take up to 1200 whales (excluding wastage). All the more urgent, then, is the case for denying them 'reinforcements' in the form of *Susan* and *Theresa*.



Sierra's stern showing whale slipway.

Postscript. Japan has undertaken to ban all imports of whalemeat from non-IWC sources as from 5 July. This pledge was given by the Japanese Ministry of International Trade and Industry on 27 June. Official pronouncements of this kind were made last year - a year which saw a marked increase of non-IWC imports over the two preceding years (see table) - but they were not franked by any corresponding government statements.

## Japanese imports of whale meat from Sierra

Weight in kilograms	Currency value: units of 1000 yen	Year
1,477,803	639,846	1976
2,234,881	1,602,541	1977
2,775,714	2,066,835	1978

At current exchange rates the 1978 value of imports from *Sierra's* operations is well in excess of \$9,000,000.

## IMPORTS TO JAPAN OF WHALEMEAT AND OFFAL, FRESH CHILLED AND FROZEN

ORIGIN	1976		1977		1978	
	Weight in kilograms	Currency value: units of 1000 yen	Weight in kilograms	Currency value: units of 1000 yen	Weight in kilograms	Currency value: units of 1000 yen
S Korea*	1,194,566	678,413	2,250,696	1,197,309	2,382,899	1,456,860
N Korea*	38,020	6,836	33,860	6,091	7,820	2,459
China*	-	-	-	-	6,000	1,884
Iceland	3,703,414	1,199,331	2,926,410	1,044,524	4,285,094	1,598,449
Norway	-	-	80,540	31,761	548,824	304,119
Spain*	1,374,273	244,439	1,352,943	271,699	2,644,603	641,673
USSR	22,852,922	5,442,483	26,111,117	9,144,950	18,421,047	6,736,399
Cyprus*	-	-	-	-	2,775,714	2,066,835
Peru*	1,491,762	313,820	1,450,358	285,863	2,018,519	447,385
Chile*	87,743	14,892	-	-	-	-
Brazil	47,818	15,831	319,506	113,815	318,818	130,571
Somalia*	1,477,803	639,846	2,234,881	1,602,541	596,880	499,513
S Africa	207,314	80,458	-	-	-	-
Un. Kingdom	-	-	10	117	-	-
	32,475,635	8,636,349	36,760,321	13,698,670	34,006,198	13,886,147

\* denotes non-IWC member

Source: Japan Tarriff Association

Imports from Sierra Ltd are included under Somalia for 1976 and 1977. In 1978 from Cyprus the Kg weight is heaviest after the USSR and Iceland. In money value, however, Cyprus imports are second only to the USSR. Which confirms *Sierra* and *Tonna* took prime quality meat only.

# Australia accepts the Frost report - in full

On 4 April the Prime Minister of Australia, Mr Malcolm Fraser, announced that his Government accepts all the recommendations of the Australian Inquiry into Whales and Whaling. The following is an extract of his speech to Parliament on this issue.

ON 20 March 1978 I announced the establishment of the Inquiry into Whales and Whaling, to be headed by Sir Sydney Frost. The report of the Inquiry was tabled in Parliament on 20 February 1979.

The Government has now completed consideration of the report and has accepted all the Inquiry's recommendations. The Government is to prohibit all

whaling within the impending 200-mile Australian fishing zone, including any extension of the zone to include a fishing zone off the Australian Antarctic Territory.

The Government upholds the central conclusion of the Inquiry into Whales and Whaling, namely, that Australia should pursue a policy of opposition to whaling and that this policy should be pursued both domestically and internationally through the International Whaling Commission and other organizations. The Government will continue to be an active member of, and to support, the International Whaling Commission and to support efforts to revise the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

In particular we will seek the extension of the Commission's charter to the conservation of all cetacea. Satisfactory substitutes are readily available for nearly all whale products. Therefore the importation into Australia of all whale products and goods containing them is to be banned from 1 January 1981.

The Government's decision represents a change in policy from one of conservative utilization of whale stocks controlled by international agreement to one committed to a vigorous and active policy of protection of whales. This change in attitude has been influenced by community concern not only in Australia but throughout the world for the need to preserve these unique creatures.

## Conservation is NOT a lost cause in Japan

OUR knowledge of the conservation scene in Japan is pathetically lopsided; we know them chiefly as exploiters of other people's resources and environment.

We know far too little of the conservation activities of the many NGOs there. How wide-ranging they are I discovered in my recent brief stay in Japan while visiting the Far East in order to meet IUCN members and discuss how we could best help each other.

Japan has no fewer than 300 NGOs professing some interest in this or that aspect of conservation and I was told that about 100 of them are active. They range from small ones like the ELSA Nature Conservancy with a membership of about 200 to gigantic ones like the Sakka Gakkai, a Buddhist organization 10 million strong.

