

**Stockholm, Bucharest and Rome  
— what next?**

There has been a regrettable tendency in recent conferences held by the United Nations to separate into neat categories the various conflicts and dilemmas that confront the human race. Each is then considered in isolation from the others. Thus the Stockholm conference on the human environment did not discuss population. The Bucharest conference on population did not discuss environment, and recently the Rome conference on world food problems did not discuss either environment or population. This would make sense if the human race did not live in the biosphere, or if ecological laws could be suspended by United Nations vote.

The question of how to meet the growing demands of an expanding human population for food, or any other necessity, cannot be considered in isolation if we expect to reach answers that will continue to hold true. Food supply depends on the productive capacity of the soils and water of earth. Any activity that impairs this productive capacity will in the long run decrease the amount of food that can be produced. Viewed in this light the Rome conference has produced a non-solution to the world's food needs. Whatever gains are made in the short run will likely result in more severe problems in the not distant future.

Thus, in one of the major food-producing regions, the United States, enormous gains in productivity have been achieved over the past quarter century by turning to a method of agriculture that depends on great inputs of fossil-fuel energy — in the form of fuels for agricultural machinery, energy used in producing that machinery, fossil fuel used in fertilizer and pesticide production, and that used in the transport, storage and distribution of food. Man power and animal power have been replaced by fossil-fuel power. One does not have to be a prophet to foretell that this system of agriculture cannot continue for very long in its present state — no matter how optimistic one may be about the amounts of fossil fuel that are recoverable from the earth's crust.

One favourable feature of the application of modern technology to agriculture in the United States, however, has been that it has permitted the retirement of marginal farming lands, and their restoration through other forms of use that are more suitable. Thus marginal farms have been turned over to forestry, pastures, wildlife, recreation, watershed conservation or other purpose that help to maintain or restore their productivity. As the result of the immediate food crisis, however, these lands are once again being ploughed and subjected to the pressures of high-energy-input agriculture. One would be less worried if such areas were brought under sustainable agricultural use, ecologically oriented, and relying more on man-power and less on fuel and chemical imports.

There is no question, from a humanitarian point of view, that any region that can produce a surplus of food, *without impairing the long-range productive capacity of lands and waters*, should do so, and should make this food available to those who are less favourably situated. There is also no question that present pressures and prices are forcing the conversion of lands that are not suitable to agriculture to systems of agriculture that cannot be sustained and that will impair their productive capacity if continued. That this practice can only produce a greater tragedy, five, ten or twenty years hence, cannot be doubted — since nothing is being done to reduce or control the ever-growing demand for food.

Furthermore, some of the glib solutions to world food problems, advanced by technological optimists in the recent past, now seem absurd — food from petroleum is an obvious example.

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There are only two ways to reduce the world demand for food — one is for each person to eat less, or to eat foods that require less space and energy for their production; the other is to reduce the number of mouths to be fed. The first solution only makes sense when it is applied to the wealthy of the world, since for others to eat less would be to die. However, even if all persons who enjoy a rich diet were altruists, and conscientiously reduced their consumption of food to basic survival levels, they could not manage more than a short-term answer to the world food problem. So long as populations continue to grow at present rates there can be no permanent solution to food problems — unless mass mortality is considered a solution.

The leaders of the nations of the world have now come together in three major international conferences where they have had the opportunity to confront the realities of the biosphere, and to address themselves to finding answers to the question of how humanity can continue to survive in a world worth living in. Because of international rivalries and in the interest of short-term political gains, they have three times refused to address themselves to the real issues. It is difficult to be optimistic about such concerns as the conservation of wildlife and natural areas when our leaders show such little real concern for the future of mankind.

R. F. Dasmann

## **Wetlands Conference urges Ramsar Convention action**

On 3 December the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat moved a step closer to being in force with the signature by Sweden, without reservation as to ratification. This action was announced during the 5th International Conference on the Conservation of Wetlands and Waterfowl, at Heiligenhafen, 2–6 December.

