



Bulletin

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The vicuña, once on the brink of extinction, now numbers around 40,000 in the Pampa Galeras region of Peru.

Vicuña cull backed by IUCN and WWF

THE cull of vicuñas in Peru's Pampa Galeras reserve, though temporarily halted in response to international protests, is to be resumed in October. At the same time some vicuñas will be transferred from Pampa Galeras to other reserves.

This decision of the government, taken early in August, has the backing of Peruvian conservation bodies. It also has the full support of IUCN and WWF. Towards the end of July top-level representatives of both organizations met in New York to discuss the issue. A 2-man team, Ian Grimwood, IUCN/WWF consultant, and Charles de Haes, Director General of WWF, then flew

to Lima to confer with Peru's Minister of Agriculture. Both sides were in complete agreement as to the steps that should be taken.

The vicuña is an endangered species. Hence the outcry when culling began in June. But an on-the-spot survey of the situation by IUCN/WWF consultant Archie Mossman confirmed what the Peruvian authorities were claiming. Whatever the vicuña's status globally, at Pampa Galeras its population at the beginning of this year

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“Wildlife is richer than diamonds or gold”

The following is an extract from an article by Tanzania's Vice-President, Mr Aboud Jumbe, which first appeared in the magazine *Africana*.

OIL or any other mineral wealth, whatever the quantities and the returns in cash, is by its very nature exhaustible, and in time - two, three, four or even five generations - such returns will be no more. That is the story of oil, diamonds, gold, uranium and the rest of them.

Whatever man does, there is a time limit to their exploitation and use, and there is nothing anyone can do to replenish forthwith what can take thousands of years to form.

The wildlife which abounds in such natural habitats as Manyara, Ngorongoro and Serengeti is renowned for its beauty. As a natural resource, wildlife is infinitely more enduring and aesthetically and spiritually richer and more refreshing than any heap of diamonds and gold. Even functionally, wildlife management and research is not confined to its immediate surroundings only. Its utility overflows far beyond its borders when wildlife studies help to suggest ways to improve cultivation and cattle-keeping practices and to avoid rapid soil deterioration.

Looked at from this angle we see Serengeti, Ngorongoro and Manyara in their true perspective, as not only museums but also living laboratories, and something infinitely richer than mines and oil-wells which now threaten man with extinction through pollution. Such spots are unique, and there is only one Serengeti, one Ngorongoro and one Manyara in the whole world.

The people of Tanzania must be brought to an increasing awareness of their heritage of National Parks. Lake Manyara National Park for instance - hailed by thousands of admirers as a little gem among national parks - is Tanzania's second oldest after the Serengeti. Though small in size, the park combines many attractions within its picturesque setting. Standing on the edge of the Great Rift Valley Wall, it commands an awe-inspiring panorama.

Lake Manyara, after which the park is named, plays host to many avian species and at certain times of the year becomes a pink fluttering mass of flamingoes, hundreds and thousands of them. The ground-water forest to the north of the park has a magic of its own. The herds of elephants, buffaloes and impalas, the lions perched on trees or roaming in quest of prey and the hippos wallowing in the shallow lake - all contribute to the fascination of this place. As a regular visitor to this park, and to other parks of Tanzania, I have found new horizons in the wonders of the world which I marvel at and enjoy in ecstasy whenever I can snatch a few days to respond to their compelling and persistent call.

But its magnificence notwithstanding, Lake Manyara National Park poses a problem to Tanzania. Due to its small size, the park is not only vulnerable but has increasingly been subject to human and cattle pressure from all sides. This is a

challenge whose implications Tanzanians must clearly see.

We have moved millions of Tanzanians who have willingly settled in Ujamaa villages in answer to the Party call to live and work together. The few hundred people now in and round Manyara will certainly not refuse to do what millions of their compatriots have done, if they are sincerely taught to understand the meaning and importance of Manyara as a national heritage much richer than Mwadui, Geida and Chunya with all their diamonds, gold and iron.

Lake Manyara National Park, Ngorongoro and Serengeti are precious resources. The Mwadui diamond mines or Chunya and

IUCN and WWF call for halt to mass killings of Uganda's wildlife

FOR SOME months alarming reports have been coming in of the wholesale killing of wildlife in Uganda. The retreating soldiers of Idi Amin and the liberating forces of Tanzania have both, in turn, been responsible. The carnage in Kabalega National Park and in Ruwenzori National Park has been particularly destructive.

Letters appealing for an immediate halt to the slaughter have gone to the Presidents of Tanzania and Uganda from Sir Peter Scott, Chairman of IUCN's Survival Service Commission, and John Loudon, President of the World Wildlife Fund.

Both organizations have also offered "full cooperation in assisting in every possible way". During the rule of General Amin, Uganda's national parks were starved of support. The government failed to provide it and outside bodies - including IUCN and WWF - were similarly reluctant for fear that any equipment given would simply be taken by the army.

An IUCN mission to Uganda to determine priority needs will be undertaken as soon as the situation allows. Certainly the needs are very great. The President of Uganda has declared a total ban on hunting but at the moment no game warden possesses a vehicle or even a single round of ammunition.

Below is a statement on the situation issued by the SSC at a meeting held in Cambridge on 12 September.

IUCN/SSC Statement on the situation in Uganda's National Parks

"IUCN's Survival Service Commission has received alarming reports documenting the wholesale killing of wildlife by military forces within Uganda's national parks. The

Geita gold mines or Songosongo gas wells contain mineral deposits which are not renewable. Animal and plant life, on the other hand, reproduces itself *ad infinitum* provided its balance and the natural system of maintaining its natural cycle are not disturbed beyond their biological critical level.

It will require the commitment of all Tanzanians in all walks of life to safeguard these invaluable assets for ourselves and the world. Let not posterity accuse us of destroying the greatest wonders of creation which God in his infinite mercy has blessed Tanzania with for her own use and enjoyment as well as that of mankind.

period covered by the reports indicates that both the fleeing Amin army and the liberating Tanzanian/UNLF forces have been involved in the killing.

"Amin troops had decimated some wildlife populations before the arrival of the Tanzanian/UNLF troops, but the fact that reliable witnesses have spoken to the soldiers currently doing the killing leaves no doubt that Tanzanian and UNLF soldiers are responsible for the continuing destruction.

"In addition, the armed troops have looted the national parks' headquarters with the result that vehicles, radios, arms and other equipment and supplies are no longer available to the Ugandan park officials. Threats on the lives of park wardens and guards by the Tanzanian and UNLF troops make conservation impossible at the present time.

"By early August an estimated 30% of the large mammals - hippopotamus, Uganda kob, buffalo, topi, elephant and lion - had been killed in Ruwenzori National Park alone. The situation is being monitored and further reports will be received.

"The SSC is deeply concerned that irreparable damage will result to Uganda's parks and wildlife resources if the situation is not rectified immediately. Similarly, Tanzania's excellent record in wildlife conservation will be severely tarnished. Ugandan park officials reportedly are willing to re-institute wildlife conservation and park management programmes if the armed troops are withdrawn from the parks or at least brought under disciplined control of their officers and the killing ended.

"While a certain degree of confusion may exist following any armed conflict, sufficient time has passed to restore discipline among the front-line troops protecting Uganda's borders. Therefore the SSC issues an urgent appeal to the Tanzanian and Ugandan Governments to take immediate steps to prevent further illegal destruction of wildlife by their troops stationed in Uganda, especially those soldiers operating within national parks."

Fight to save flightless bird

THE TAKAHE (*Notornis mantelli*) is one of the world's rarest birds. It exists only in a small inaccessible part of Fiordland National Park in southwest New Zealand.

Once thought to be extinct this large flightless rail was rediscovered in 1948. Since then, despite strict protection in a *Special Area* of the Murchison mountains, the takahe's population has declined by about 60%. Only 200-250 birds now survive.