A few - but nowhere near enough - are already working alongside IUCN. For example the National Parks Association and the Marine Centre are engaged in the monitoring programme of the National Parks Commission in addition to their own national work. Both are now forming links with NGOs elsewhere in Asia.

The ELSA Nature Conservancy and the Wild Bird Society of Japan are also expanding their areas of involvement. The latter (whose conservation interests are wider than just birds) has contacted industrial firms with a view to hosting regional meetings. Together with the Yamashina Institute of Ornithology, the Association of Zoological Gardens and many others, they are pushing hard for Japan's ratification of CITES.

Prominent among the government bodies with interests beyond the national horizon is the Environment Agency of Japan. It has concluded bilateral conventions with the US, the USSR and Australia on migratory birds. More are being planned.

Other government agencies have contributed directly to the establishment of

research centres in Asia and the Pacific on ecosystem use and management. The programme of the United Nations University in Tokyo is heavily oriented towards research on natural resource management and is supported by the Government.

A senior government official of the Environment Agency pointed out another role the Japanese could play in international conservation - the training of Third World personnel in fishery management. Meanwhile their ecologists and biologists could be called upon to assist in overseas field work. Said this official: "It is about time Japan set about changing its image."

Of Japan's 100 or so active NGOs, IUCN is in direct contact with no more than a dozen. Many are in dire need of moral support to cheer them on. Others could offer us guidance. Still others could help us to establish NGOs in those parts of Asia and the Pacific where none exist.

Japan ought to be one of IUCN's main focal points. Its capacity to affect our work for good or ill is enormous. There is the makings of a useful conservation movement in the country which deserves much stronger representation in our global network than it has at present.

If Japanese inventiveness and skills could be harnessed to the cause of conservation, the gain would be great. Our members in Japan, few though they are, would like to establish an IUCN National Committee and to be linked with National Committees in Australia and Malaysia. Their hope is to be able to build a regional conservation strategy - with Japan as one of its chief architects. It is a goal we should do what we can to help them achieve.

Chew Wee-Lek,  
Regional Officer for Asia and the Pacific.

## Bahamas join CITES

THE Bahamas acceded to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora on 20 June, thus becoming the 53rd Party to the Convention.

## Seychelles go for whale sanctuary

THE SEYCHELLES, one of four new members of the International Whaling Commission (the others are Peru, South Korea and Sweden) will be putting forward three main proposals at the IWC annual meeting in July.

The first of these calls for the entire Indian Ocean to be made a whale sanctuary. Clearly this has much in common with a proposal emanating from the IUCN Cetacean Sanctuaries Workshop in Mexico last February that the south-eastern part of this ocean become a sanctuary (see April *Bulletin*).

A closely reasoned position paper *The Seychelles Initiative* recognizes the affinity of the two proposals. It says: "The IUCN proposal is in no way incompatible with our sanctuary suggestion, but for the purpose of regulating whaling, within the powers of the Commission, we consider it preferable to declare the entire Indian Ocean as a sanctuary."

The second of the Seychelles' proposals is for a "3-year moratorium on the commercial taking of sperm whales". The position paper states: "The meat from sperm whales is generally not eaten and can in no way be regarded as essential to human welfare. The oil has industrial applications, but for all its uses there are now adequate substitutes."

The third proposal is concerned with putting a stop to pirate whaling. It requests the IWC Secretariat to keep a register of all whaling ships and calls on IWC members to close their ports to non-IWC whaling ships, to refuse them insurance cover and registration and to forbid their own nationals to serve on them.

## MSY equation

Said a well-known biologist: "When I am asked (as I am now and then)

To explain MSY  
I smile and reply  
Minke + Sperm = Yen."



# Conservation's unsung heroes...

**RANGER N.M.D. Perera was bleary-eyed and unshaven when I ran into him one morning recently on the road to Wilpattu National Park in Sri Lanka. He explained that he had just been on a night mission to catch poachers.**

'I got information yesterday afternoon that a carload of poachers was on its way. I took some men and we lay in ambush during the evening. There were no shots, and so we waited until 2 a.m. and then we raided the camp. They were all fast asleep. We got them up and questioned them.

'There were some professional hunters accompanying the poachers. They said they had been out during the evening but could not shoot anything. I called for their arms licences - they had two guns - but they were in order. I gave them a severe warning and my men and I stayed around until they gave up and went away. So we did not arrest anyone, but it is a good example of how to prevent offences being committed'.

For Ranger Perera it had been an unspectacular operation, just part of the routine of his job as Warden of the Wilpattu National Park, one of Sri Lanka's finest conservation areas and probably the only place in the world where you have a very good chance of seeing leopards by day - perhaps stalking deer, pig or young buffalo.