The Conference took special note of the Convention which, as of early December, had received a total of 9 signatures, three without reservation and a fourth, Finland, with subsequent ratification. Hope that further governments would ratify the Convention without delay was urgently expressed by the Conference and despite earlier disappointment that almost four years after its approval at Ramsar the Convention was still not in force, there was an air of optimism that ratification by three more countries would occur soon. At least seven countries must become parties to the Convention, after which it will come into force in four months.

The nine countries that have signed, did so in the following order: Iran, Finland, United Kingdom, USSR, Switzerland, Australia, Norway, Federal Republic of Germany, and Sweden.

### United Arab Emirates accedes to convention on endangered species

By accession, on 21 November, the United Arab Emirates became the seventh party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.

Ten States must adhere before the Convention can enter into force. Sweden and Cyprus were the fifth and sixth States to ratify.

### Additional Signatures

Since our last report [in the August Bulletin, eleven countries have signed this Convention to bring the total to 58. They are India, 9 July; Lesotho, 17 July; Chile, 16 September; Ireland, 1 November; Portugal, 6 December; Ecuador, 12 December; Ghana, 16 December; Bolivia, 23 December; Norway, 23 December; Peru, 30 December; and Netherlands, 30 December.

The Conference was held in the Kongresshalle at the Baltic town on the invitation of the Federal Minister of Food, Agriculture and Forestry of the Federal Republic of Germany. It was organized by the International Waterfowl Research Bureau (IWRB) in conjunction with the Federal Institute of Vegetation Research, Nature Conservation and Landscape Management of the FRG.

IUCN, a sponsor of the Conference, was represented by Sir Hugh Elliott and Eric Carp.

Thirty-nine nations sent delegates or observers while 10 international organizations were present including FAO, UNESCO and UNEP, and the Council of Europe.

Among other actions, the Conference set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Hugh Elliott to review criteria for identifying the wetlands which are of international rather than purely national interest and importance. In view of the greatly increased extent of concern for wetland conservation, the criteria as revised aim at establishing a system which can be applied to all categories of wetlands on a global basis.

The Conference noted with concern that the recommendations of the Ramsar Conference with regard to pesticides, which so often affect wetland habitats, had not yet been implemented by all countries. It was noted, however, that industrial pollution had been successfully reduced in a number of rivers, and responsible authorities were congratulated.

In view of the high biological productivity of wetland habitats the Conference particularly welcomed a reported increase in the numbers being created and rehabilitated. However it also noted that there was still a net loss of wetlands in most countries of the world at a rate which was alarming. A number of specific recommendations were approved in an effort to save from destruction some of the most internationally significant wetlands currently threatened.

The absolute necessity for internal cooperation, at all levels from governments to individuals, was noted as a requirement for successful wetland conservation. Greater coordination on a regional or "flyway" basis was therefore advocated and delegates also approved a world system for marking swans and geese.

Eighteen recommendations were adopted. These will be submitted to governments and other bodies concerned for consideration and appropriate action.

Dr. Wolfgang Erz, of the Federal Republic of Germany, was President of the conference. Vice Presidents were Professor A. A. Haapinen of Finland, and Dr. I. Maximov of USSR. Professor G. V. T. Matthews (UK), Director of the IWRB, was Rapporteur-General.

## Programme Activities

### IUCN publishes Spanish edition of World Park Conference book

A complete record of the Second World Conference on National Parks has just been issued in the Spanish language. Printed in Switzerland, the new 563-page book was published by IUCN for the National Parks Centennial Commission of the United States. Like its counterpart editions in English and French, the new book sells for US\$10. Orders should be sent to the Secretariat at 1110 Morges, Switzerland.

The volume contains the full record of the Conference held in September, 1972, at Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks in the United States. Bulk of the work is devoted to the 32 background papers prepared for the Conference, and the associated technical discussions.

The National Park Service of the US Department of the Interior is sending copies in appropriate languages to all participants.