In May 1978 all those involved in the study and protection of the takahe met to discuss the causes of the decline and to agree future policies.

Already rare when the first Europeans arrived in New Zealand, the takahe is poorly adapted to deal with competitors. Of these the chief are red deer (*Cervus elephas*) which compete for food, and stoats (*Mustela erminea*) which are predators. Both were introduced by man.

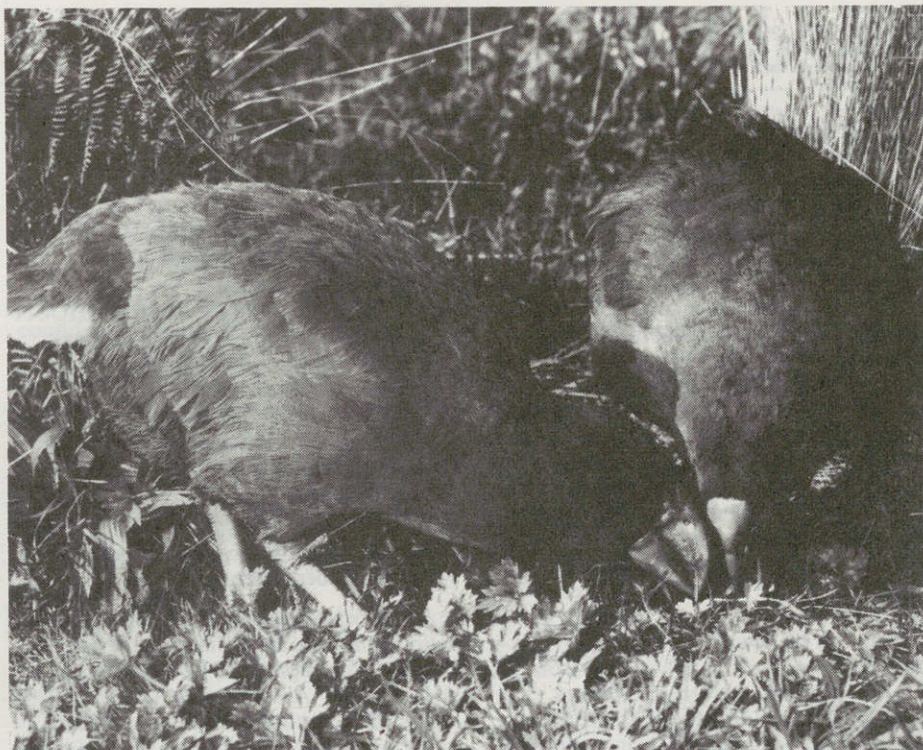
The deer have been thinned out but the remaining population is elusive - and at these high altitudes very destructive of forest and grasslands. As for stoats, not all experts are convinced that they pose any great threat. But the evidence suggests otherwise. A dramatic decline in the takahe population in the summer of 1976-77 coincided with a time when stoats were very numerous.

Management options now being considered include:

- artificial fertilization of the grassland - takahas are known to favour plants containing high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous;
- stricter control of red deer and stoats - including the use of poison;
- translocation of birds and an increase in the small captive population.

Resorting to fertilizer and poison is opposed by many people. The area concerned lies within a National Park in which the primary aim is to preserve natural ecosystems. The use of fertilizer clearly conflicts with this aim, while poison is likely to claim non-target species.

The proceedings of the meeting, entitled Seminar on the takahe and its habitat 1978, are available from the Fiordland National Park Board, PO Box 826, Invercargill, New Zealand. Price: \$NZ 5.00.



The takahe, one of the world's rarest birds, lives only in New Zealand.

Wild rice protein

WILD RICE can contain 12% protein compared with 7%-8% of most cultivated varieties. This finding comes from examination of 90 types of wild rice in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Rice provides more than 75% of Asia's protein and calorie intake. Not only are most modern varieties low in protein but this is further reduced during milling which removes the protein-rich outer layers. In certain wild varieties the protein is more evenly distributed throughout the grain's endosperm and milling would therefore be a lot less damaging.

CITES seminar

ON 13 December the European Environmental Bureau, with support from WWF Netherlands and WWF UK, will hold a one-day NGO seminar on the Washington Convention (CITES), its implementation by governments and the proposed European Community Directive on trade in endangered species.

For details write to: *Hubert David, European Environmental Bureau, 31 Rue Vautier, B-1040 Bruxelles, Belgium.*

Ivory seized

ON THE night of 23 August at Jomo Kenyatta Airport three innocent-looking boxes were loaded on to a Lufthansa plane bound for Frankfurt. The plane took off without them. For the boxes had been found to contain 114 pieces of elephant tusk weighing 650 kilograms - well over half a ton.

The manager of Lufthansa Airlines said he knew nothing about the ivory and was astonished it had got through customs and on to the plane. Cargoes delivered by an agent or an airline are normally accompanied by an airway bill which must be stamped by customs before loading is permitted. In this case there was no airway bill.

The matter has been referred to the Commissioner of Customs and the police are "working round the clock to bring the culprits to book".

Also not going to Frankfurt

150,000 snake skins and 500 otter skins have been seized in Calcutta by Indian customs. They were bound for Frankfurt.

Presidential patronage

THE President of Sierra Leone has become the Patron of the Sierra Leone Nature Conservation Association (SLENCA). In doing so he has publicly announced his support of SLENCA's aims and has urged others to respect and protect the nation's wildlife. One of the President's wishes is to establish a nature reserve near Freetown so as to give as many people as possible the chance to appreciate first-hand the richness of their natural heritage.

Past issues of the *Bulletin* have dealt with SLENCA's battle to save Sierra Leone's chimpanzees from unscrupulous dealers. The battle was won when the President banned all export of these endangered animals - with the exception of those *already* in captivity.

India extends wildlife trade ban

INDIA now restricts trade in live wild animals to just 21 species of bird and one mammal, the striped squirrel. Trade in animal products is also severely limited. The new policy is a further strengthening of the import-export order of January 1978 which banned trade of most wildlife in demand abroad.

The bird trade in India is (or was) worth 80 million rupees a year. A recent report of the Royal Society for Protection of Birds put the country's annual export of birds (mostly munias) at 4.5 million.

While legal commerce in animals is now drastically curtailed, poaching and smuggling are on the increase. A worldwide racket involving the exchange of wrist watches for snake skins was recently uncovered in Bombay.

Sweden's rain of death

The Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature has issued the following press release.

Sulphur falling as acid rain is killing our lakes and streams. More than 750,000 tons of sulphur dioxide now fall on Sweden every year. And most of it comes from abroad - borne on the prevailing winds mainly from the oil and coal-burning industries of western Europe, particularly Britain and Germany.

For 15 years the situation has been bad - and getting worse. Today over large tracts of Sweden, lakes once teeming with fish are dead or dying. And there is an obvious risk that the sensitive soil of the forests will suffer too.

What can be done? We in Sweden can - and have - set limits to the sulphur content of oil, our major source of energy. But obviously we cannot legislate for "foreign" industry. In other words we cannot solve this problem alone.

Sweden's leading conservation body, the Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature, has published a leaflet setting out the facts. Printed in English and German it is aimed at tourists.

It seeks to make them aware of the facts and pleads with them to alert their own countrymen to their responsibilities and the international nature of the problem when they return home. For only through international action can this rain of death be stopped and an important part of our shared European heritage saved.

For further information contact Mats Segnestam, Executive Director, Swedish Society for the Conservation of Nature, Kungsholms Strand 125, S-112 34 Stockholm.

IUCN appoints new councillors

THE following appointments were made by IUCN's Council at its meeting in Morges, 25-27 June.

IUCN Vice-President

Mr Syed Babar Ali, Pakistan (IUCN Regional Councillor for West Africa).