Not all anti-poaching work is routine. Only two weeks earlier some of Perera's men found two intruders who claimed to be collecting wild honey in one of the remotest jungles of the park. The guards arrested the two men, who had a single-barrelled breech-loading gun.

'The arrested men called for help', said Perera, 'and two of their companions came out of the bushes with clubs and attacked my guards. One guard got a bad head injury and had to be rushed to hospital'.

As it happened when we arrived at Ranger Perera's Headquarters we found the injured guard there, his scalp half-shaved and with a large dressing on it. He just grinned and shrugged - part of the job. He

would be back on patrol again soon.

During an extensive tour of Sri Lanka's wildlife areas I was reminded all the time of the constant battle to save wildlife from the depredations of poachers. In Yala East, Ranger Shirley Perera was dapper in spotless whites when we met.

'I cannot come with you. I have to be in court this morning to give evidence in a poaching case. See you later', he said. That evening we sat on the veranda of a park bungalow looking out over a waterhole as the sun set.'

'Today's case was over a leopard skin', Shirley explained. 'A villager from outside the park came and shot the leopard and he was planning to sell it for a high price in the market. But some of my fellows caught him and we took him to court. Of course the fine was negligible - 450 rupees (\$ 3)'.

Shirley told me that the presence of a village in the park was one of the main poaching problems. The people had lived in the jungle before it was protected, living off its products.



*Ranger N.M.D. Perera shows the dressing on the scalp of one of his guards who was assaulted while arresting poachers*

Photo: Peter Jackson

# ...risk all to protect wildlife

'When it became a National Park they were denied food and so they more or less had to continue in an illegal way. They are very good jungle people and it is difficult for our officers to detect them because of their ability to move in the jungle unheard and unseen. They are almost like animals themselves in their instincts'.

The relentless battle with poachers is not the only hazard. On the sandy shore of a waterhole a tattered banner fluttered over the simple grave of a guard killed two months earlier by a buffalo, one of the most feared jungle animals.

'I think it was an accident. Our man was on an early morning patrol and was just entering the jungle after crossing the plain ahead of two companions. The buffalo was crossing the track and found the man in the middle. It just swept him off his feet with its horns'.

## Illegal entrants

On another occasion, trudging under a broiling sun through the Wasgomuwa Strict Nature Reserve we headed for the Mahaweli river full of thoughts of plunging into the cool water. I felt a touch on my arm. Ranger Chandra Jayawardene cupped his ear and pointed ahead - I could hear faint voices. No one is allowed in a Strict Nature Reserve without a permit from the warden and so there was good reason to be suspicious.

Chandra and one of his guards crept forward through the bush and peered down the river bank. Then they relaxed and called me up. A group of men were by the water round a cooking fire. Four of them were young trainee game guards and they shouted up that they had arrested three illegal entrants.

We scrambled down and saw a skinny, bearded old man and two younger men with the resigned expression of helpless captivity.

Chandra questioned them closely and then told me that they said they had come for fishing. Some wicker baskets with nets showed that this could be true.

'The trouble is that they may also be here illegally to search for gems - this is a rich country for that. Or they may have guns hidden somewhere around here. You can never tell. Anyway they will be charged tomorrow with illegal entry, which carries a fine of 600 rupees (\$ 4) or six months imprisonment. The magistrate will make enquiries to find out more about them'.

After a refreshing bathe and a fish curry eaten from palm leaves we set off back with the prisoners. Next morning I saw them going off to court in a Toyota landcruiser - one donated by WWF to Sri Lanka Wild-

life Department.

On the wall in the Wildlife Department Headquarters in Colombo is a memorial to three guards killed in anti-poaching operations. A court case is also in progress over an incident in which a party of police officers allegedly shot and killed a game guard in a hut. The police say the guard fired at them first... It is for the judge to decide.

But violence in the jungle is not the only hazard wildlife staff have to face. An offender may be arrested and charged, but then political influence may be brought to try to get the charge dropped. Efforts may be made to get the guards transferred elsewhere. Or there is the chance that the guard may be beaten up.

Assistant Ranger Anthony Solomon told me how he had brought an unsuccessful case against a man found with a deer skin. The man later contacted a wealthy organizer of commercial poaching who offered 2000 rupees (\$ 13) for someone to force Solomon into a car and take him away to be assaulted.

'Well, I am shrewd enough. I always carry a gun. We face this type of thing continually in our daily life. My wife is a little worried and she tells me to take precautions'.

Ranger Desmond White did not even have to meet the poachers to get the scar he bears for life. He walked into a poacher's

trap set for animals with a crude pipe gun. The shot blasted a hole through his leg just below the knee, fortunately without damaging the bone.