### Guidelines for commercial turtle use to be explored

The Survival Service Commission of IUCN has become greatly concerned over mounting threats to sea turtles arising directly and indirectly from their commercial exploitation. The marked increase in trade in turtle souvenirs is an example.

Under the auspices of the SSC a specially constituted task force held a meeting at Miami, Florida, USA, on 22-24 November 1974, chaired on alternate days by the two Co-Chairmen of the Marine Turtle Specialist Group, Professors Archie Carr and Tom Harrison. Invited were Professor D. Ehrenfeld, USA; Dr. G. R. Hughes, South Africa; Dr. G. H. Balazs, Hawaii, USA; Dr. H. F. Hirth, USA; Dr. N. Mrosovsky, Canada; Dr. P. C. H. Pritchard, USA; Dr. L. D. Brongersma, Netherlands; Mr. G. S. de Silva, Sabah, Malaysia; Dr. F. W. King, USA. The task force considered all implications of commercial exploitation of sea turtles and drew up for consideration by IUCN certain principles, or conservation guidelines, under which limited commercial use might be permitted.

### Polar bear specialists urge action against poachers

The Polar Bear Specialist Group of the Survival Service Commission held its 5th meeting 3-5 December 1974 at Le Manoir, Saint-Prex, near Morges, Switzerland. This Group, unique in that its members are designated Government representatives, was meeting for the first time since its noteworthy achievement in negotiating the Polar Bear Agreement (see Bulletin, Vol. 4, No. 12, p. 50 and Supplement). Dr. John Tener of Canada was in the Chair. Members represented Canada, USSR, USA, Norway and Denmark.

Principal business of the meeting was the review of research programmes, exchange of ideas and coordination of management and research plans, as the Group has done since 1968. A number of scientific specialists on particular aspects of polar bear ecology and management who are not members of the Group also participated at the invitation of the Group. One topic of major concern was the difficulty of establishing movement patterns and locating denning areas, with the consequent importance of developing telemetry techniques and of their application within a coordinated programme.

Concern was also expressed that rapidly increasing prices for polar bear skins offer incentives for nationals of countries other than those party to the Agreement to engage in poaching. The Group urged that this situation be formally brought to the notice of countries whose nationals are likely to have the interest and capability for such illegal activities. Poachers from nine countries not party to the Agreement have been identified.

All members reported encouraging progress in the application of conservation measures, particularly in more effective and scientifically based controls on hunting and disposal of skins. A comprehensive system of national parks and reserves is being developed in Greenland. In addition to protecting polar bear populations, these areas will act as reservoirs to ensure the availability of sufficient numbers of bears to those people traditionally dependent on them.

## Conservation Notes

### Huge new game reserve at Melville bay in Greenland

A signature by the Danish Minister for Greenland was expected in December as the final step in authorization of a new 8000 km<sup>2</sup> game reserve on the huge arctic island's west coast.

Located on Melville bay, the reserve consists of sea, islands, coastlands, inland ice and nunataks. It contains the only polar bear denning area south of Thule on the west coast. The area is also an important denning area for ringed seals, while its islands are breeding grounds for arctic birds.

Following unanimous approval by 12 members of the Thule, Upernavik, Umanak and Angmagssalik municipal councils of Greenland hunting districts, the proposal was passed by the Landsrådet. The Minister's signature will provide final approval.

Dr. Christian Vibe, who met with the members of the Municipal Councils, all Greenlanders, forwarded a resolution passed at their September meeting in Søndre Strømfjord, in which they expressed thanks to IUCN and WWF for work done to save arctic animals from extermination, and appealed urgently for continued efforts. Out of Greenland's total population of 46,000, ten thousand people live by hunting.

They declared that the taking of whales, seals, and polar bears had always been the only possibility of making a living.

### New environmental journal

The first issue of the new *International Journal of Ecology and Environmental Sciences* has now reached IUCN. This is the first international environmental journal to be published in a developing country, and it is hoped that it will help establish a trend. The journal is produced by International Scientific Publications, of 386 Street 2, Raja Park, Jaipur, India, and edited by R. Misra of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, a member of IUCN's Commission on Ecology.