Members of the Bureau

Mrs Cecilia de Blohm, Venezuela (IUCN Regional Councillor for Latin America)

Mr N.D. Jayal, India (IUCN Regional Councillor for East Asia).

Professor Thomas R. Odhiambo, Kenya (IUCN Regional Councillor for Africa).

Co-opted Councillors

Dr Hédia Baccar, Tunisia.

Dr Sylvia A. Earle, USA.

Chairman of the Education Commission

Professor Albert Baez, Mexico.

At the beginning of June, following a mail ballot, the Council filled two regional vacancies for West Asia. Dr Abdulbar A. al-Gain, Saudi Arabia, and Dr Jamal S. Dougrameji, Iraq, have been appointed.

Dues please members!

IUCN members who have not yet paid their membership dues for 1979 are asked to do so please - promptly!

Mussel relief

A MUSSEL found in the seas off New Zealand can relieve arthritis. Clinical trials in Britain have shown that two out of three arthritis sufferers benefit from a 21-day course of "sealone capsules" made from the green-lipped mussel.

While the treatment appears to work, how it works remains a mystery. The "magical" property of the mussel has not been tracked down.

New Programme takes shape

THE second meeting of the Programme Planning Advisory Group took place at Morges on 28-29 June (the first meeting was reported in the April *Bulletin*, page 26). All members of the Group were represented and they received a first draft of the IUCN Programme. Following their review of it - and the comments of IUCN's Commissions - a much fuller draft will be prepared for the PPAG meeting early in November immediately before the submission of the Programme to IUCN's Council.

The June meeting also considered proposals for IUCN activities in drylands' conservation and requested a similar report on tropical rainforests. PPAG reaffirmed the importance of the marine element of the Programme (as established by the former Marine Steering Committee), received and approved a conservation strategy for the Caribbean which will guide IUCN's work in this area in the years ahead, and decided that the ICBP programme for bird conservation should be included within the IUCN Programme.

The Group also agreed on criteria for accepting projects for possible WWF funding, and for establishing priorities between project proposals.

UNEP officers visit Morges

UNEP is preparing detailed reviews of international activities in a number of areas of concern to IUCN. Between May and August IUCN received several visits from UNEP officials who are coordinating studies to determine UNEP priorities in genetic resources, living marine resources, ecosystem management and species conservation.

IUCN officers explained in some detail IUCN's position on these matters. UNEP will now review comments made by IUCN and other organizations in preparation for an October meeting in Rome to which IUCN has been invited.

At that stage it will be possible for IUCN to make further suggestions to UNEP and other bodies on international requirements in these important areas. In so doing it will be guided by the priorities which have emerged from the World Conservation Strategy.

Lee Talbot honoured

FOR the first time ever the American Institute of Biological Sciences (AIBS) has given its highest honour to a conservation scientist.

Lee Talbot, WWF's Director of Conservation, is the recipient of this year's AIBS Distinguished Service Award. The award goes to individuals "who have contributed significantly to biological science as a profession and to society as it can be served by the profession".

Global Resource Strategy

THE concept of a *Global Resource Resolution* to be ratified by all nations has been proposed as the theme for a 3rd International Conference on the Environmental Future.

Intended to secure the wise use and safe development of Earth's natural resources, the concept is the brainchild of Dr J.R. Vallentyne, the President of the International Association of Limnology, and Professor Nicholas Polunin, convener of the 1st and 2nd International Conferences on the Environmental Future. They propose that "the formulation of the resolution's guiding principles should:

- proceed at arm's length from governments to allow governments their opportunity to act;
- involve participants as highly respected persons rather than as representatives of organizations with organizational restraints;
- eventually develop through an interaction process between these individuals and organizations from all parts of the earth."

It is also proposed that the resolution be developed into a *Global Resource Strategy* and that this strategy be finalized not later than mid-1981 at a 3rd International Conference on the Environmental Future.

Clearly such a strategy will serve to complement IUCN's World Conservation Strategy - the focus of which is *living* resources. For this reason the Council has declared its sympathy with the aims of the Conference, although naturally the central thrust of the Union's activities must be towards securing the goals of the World Conservation Strategy.

Soviets sunk but Japanese buoyant

THE US proposal for an indefinite moratorium on all commercial whaling got off to a choppy start. Unable to recommend either for or against the proposal, the Scientific Committee's report ("Some members felt... others felt...") provided ammunition for both sides. Said the whaling nations: "The data are imprecise and there are many uncertainties: a moratorium is therefore unjustified" (or words to that effect). Said the non-whaling nations: "The data are imprecise and there are many uncertainties: a moratorium is therefore essential" (or words to that effect).

Realizing that the proposal as it stood would never go through, Panama moved that it be voted on in two parts: pelagic and coastal. Although the Japanese objected they emerged relatively unscarred, for at their insistence the pelagic moratorium was amended to exclude their principal quarry, minke whales. In this form it passed 18-2 while the coastal moratorium failed.

For some years pelagic whaling has been confined to just minke and sperm whales. So in effect the pelagic ban applies only to sperm whales - far and away the main target of the Soviet fleet.

Sperm-whale move fails

ON THE agenda was a Seychelles proposal for a 3-year moratorium on sperm whaling. "Deep uncertainty still prevails over even the most basic facts of sperm whale biology" said a supporting paper, adding that the scientists need time to catch up with a huge backlog of research - "large numbers of teeth and quantities of ovaries and other biological material from past catches which still remain unstudied". The paper also pointed out: "The meat from sperm whales is generally not eaten and can in no way be regarded as essential for human welfare. The oil has industrial applications but for all its uses there are now adequate substitutes."

Clearly the moratorium case was a strong one - made all the stronger by the Scientific Committee's inability to recommend firm quotas because of difficulties in assessing populations. The moratorium proposal was debated after the pelagic ban had been agreed. Coastal sperm whaling was therefore now the sole issue. However in terms of tonnage sperm whales constitute the main catch even among coastal whalers, so the proposal was far from being relegated to a fringe matter. Alas it fell foul of politics (so observers believe) and failed.

Australia's proposal progresses

A YEAR AGO Australia was a whaling nation and a forthright champion of "whaling values" in the IWC. All this is now changed. Thanks to the immensely

Debates in brief

thorough *Inquiry into Whales and Whaling* conducted in Australia by Sir Sydney Frost, and thanks to the acceptance of its findings *in full* by the government, Australia is now a most powerful and effective spokesman for the whale.

The third of the three moratoria stood in Australia's name. It called for nothing less than a *worldwide* ban of *all* whaling - so including non-members as well as members and subsistence as well as commercial whaling.

A proposal couched in such blunt terms, though, would have been swiftly defeated and forgotten. Australia avoided this trap. It asked the Commission to consider and report on the procedures required to institute a worldwide ban, its economic consequences and any steps that might be needed to mitigate hardship for local communities. The proposal was adopted with only a few dissenting voices.

40 million square miles of sanctuary

TO PROTECT whales and to enable scientists to gather facts on undisturbed whale populations, Seychelles proposed that all commercial whaling in the Indian Ocean be banned. Japan argued with some heat that whale populations would "rise to the ceiling" unless controlled by whaling. This singular view was received with general astonishment (eyes were rising to the ceiling all over the place) but gained no support. All the same the proposal was amended to allow Japan to catch minke whales below 55° South. In this form it was voted through, 16-3.

The ban applies for 10 years (with a general review after five years). Why 10 years? Because, in the words of the Australian Commissioner, "It will take the scientists three years to decide what to do, five years to do it and two years to find out what they've done."

The "by-catch" gets by again

A HOTLY contested issue was the coastal sperm whale quota shared between Japan and South Korea. In the North Pacific last year females had been declared protected. But the USSR and Japan had claimed their harpoonists could not always tell males from females, so a "by-catch" of females was included in the male-only quota to allow for mistakes.