It seemed to me that poaching must be a major preoccupation of the Wildlife Department, but Director Lyn de Alwis said he would not describe it as a 'massive problem'.

'Some people never forget that some of the protected areas were their hunting grounds and they hunt for the pot. Others do it in the hope of selling dried meat. Then there has been a slight increase in poaching for ivory, but we have few tuskers. Leopard skins are highly prized. We get good cooperation from Customs and police, but there always seem to be ways to get skins out. All in all we just have to have more vigilance, more effective patrolling'.

The war is endless. This glimpse from the frontline in Sri Lanka is typical of what is going on all around the world. It would be interesting to hear from Wardens and Guards about their experiences. So please write to the *Bulletin* - English preferred, but we can manage French, German and Spanish.

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Memorial to three game guards killed in clashes with poachers in Sri Lanka.

Photo: Peter Jackson

# Customs catch the cactus plunderers

IN April customs officials at Frankfurt airport seized 3600 Mexican cacti, many of them listed in the Red Data Book and all in Appendix II of CITES.

West German citizens, returning from an extensive plant-plundering tour of Mexico, brought in suitcases crammed with rare specimens - without the required documentation.

The market value of the plants seized is put at DM 40,000 (US \$21,000). However the total value of this one plane-load of cacti is probably close to DM 100,000. Searching of the passengers only began after half of them had already been allowed to pass through unchallenged. And even then those who were searched were allowed to keep their best specimens for 'personal use'.

The confiscation is the result of cooperative vigilance. A Mexican botanist informed the International Organization for Succulent Plant Study (IOS) at Kew that the 'tour' was taking place. This news was then passed to IUCN's Threatened Plants Committee and thence to TRAFFIC in London and so to the CITES Secretariat in Morges. The Secretariat thereupon alerted the West German authorities.

The confiscated cacti are now 'in custody' at the Botanic Institute at Heidelberg University.



In the baggage of just one tourist were these mature specimens of the very slow-growing *Aricocarpus*, *Obregonii* and *Strombocacto* - all of which command a very high price on the market. One of the small cacti in the centre is *Mammillaria lauii*, a plant so rare that it was not known for certain that any still existed.

## Five CITES nations invoke 90-day rule

AT the CITES meeting in Costa Rica last March the Parties agreed to a UK proposal that all cetaceans be listed in the Appendices. Canada and South Africa have invoked the 90-day rule and notified the Parties that they refuse to recognize the new listing.

For both countries the reservations apply to the humpbacked dolphins in Appendix I and to all cetaceans in Appendix II. Canada has also entered a reservation on the finless porpoises and reiterated its earlier reservations on gray whales, sei whales and fin whales in Appendix I.

France, Switzerland and West Germany have entered reservations on the estuarine (saltwater) crocodile *Crocodylus porosus* in Appendix I. In addition Switzerland has entered reservations on a number of other species to the listing of which it had objected in Costa Rica - including virtually all newly listed plants.

## Parties trust fund

DURING the Migratory Species Conference in Bonn the Parties to CITES held a special meeting to consider a formal amendment to the Convention empowering the Conference of the Parties to "adopt financial provisions". These take the form of a CITES Trust Fund to which all Parties will contribute. The amendment, which was proposed at the Costa Rica meeting in March, was carried by a 22-1 majority and will now be submitted for national approval by each of the Parties.

## Wildlife in Dublin

THE 14th International Wildlife Congress under the auspices of the International Union of Wildlife and Game Biologists will take place in Trinity College, Dublin, 1-5 October. Registration is on Sunday 30 September; the £30 fee covers excursions.

Congress themes include: population regulation mechanisms, wetland assessment and management, carnivore ecology and management, advances in wildlife management techniques, endangered species and CITES. From 6-9 October a post-Congress coach tour will visit some of the country's native wildlife and national parks.

For details write to: Robert Manson, XIV International Wildlife Congress, c/o Irish Tourist Board, 150 New Bond Street, London W1.

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## New biosphere reserves

EIGHTEEN new biosphere reserves were approved at the UNESCO Man-and-the-Biosphere meeting in Paris on 14-16 May - bringing the total to 162 in 40 countries. 71 biogeographical provinces (areas with distinctive biological attributes not replicated elsewhere) now contain one or more biosphere reserves. There are 19 provinces in all, so there is a long way to go before the network is complete.

A booklet giving essential data about these reserves was issued in May. It is intended to help those working in them to keep in contact with each other and to identify areas with similar problems. The booklet will be regularly updated.

A separate publication, supported by the US National Parks Service, deals with biosphere reserves in the United States. It shows how they contribute to the national network which is designed to cover all the most important vegetation types and habitats.