The first issue is an interesting mixture of east and west. Its eight articles range from David Goodall's presentation of the use of preliminary environmental impact assessment and mathematical modelling in a theoretical river basin (the Styx Valley Project) to G.S. Puri's presentation of the Yoga approach to the health hazard of stress. In between are articles on human adaptability, fisheries and pollution, the tropical dry evergreen forest, human development, seed germination, and the ecology of *Eupatorium odoratum*. Regrettably the price of subscription is high — US\$ 19 per year.

### Research center established at Hawaii Volcanoes National Park

A field research center has been established in Hawaii Volcanoes National Park on the island of Hawaii by the US National Park Service. The Center will make laboratory facilities and personal accommodations available to researchers working in the park on island biology and ecology and the evolution, adaption, speciation and extinction of endemic species.

Inquiries concerning the Hawaii Field Research Center should be addressed to the Superintendent, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, Hawaii 96718, USA.

### Coastal zone use and limitations subject of SEPANRIT Congress

Utilization of Coastal Zones and limitations imposed by requirements for nature protection comprised the theme of the 4th Annual Congress of the Société pour l'étude, la protection et l'aménagement de la nature dans les régions inter-tropicales (SEPANRIT) at Bordeaux, 4-6 October.

Delegates from conservation organizations having close ties with SEPANRIT, notably from Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guyana, Réunion, Tahiti and New Caledonia, were present. Emphasis was placed on problems faced by conservation aspects in tropical coastal regions but there were also papers on improvement of productivity of coastal zones compatible with conservation objectives.

Proceedings will be published. Themes suggested for the next congress, to be held in 1976, include: 1. Problems resulting from introduced species with particular reference to island environments, and 2. The relationship between economic growth and the constraints on nature conservation in developing countries.

### Supysáua

On 8 November 1974, a meeting was held at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., under the sponsorship of *Indigena*, an organization concerned with the future of indigenous American people. The meeting addressed itself to "Indian policy in Brazil: the need for urgent international action and concern" and brought together representatives of American Indian groups, anthropologists and other people expert on recent conditions in Amazonia.

Background documents for the meeting included the new publication *Supysáua: a documentary report on the conditions of Indian peoples in Brazil*, which includes reports by Brazilian anthropologists, bishops and priests on the destruction of traditional peoples and cultures in Amazonia. Among other features of interest are lists of principal foreign investors in Brazil, development projects and who is financing them, and the consequences for the indigenous peoples. The report is not pleasant reading, but will be of importance to those following the fate of the tropical rainforests and their inhabitants throughout the world. It may be obtained from *Indigena*, P. O. Box 4073, Berkeley, California 94704, USA.

The Brookings' meeting has called on the United States Congress to "begin active enquiries into the American corporate and government involvement 'on grounds of national security' in Brazil".

R. F. Dasmann

### USA to establish new "National Preserve"

The new Big Thicket National Preserve in the State of Texas is the first unit in the extensive holdings of the US National Park Service to be designated a "National Preserve". This is a new concept which establishes the preservation and protection for areas which are unique mainly because of their plant and animal life.

The Big Thicket will include a remarkable community of life forms, a complex mingling of species, both plant and animal, found nowhere else. The area is located in a transition zone between the moist eastern woodlands, the arid southwest, the tropical coastal marsh, and the central prairie.

Legislation signed in October calls for the Federal Government to acquire within the next six years 12 units totalling 84,550 acres (34,218 ha) in eastern Texas which would become the preserve.

In other actions, the US has taken steps to add six historic sites and one national monument to the park system. The new national monument, the John Day Fossil Beds, is comprised of 14,400 acres (5828 ha) in north-central Oregon where plant and animal fossils in

great variety offer a record dating back at least 37 million years.