This year, in the absence of any recommendation from the scientists, Japan proposed 1350 males including the same female by-catch as before - 11.5%. This was the level of catch last year, they said.

Panama objected, saying the information was "totally inadequate", and the Netherlands wanted to reduce or even abolish the by-catch.

Seychelles proposed a quota of 1100 and no change on the by-catch. This failed, whereupon the original Japanese proposal (1350) went through - thanks to the final vote of the UK which justified its "Yes" on the grounds that it was getting late and that a quota was better than no quota. To many people at the meeting the reasoning was curious, for the most likely outcome of blocking the proposal would have been speedy agreement on an in-between quota - so saving the lives of maybe 100 whales at the cost of just five minutes delay.

No reprieve for minke

THE pelagic minke quota is up from 6221 to 8102 in line with the majority verdict of the scientists based on evidence from just one whaling area. The minority (John Beddington and Sidney Holt) contended that pooling information from two areas is statistically sounder than relying on only one area - especially where the two areas very likely contain a single population - and that on this basis the quota should stay at about last year's level.

France, seconded by Panama, pressed this view, adding that Beddington and Holt had been proved right in their warnings of 12 months earlier and should therefore be listened to now. It was to no avail. Only Seychelles and the Netherlands supported them in the vote.

No data, no whaling? NO

The US, seconded by the Netherlands, proposed that any factory ship, catcher or land station failing to supply "substantially all" the data required by IWC regulations should be punished with a zero quota for a year. Pleading practical difficulties, domestic legal problems and infringement of sovereign rights, objectors managed to block a "schedule amendment" - meaning there was no three-quarters majority. So it's still a case of no data, no punishment.

Phasing out in South America

PERU and Chile have agreed to stop whaling after 1981. On this understanding they were awarded a joint quota for sperm whales in their coastal waters despite the Scientific Committee's recommendation of zero for this "protected" stock. The quota is on a sliding scale: 1980 - 550 or half the 1978 catch, whichever is the lower; 1981 - 300 or a quarter of the 1978 catch, whichever is the lower; 1982 - zero.

Peru was also given 264 Bryde's whales while over on the other coast Brazil was

Continued on page 76

AS A RESULT of the IWC annual meeting in London a moratorium of a kind was agreed, 40,000,000 square miles of the Indian Ocean are now a whale sanctuary and some 5000 fewer whales will be killed in the coming season.

A significant victory, then? Judged by the standard of previous years, yes. But judged by what could and should have been achieved, no.

At the outset of the meeting hopes were high that 1979 would go down as the year in which the whale was saved. No less than three moratoria were on the agenda and the conservationist tide was flowing strongly. Australia was a full-blooded convert to the cause, New Zealand had shifted considerably, Norway and South Africa were thought to be coming round, while Britain's junior Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Alick Buchanan-Smith, announced in his speech of welcome to the meeting that the UK would support a moratorium.

So the signs were auspicious. Admittedly

THE QUOTAS

Southern Hemisphere	1978/79	1979/80
Bryde's Sperm Minke	-	264
	4857	580
	6221	8102
North Atlantic		
Sperm Minke Sei Fin	685	273
	2552	2543
	84	100
	470	624
North Pacific		
Bryde's Sperm Minke Gray	454	479
	3800*	1350*
	400	1361
	178	179
Alaska		
Bowhead	18 (27) [†]	18 (26) [†]
	19,737	15,873

* The quota is for males only. But to allow for misjudgment by harpoonists a female "by-catch" of 11.5 % is permitted.

† The figure in brackets is the alternative struck-and-lost quota. Whaling ceases when either total is reached.

N.B. In total the quotas set this year, despite the pelagic ban, are less than 4000 down on last year. But the comparison is misleading. This year four new whaling countries joined the IWC which therefore set quotas for territorial waters which were formerly outside its jurisdiction. While a precise figure cannot be put on it the *real* reduction is certainly over 5000.

Quotas could have been cut still more

four of the six new members to the IWC were (are) whaling nations but of these only South Korea could be regarded as an incurable hard-liner. Spain, Peru and Chile were thought to be open to persuasion while the other two newcomers, Seychelles and Sweden, were known to be staunch conservationists.

The optimism proved short-lived. It soon became plain that, as in former years, saving face was more important than saving whales (viz. the flabby handling of the "pirates" issue), that on the rare occasions when the scientists were of one mind their advice could be ignored and that plenary discussions were too often just the acting out of "arrangements" arrived at in Commissioners' meetings from which scientists, observers and even fellow delegates were barred.

Non-aligned newcomers could hardly fail to get the message - and indeed as the week wore on conservationists found a distinct hardening of sentiment among them.

Last year the Alaskan Eskimos had turned up in strength to fight for their right (as they see it) to hunt the endangered bowhead.

On their behalf the US Commissioner, Dick Frank, had argued that a zero or "unfairly low" quota would be culturally damaging. And also bad for the bowhead - for the frustrated Eskimos would ignore any such ruling and the US could not police the entire coastline. By being less than tough on commercial whaling he eventually wrung from a reluctant Commission a quota of 18 bowheads (or 27 struck).

That was 1978. How about 1979? Alas, the Eskimo issue had not gone away although they themselves were not to be seen. The Eskimo-bowhead problem seemed just as important to the US this year as last and even tougher to resolve. The conservationist mood was dominant, there were no fresh arguments to bolster the Eskimo case and the Scientific Committee's advice was couched in even sterner terms than before. While again unanimously recommending a zero quota the scientists now underlined their advice by stating that available evidence points to a continued drop in bowhead numbers *even if no more are killed*.

Clearly there would have to be some hard negotiating if the Eskimos were to be pacified. And equally clearly the most "negotiable" position was the US proposal for an indefinite ban on *all* commercial whaling.

Moratorium voting

With the scientists unable to give any clear guidance on this issue it was plain that a three-quarters majority - the majority required to change IWC quotas - was not to be had. Panama therefore proposed that the moratorium be voted on in two parts: pelagic (factory ship) whaling and coastal whaling. (The Japanese claimed this proposal was out of order. The Chairman agreed but was overruled in a vote.)

Before a vote on the moratorium could be taken, though, Japan demanded an adjournment so that the Scientific Committee could review the issue. The US complained of "delaying tactics" and the Scientific Committee (through its Chairman) said it was unlikely to come up with anything very pertinent or new. All the same the adjournment was granted.

Japan had won for itself a brief reprieve but no more than that - or so it appeared. For with the USSR being the only other nation directly affected, the pelagic moratorium now seemed certain to go through.

Precisely what happened next is hard to unravel. What is known, though, is that Japan made it clear that for a pelagic

moratorium to be acceptable minke whales must be excluded. The Commissioners met to discuss the matter *in camera*.

When two hours later the full meeting reconvened an amended pelagic moratorium, excluding minke, was immediately proposed, voted on and overwhelmingly carried. The coastal moratorium failed. While this meant the end of pelagic sperm-whaling, which is mainly conducted by the Soviets, the Japanese emerged virtually unscathed. Their ships are mostly after meat, not oil.

A bargain of some kind seemed to have been struck and to many observers at the meeting its full ramifications were very soon revealed. For next on the agenda was the Seychelles proposal for a sperm-whale moratorium. The form the debate took, so observers believe, demonstrates that bowheads had been bartered not only for minke but for sperm whales.

They argue it this way. The failure of the coastal moratorium need not have meant the continuation of sperm whaling in territorial waters. The Seychelles proposal ought to have succeeded. The conservation logic was strong (clearly declining sperm whale stocks in some areas plus great uncertainty in others) and early soundings among the uncommitted nations gave solid grounds for hope. But when it came to the vote the majority fell well short of three-quarters.

Why? Because the US, so it is suggested, had let it be known that there would be no American pressure on the issue of coastal whaling - even with regard to that highly vulnerable species, the sperm whale, including stocks of the sperm whale which the Scientific Committee declared protected.

Iceland, Spain, Chile, Peru and, in particular, South Korea and Japan could thus relax. (The last two would have much to lose if refused fishing permits in US waters.) In return the US looked for a little help from its friends on the matter of the bowhead.

Those holding to this theory point to the conspicuous silence of the US during the debate on the sperm-whale moratorium - even though it voted the right way. (Being publicly pledged to oppose commercial whaling it could hardly do otherwise.) The defeat of the Seychelles proposal means that some 2200 sperm whales are now scheduled to be slaughtered - the majority of them in the Sea of Japan where pregnancy rates are known to have declined.

In the bowhead debate on the final day Japan seconded the US proposal for a repeat of last year's quota - 18 killed or up to 27 struck. This didn't quite make it. The figure finally agreed was 18 killed or up to 26 struck. On this occasion South Korea was the seconder.

IUCN's statement to the IWC

- 9 July 1979

LAST year in its statement to the Commission IUCN urged that the conservation provisions of the International Convention on the Regulation of Whaling be strengthened and the process of revising the Convention be speeded up.

IUCN is disappointed that little progress has been made in these matters. Essential revisions to the Convention include, in IUCN's view, mandatory requirements for a truly independent observer scheme; tighter control on the transfer of whaling ships, gear and technology to non-member States; and exhaustive examination of alleged infractions. Only in this way can the suspicions of malpractice, repeatedly voiced in the international media and elsewhere, be allayed; particularly with regard to alleged connections of certain members with "pirate whaling" enterprises. Recent reports of such connections have carried sufficient corroborative detail as to demand the urgent attention of the Commission.

Recognizing the effects of whaling beyond the immediate interests of the industry itself, IUCN is also concerned that among non-member States, so far only those actively engaged in whaling have been invited to attend revision discussions. It has followed with great interest the Australian Inquiry into Whales and Whaling which put the issues of whaling to the public at large; and applauds that Government's decision to accept the Inquiry's recommendation that Australia should cease whaling while retaining its role as a member of the Commission in order to promote better whaling management. IUCN was glad to see the Inquiry's consideration of values other than those relating to whale products, and draws the Commission's attention to the growing international interest in scientific, cultural and ethical values;

urging their due recognition in management.

Aspects of IUCN's expanded marine programme, supported by the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Wildlife Fund, were drawn to the Commission's attention last year. Of these, the Workshop on an International System of Cetacean Sanctuaries has now been held; among its recommendations being a proposal for a large sanctuary in the South East Indian Ocean, which is now being evaluated by IUCN's consultant. This proposal would clearly relate to the initiative of the Government of the Republic of Seychelles for the declaration of a whale sanctuary in the Indian Ocean. The applicability of Maximum Sustainable Yield as a management objective has received further examination in depth by an IUCN Working Group; the results being published in *Science*. It is hoped that these will prove useful to the Commission in its efforts to improve management.

Although IUCN has appreciated the opportunity to participate in the work of the Scientific Committee and emphasizes its desire to continue cooperating in the work of the Commission, it remains of the opinion that management of whaling by the Commission still fails to meet requirements for sustainability of the resource. In particular, insistence on adequacy of scientific data and their handling is not yet assured, as was demonstrated at the special meeting on sperm whales at La Jolla, and margins of safeguard are insufficiently conservative. For these reasons IUCN's General Assembly meeting in Ashkhabad, USSR, last October passed a Resolution, which was conveyed to the Commission, confirming the call for a moratorium on commercial whaling until these requirements are met.

HOPES HARPOONED

*The bid to stop commercial whaling fail?
Perish the thought! This year we'll save the whale.
Australia's switched, New Zealand's coming round,
Norway, South Africa - we're gaining ground.
The newcomers, though whaling nations (mainly)
Are, so it seems, quite open-minded, sanely
Weighing the facts, prepared to take due note
Of reasoned arguments before they vote.
In short, the conservation viewpoint should
Triumph at last. Yes, this year things look good.*

*But hopes, so high to start with, plunged and died,
Harpooned by those we'd thought were on our side.*

the iwc

debates in brief - cont.

allotted 30 sperm whales and has confirmed (subsequently) that 1980 will be its final whaling season.

Killing methods are still inhumane

"HUMANE KILLING" is a perennial issue. Normally little emerges except pious platitudes. This year was a bit different. From post mortems on whales caught by the Icelandic fleet Dr Rowsell, a Canadian pathologist, has found that *most* of the animals do not die rapidly and that "death times" of half an hour are frequent. His well documented report went to the Scientific Committee and to an IWC Working Group.

Nine recommendations emerged and were endorsed. The most notable of these echoed Dr Rowsell's strong condemnation of the use of cold grenades. Members are urged to abandon this barbarous practice with respect to the larger whales and next year an IWC "schedule amendment" may prohibit it.

An "ethical" meeting in 1980?

THE Threshold Foundation has offered £10,000 (\$22,000) and the Institute for Delphinid Research \$10,000 towards a broad-based meeting on the ethics of whaling. As last year the Scientific Committee declared itself unqualified to advise on ethical matters and proposed that any meeting should stick to scientific aspects of intelligence and behaviour in relation to management. Panama insisted that ethics be included. In principle a meeting has been agreed - to be hosted by the US. April 1980 is a suggested date.

Permits by permission

BY A VOTE of 13-4 the IWC has agreed that Scientific Permits must in future be sanctioned by the Scientific Committee. So no longer will members be able to issue such permits to their own whalers for purposes yielding little benefit to science - as the Japanese have done during the past three seasons with respect to a total of 480 Bryde's whales in the Southern hemisphere.

Particularly upset by this decision were the South Koreans. In the last year or so they have greatly increased their minke catch. This year's quota leaves them worse off than before - with no recourse to the solace of science.

Pirates remain afloat

THE IWC had a wealth of material showing the far-flung extent of pirate whaling and its links in every case with Japan. The People's Trust for Endangered Species (see June *Bulletin*), The Threshold Foundation and Monitor had all produced and circulated weighty documentary evidence.

The issue was one of the very last items on the agenda and did not come up for

discussion until long past midnight on the final day. A summary of the present position by Seychelles was followed by one or two countries briefly and very delicately tip-toeing around the subject - until Panama ventured a direct question. What was Japan doing about the Taiyo Fishery and its involvement in Taiwan's pirate operations? "I have no information" replied the Japanese Commissioner.

The debate was then closed, having lasted all of nine and a half minutes. However it was agreed that the IWC should have a register of all whaling vessels. The IWC

Secretariat will implement this.

P.S. Since the IWC meeting the notorious pirate whaler *Sierra* has lost her insurance with Lloyds and been rammed by *Sea Shepherd*, an anti pirate-whaling vessel. The owners of *Sierra* say their ship has permanently ceased whaling. A report on the post-IWC pirate-whaling situation will appear in next month's *Bulletin*.

● *Monitor's* publication *Outlaw Whalers* is published by *The Whale Protection Fund*, 1925 K Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20006. Price: \$3.50.

What is Canada up to?

FOR a non-whaling nation Canada's performance at the IWC meeting was puzzling. Of the 13 non-whaling members 12 voted *for* the Indian Ocean sanctuary. Canada abstained. Eleven of the 13 voted *for* the coastal moratorium and 11 voted *for* the sperm whale moratorium. Canada abstained on both occasions - along with South Africa.

Of the non-whaling members, only Canada voted *against* the proposal for a zero quota on fin whales in the Spain/Portugal/British Isles stock - and only Canada and South Africa voted *against* the proposal for a zero quota on sperm whales in the North Atlantic.

The Chairman of Canada's government-appointed *Committee on Whales and Whaling*, Professor Ian McTaggart-Cowan, has strongly recommended that Canada support whale conservation. The Canadian public is of the same mind. What, then, is Canada up to?

At the IWC the Canadian Commissioner (and Vice-Chairman of the Commission) is Dr Malcolm Mercer. Last January, while visiting Morges to discuss the harp seal hunt, he gave a categorical assurance that Canada will not resume whaling.

Does this assurance still stand? Canada's voting record at the IWC, its refusal to recognize the new CITES listings of cetaceans (see June *Bulletin*, page 52), its re-opening of the land-station at Dildo, Newfoundland, to process a "by-catch" of humpback whales (27 this year have been entangled in nets) - these actions, taken together, have done nothing to dispel persistent rumours that the government, despite assurances to the contrary, does intend to keep the whaling option open.

The IWC line-up

The 10 whaling nations

Brazil	South Korea
Chile	Norway
Denmark	Peru
Iceland	Spain
Japan	USSR

The 13 non-whaling nations

Argentina	Panama
Australia	Seychelles
Canada	South Africa
France	Sweden
Mexico	UK
Netherlands	USA
New Zealand	

Obey the rules - or else!

ANY nation found subverting whale conservation - flouting IWC regulations or supporting pirate whaling - will now automatically lose its fishing rights in US waters. This is the result of a new US Congress bill, the Packwood-Magnuson Amendment.

The US Commerce and State Departments vigorously opposed the bill. Why? Because faced with the threat of losing a vast tonnage of fish, the Japanese - or more accurately the Taiyo Fishery Company whose connection with pirate whalers around the world is notorious - have said they will stop buying US salmon and other fish and will stop selling tuna to US canners.

Happily on this occasion the broad conservation perspective, strongly backed by public opinion, triumphed over sectional interests.

Sorry sir, but only delegates with valid papers may attend



Vicuña - from page 69

far exceeded the carrying capacity of the land.

Peru's "rescue" of the vicuña is one of the great conservation success stories. During the 1950s and early 1960s the species was exploited to the brink of extinction. Some 400,000 animals were slaughtered to supply skins and wool (the "royal fleece" of the Incas) for the luxury markets of Europe and North America.

By 1965 vicuña numbers in Pampa Galeras had slumped to 1700. Throughout its entire range there were perhaps 10,000 left. An invaluable self-renewing resource was fast disappearing.

At this stage the Peruvian government stepped in. The vicuña, the national emblem of the country, must be saved. Its shattered populations must be rebuilt. Thereafter a properly regulated vicuña industry, producing and marketing vicuña products in a sustainable manner, must be set up to ease the poverty of the people of the high Andes and to contribute *lastingly* to the national exchequer.

But no species, no industry. So the first step was to establish Pampa Galeras as a fully protected National Vicuña Reserve and to sign a vicuña treaty with neighbouring Bolivia agreeing a total ban on hunting and trading.

This treaty, known as the La Paz Convention, was subsequently ratified by Chile, Ecuador and Argentina. Meanwhile support for Peru's vicuña programme came from the West German government, from the Frankfurt Zoological Society, and from IUCN and WWF.

At the beginning of this year the vicuña population in and around Pampa Galeras stood at 40,000 odd. Protective measures had proved astonishingly successful - in a sense too successful.

Consuming their own weight of vegetation every three weeks, vicuñas need about five hectares of land *each*. Clearly 40,000 cannot healthily subsist in an area of 67,000 hectares. And if in addition they have to share their communally-owned reserve with domestic animals (which they do), and if in addition to that the rains fail (which for the past two years they have - 50% below average), then both land and animals will suffer.

Throughout Pampa Galeras and its surrounding region the pasture is now severely degraded and will not quickly recuperate. Archie Mossman reports: "Except in a tiny spot protected from ungulate feeding by large boulders, I saw no place in the entire area that was not in very bad condition - and its condition declining". That was in June. To take no action in these circumstances would be to condemn vicuñas by the thousand to death by slow and painful starvation.

Move the entire surplus? It's not on

Why cull, though? Even if in one locality vicuñas are too thick on the ground for their own good, does this justify killing the excess population? Surely, so the argument runs, any surplus should be transferred to areas in need of "reinforcements" - so speeding the day when the species can shed its endangered status.

The answer is that the thinning out required in Pampa Galeras cannot be achieved solely by translocation. Biological hazards aside (e.g. the likely disruption of family groups), the cost would be prohibitive. Transporting the animals, ensuring their proper protection the other end (without which poachers would soon move in), compensation to the Indian community - the bill would be astronomical. At \$100 an animal, compensation alone would amount to \$1.5 million for 15,000 - the approximate cull-cum-transfer total. (Culling involves no compensation because the Indian people, who own the land on which the vicuña grazes, receive due benefits from the sale of the wool, meat and hides.)

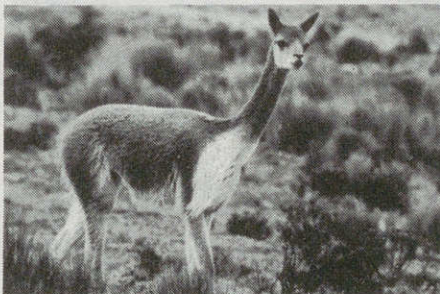
But although translocation on its own cannot solve the problem, some animals *are* being moved to other parts of Peru - to Huancavelica and, more particularly, to Aguada Blanca. A huge area of 367,000 hectares with magnificent mountains, pampas and lagoons, Aguada Blanca was established as a National Reserve by Presidential decree in mid-August. It is ideal vicuña country. Under careful guarding and management this new reserve could support a very much larger population than the scattered groups at present there.

The trading dilemma

While in Lima in July the IUCN/WWF deputation (referred to earlier) learned of Peru's future vicuña plans and confirmed the two organizations' whole-hearted backing in an open letter to the Minister. The letter said (in part): "*We fully support your Ministry's confirmed opinion that even when permissible under international agreements, there should, at least for the next 10 years, be no internal or external commerce or trade in raw wool, or in the skin or in any form other than finished cloth, woven in Peru, under strict control and with a clearly identifiable weave. Without these restrictions there would be no way to distinguish vicuña wool products obtained illegally by poachers and this would pose a grave threat to the vicuña's future.*"

At the CITES meeting in Costa Rica last March vicuña trading was a fiercely debated issue. Pointing to the situation in Pampa Galeras, Peru pleaded that the vicuña population there - and only there - be shifted from Appendix I to Appendix II. The parties voted 15-8 *against*.

In retrospect it seems that this decision was due not so much to preservationist zeal as to misappreciation of the relevant facts - three facts in particular. One, the



The vicuña consumes its own weight in vegetation every three weeks and needs five hectares of land to survive healthily.

urgent need on ecological grounds to reduce the Pampa Galeras population; two, the impracticability of achieving this *solely* by translocation; three (and most important), Peru's failure to clarify its position with regard to the La Paz treaty.

The treaty forbids trade in vicuña and vicuña products. CITES permission on this score would thus have been in breach of the treaty. Furthermore the treaty expires in September this year. Were the Peruvians intending *not* to renew it - or only in a much weaker form? Delegates were unclear.

In fact the Peruvians had no such intentions. Even if their views had prevailed in Costa Rica, they were not planning to trade before the treaty's expiry date - and only afterwards in a strictly limited manner.

The open letter, quoted above now states Peru's position unequivocally; no trade "*even when permissible under international agreements*" for at least 10 years *except* in finished cloth, woven in Peru. The reference to "international agreements" - meaning La Paz and CITES - shows that Peru, far from wishing to weaken present trade embargoes, will continue to act *as if* they are in force, even if they should cease to be. With, that is, one proviso, one exception. Peru is seeking to be allowed to trade in locally woven cloth.

Now this, of course, would contravene the CITES ruling on Appendix I species. But CITES is a *trade* convention. Its *raison d'être* is solely to ensure that international trade does not endanger a species. The Peruvians argue that the build-up of vicuña numbers in Pampa Galeras has been far faster than expected and that those responsible for this resounding success are now entitled to reap the fruits of their labour. Saving the vicuña was never intended to be an end in itself. The overriding purpose all along has been to provide a livelihood for the local people.

For Peru it makes no economic sense to stockpile vicuña products indefinitely - even though their value may be rising on the world markets. There are immediate economic needs to be met and, Peru argues, the vicuña can *safely* help meet them. Trading only in locally woven cloth would mean maximizing economic returns while minimizing danger to the species.

If the La Paz treaty is amended to allow this, Peru still faces the CITES hurdle. The parties do not meet again till 1981 so the only way in which Peru can gain permission to trade before then is by putting its case to a postal vote of the parties. They would be asked to agree to a down-listing of the Pampa Galeras vicuña population to Appendix II. If Peru makes it quite plain that an Appendix II listing would not be exploited to the full - that *raw* vicuña products would still not be traded - then there is every prospect of the parties saying Yes.

Certainly there would seem to be no conflict here between trade and conservation. There may not even be any final conflict between trade and *preservation*. Future plans for the vicuña envisage shearings every two years. The animal that grows a "golden fleece" (\$ 200 a kilogram - \$ 90 a pound) can give and give again, so long as in the process it does not give its life.

THE wire mesh doors of the two crates were opened and eight young chimpanzees blinked nervously into the brightness of an African morning - the first they had seen for over five months.

During those months they had experienced one of northern Europe's bitterest winters for many years, and two of their original number had died.

They had been seized by Dutch customs officers at Schiphol airport last December when en route from Sierra Leone to circuses and zoos in Spain and Mexico. Now, thanks to combined efforts of a Dutch journalist, government officials and the World Wildlife Fund, they were back on African soil with the prospect of renewing a natural life in the

Chimps return to Africa...

forest.

I flew to The Gambia with the chimpanzees, accompanied by Hanneke Louwman, wife of the Director of the Wassenaar Zoo, who had cared for them, and Dick van den Hoorn of *De Telegraaf*, who had publicized their plight and joined with WWF Netherland to raise money for their rehabilitation.

When we touched down at Banjul airport we were met by Eddie Brewer, The Gambia's Director of Wildlife Conservation, who took charge of the chimps, along with Janine Carter, a young American primatologist,

who is teaching jungle survival to a growing number of chimpanzees rescued from captivity.

Cautiously, encouraged gently by Eddie, Hanneke and Jan, the little chimps crept out of the crates, clinging to each other for reassurance as they faced yet another stressful new experience. Karen, the eldest at about six years old, played mother to the others, shepherding them to the platter of mangoes, tomatoes, plantains and bread that awaited them.

The long odyssey of the young chimps had begun when they were shipped from Freetown by Austrian dealer, Dr Franz Sitter, destined for Spain and Mexico via Zoo-Fors in Copenhagen. But Denmark, as a party to CITES, refused entry permits and they were therefore shipped via Amsterdam because the Netherlands has not yet ratified the Convention. Unfortunately for the dealers the Netherlands has a law for the protection of endangered exotic animals which enabled customs officers to seize the chimps. And the courts upheld the seizure despite the dealers' pleas.

When they were torn from their families by hunters the little chimpanzees' education in living wild had been abruptly broken. Now I watched Eddie Brewer and Jan Carter winning their confidence so that the process could start once again with Jan in the key mother role.

Re-education begins in the beautiful Abuko Nature Reserve near Banjul, where 180 acres of gallery forest and Guinea savannah harbour sitatunga, bushbuck, duiker, red colobus, red patas and green vervet monkeys, and a host of birds, butterflies and reptiles, including pythons and two species of crocodile.

As the chimpanzees settle down in the Abuko orphanage they are taken for daily outings into the forest to get to know the sights and sounds and smells again, and to learn the fruits which are edible and those that should be avoided. This process will last many months for most of the young chimps.

Karen, however, graduated quickly to the advanced course. Having lived for more than four years in the wild she was ready for transfer to Baboon Islands, 170 miles up the river Gambia. There I watched her climb confidently out of the boat and walk along the jetty to exchange greetings with half a dozen of Jan Carter's chimpanzees.

Karen quickly showed her experience when she chose baobab and other wild fruits in preference to plantains and tomatoes and foods provided in captivity. That first evening she climbed into the trees and built her nest, something that the others had to be taught.

"I think Karen will be useful as a maternal tutor," Jan Carter remarked as we sat and watched the chimps playing together. She said that most of the others had been raised in homes and had to be taught what to eat. It had taken six months to get one of them to eat keno leaf (*Pterocarpus erinaceous*) which chimps usually love.

"I used to eat it and she would peer into my mouth to see if I was really swallowing it.



Photo: Peter Jackson

Back in the trees again in Africa after a captive odyssey to the Netherlands.

...and learn to live wild

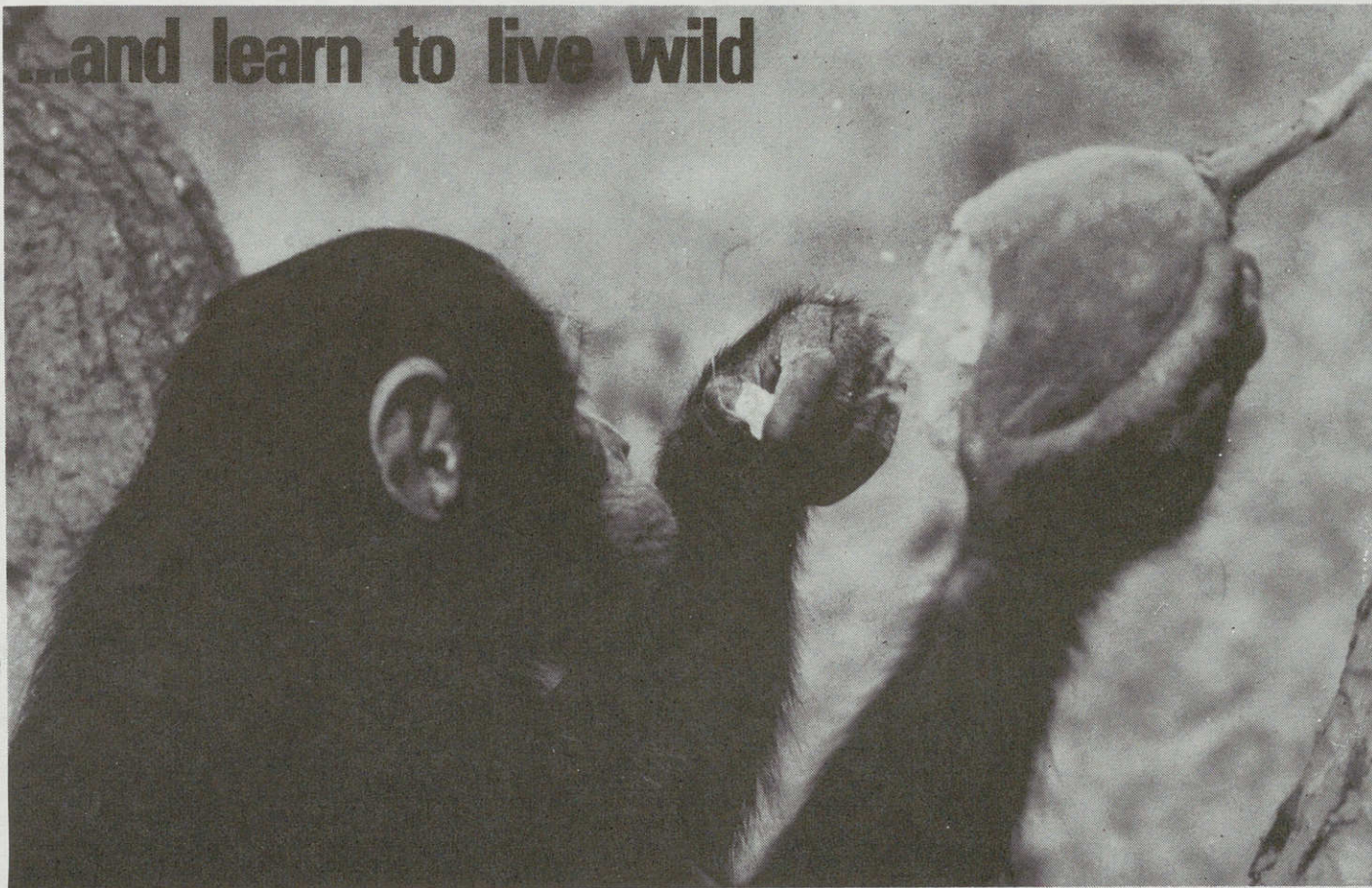


Photo: Peter Jackson

Karen, eldest of the chimpanzees repatriated to The Gambia, samples a baobab fruit.

Then I would pass it from my mouth to hers and she would drop it. It went on, and on, and on.... Finally I think the sheer pressure of my doing it - and seeing one of the others eating it - got her to eat it herself."

At her advanced training station Jan Carter lives in a large cage from which the chimps are excluded because otherwise they would prefer to play with her belongings as a result of their earlier contacts with humans rather than resume forest life.

Each day the chimps climb down from their night nests and Jan takes them into the forest where she conducts play and learning sessions. Eventually they should be able to fend for themselves like another group on a neighbouring island. This group had been successfully rehabilitated in the Niokola Koba National Park in Senegal, but had had to be withdrawn to The Gambia when resident chimpanzees began to attack them. I saw them living happily there, among them a two-year-old born in the wild in Niokola Koba.

The little chimps saved from the wildlife trade by the Dutch authorities are lucky. Had they not been found a home in The Gambia they might have ended up in zoos. This is what happens to many animals seized under CITES.

Says the Secretary General of CITES, Peter Sand: "The Convention has always envisaged 'rescue centres' for confiscated species. The term has not been defined but in practice it has usually meant zoos. If the bold action of returning the Schiphol chimps to the wild proves successful, it will add a new dimension to the concept."

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Photo: Peter Jackson

Jan Carter with a group of chimpanzees to whom she is teaching the art of jungle survival on Baboon Islands.

Gulf oil spill spells peril for endangered ridleys



"Where's the best fishing in the Gulf of Mexico? Just look for an offshore oil platform."

"If you have any doubts, ask one of the men who run sports fishing boats in the Gulf of Mexico," says H. E. Braunig, a Manager of Environmental Affairs at Gulf Oil Corporation. "When they want to guarantee their customers a good day's fishing, they head straight for the oil platforms."

"Twenty universities and thousands of fish say oil platforms don't hurt the environment."



"What happens around the bottom of the oil platforms is ecologically identical to what happens around any natural reef."

"A food chain starts. Mussels, anemones, starfish, anything that likes to live on a solid underwater surface, all come first. Then the fish that feed on them; and so on, until a whole ecosystem builds up."

"Even with the oil platforms, it's life as usual in the Gulf of Mexico - even for the commercial shrimp and oyster fishermen, whose livelihood depends on clean water."

"That's living proof that offshore platforms aren't ecologically destructive. A two-year study by twenty Gulf Coast universities, concluded in 1974, says the same thing."

"Gulf people meet a lot of challenges getting the oil out while preserving the environment. This problem seemed to solve itself, and with continual environmental monitoring and sampling on all current and future offshore sites, we intend to make sure that it stays solved."



Gulf people: meeting the challenge.
Gulf Oil Corporation

Gulf Oil spells out the message

THE advertisement on the left appeared in the July issue of *National Geographic*. On 3 June "Ixtoc I" in the Gulf of Mexico exploded.

From that date until 14 June oil was gushing into the Gulf at the rate of 30,000 barrels (over 1,000,000 gallons) a day. The burst was then partly sealed and from 14 June to 14 August the daily spill was reduced to 20,000 barrels.

Following further first-aid it is now "only" 10,000 barrels.

No more attempts to cap the wells are expected until mid-October. By then pressure in "Ixtoc I" should have been lowered by new adjacent borings. Meanwhile untold numbers of fish, birds and marine mammals continue to die.

WHEN oil from the giant oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico first washed ashore at Rancho Nuevo, long-standing efforts to save the world's most endangered sea turtle appeared to have been sabotaged. The time was mid-July and 10,000 Atlantic ridley eggs - the last 25% or so of this year's clutch - were about to hatch.

Emergency measures were called for. A Mexican-US plan was promptly drawn up and acted on. As the hatchlings scrambled out of their shallow nests and headed for the oil-polluted sea they were seized and placed in shaded pens. The hatching period lasts just a few days and soon all 10,000 nestlings had been collected. They were then airlifted to an oil-free region of the Gulf.

There they were gently lowered on to huge floating beds of seaweed - a source of food and a refuge from predators. Oil company and government officials gave full support throughout.

So the hatchlings were saved - but will this benefit the species? We shall not know till about 1987. For not till then will this year's young be mature. Will the "airlifted" turtles then come ashore to nest? And if so, where?

Turtle conference

A World Conference on Sea Turtle Conservation will be held at the US State Department, Washington D.C. on 26-30 November. For the first time ever an international forum of scientists, conservationists and government officials will meet to find solutions to sea-turtle conservation problems. Topics include:

- value and importance of sea turtles;
- present knowledge of sea-turtle biology;
- major threats to survival;
- status of sea-turtle populations;
- protective legislation and management;
- conservation strategy, recovery plans, treaties.

Those wishing to attend should write *immediately* to the Conference Coordinator, Vivian Silverstein, 1244 19th Street, N.W., Washington D.C. 20036. Hotel accommodation will be reserved if requested: single room, \$ 35 a day; double room, \$ 45 a day. There is no registration fee.

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Dutch say NO to land reclamation

THE Ministerial Council of the Netherlands has decided there will be no land reclamation in the Waddensea in North Friesland. The Council points out that the Waddensea is a unique natural area which should be conserved and that any human activities there will be "weighted against the interests of nature".

In a letter to IUCN giving this news the Minister of State says: "The efforts of IUCN and the international conservationist movement certainly contributed to the decision-making process and its positive outcome."

Meanwhile in West Germany a study by the Conservation Authority of Lower Saxony has come to the conclusion that Leybucht Bay should not be embanked. (Leybucht is the largest and least disturbed salt-water bay along the Waddensea coast.) This conclusion is supported by an IUCN/WWF project team working in the area alongside local conservationists.

IUCN has learned that the Federal Ministry for Food, Agriculture and Forestry shares the concern of conservationists and supports the view that the safety requirements of the local people can be met without destroying the area. But the State government of Lower Saxony has the final say.

Presidential veto saves turtles

PRESIDENT Rodrigo Carazo has vetoed a potentially disastrous bill passed by the Costa Rican Congress. The bill would have so reduced the dimensions of Tortuguero National Park that the green-turtle nesting colony there could not have been protected from exploitative abuse.

In taking this stand the President was responding to a great many letters and cables from abroad and to extraordinarily widespread concern within Costa Rica itself. Dr Joe Tosi of Centro Cientifico, Señor Guillermo Cruz Bolaños and the non-governmental body ASCONA (an IUCN member) were prominent among those protesting the bill and mobilizing opposition to it.

Somoza property put to good use

LAND in Costa Rica formerly owned by ex-President Somoza of Nicaragua is to become a wildlife sanctuary. The programme necessary to establish this sanctuary at Juan Santamaria will be carried out by the government of Costa Rica assisted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.