The US has also taken steps towards acquisition of more than half a million acres (211,245 ha) of private lands in the swampy watershed above Everglades National Park in southern Florida. This will become Big Cypress National Preserve.

#### **Canadian musk-ox to Soviet Arctic**

An attempt is being made to introduce musk-oxen into Siberia. Ten animals were flown from Canada in early September for permanent settlement on the eastern shores of Lake Taimyr.

According to the Novosti Information Service, in prehistoric times musk-oxen ranged along the Yenisey river above the Arctic Circle.

#### **Professor Hackett wins prize for landscape conservation**

Professor Brian Hackett (UK), long a member of the IUCN Commission on Environmental Planning, has been awarded the 1975 European Prize for the Protection of Nature and Development of Landscape.

The SFr. 20,000-prize is awarded by the Johann-Wolfgang von Goethe Foundation of Basle for achievements in nature conservation and landscape planning of European significance.

Professor Hackett, of University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, pioneered the application of ecological principles and conservation in the study and practice of landscape planning. Through his publications, and hundreds of former students now in active careers throughout the world, his influence on landscape conservation has been substantial.

### **World Wildlife Fund News**

#### **WWF names Director of International Relations**

Ambassador Åke A. Jonsson of Sweden has joined the World Wildlife Fund's International office as Director of International Relations.

Ambassador Jonsson, 55, has just retired from the Swedish Diplomatic Service, his last post having been Beirut, where he was Ambassador to Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, and Cyprus. Earlier he was Ambassador to Mexico.

Mr. Jonsson will assist the World Wildlife Fund in an honorary capacity in its relations with governments and other organizations throughout the world.

#### **Mauritius kestrel chick dies, species near extinction**

The first Mauritius kestrel chick hatched in a special breeding programme aimed at saving the species from extinction died in November because of an incubator mishap, according to a report received by the World Wildlife Fund. The chick hatched out of a clutch of three eggs laid by a pair of kestrels caught from the wild for the breeding programme. The other two eggs failed to hatch.

The Mauritius kestrel has been reduced to near extinction by destruction of its forest habitat, predation of eggs and young by introduced monkeys and rats, and persecution by man. Six birds survive, two in the breeding project, and four in the forests of the Black River Gorge, Mauritius.

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Authors interested in submitting material for publication are invited to write to the Editor.

#### **WWF Trustees urge industries, airlines to aid conservation**

The Board of Trustees of the World Wildlife Fund at its 21st meeting, held on 1 November at Lausanne, Switzerland, adopted two resolutions. The first, addressed to public agencies and private enterprises exploiting mineral, oil, and timber resources, reads as follows:

##### **Conservation of Natural Resources**

*Alarmed* at the rapid increase in the rate of exploitation of the world's limited natural resources, often without considering future needs or taking into account adverse environmental impacts;

*Regretting* the lack of concern for the natural environment demonstrated by many bodies both public and private engaged in such exploitation, and the thoughtless destruction wreaked by their field personnel;

*Stressing* the special responsibility of all groups engaged in such exploitation, particularly those profiting commercially from such ventures:

*The Board of Trustees of the World Wildlife Fund meeting in Lausanne, Switzerland, on 1 November 1974:*

1. *Calls* on all public agencies and private enterprises engaged in the exploitation of natural resources, particularly those extracting minerals, oil and timber, to be aware of their special responsibility for the rational use of these resources in the best long-term interests of all peoples;
2. *Urges* such agencies and enterprises to adhere to sound ecological principles in all their activities from the planning stage through to execution, and to follow ecological guidelines as formulated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources;
3. *Appeals* to such agencies and enterprises (a) to initiate investigations by competent experts into the environmental impact of their activities, (b) to adopt monitoring and corrective measures required by the circumstances, and (c) to avoid development and other activities which are incompatible with the long-term wise use of natural resources; and
4. *Stresses* that such agencies and enterprises should ensure that their field personnel observe local conservation regulations, including those concerned with hunting, and refrain from killing or collecting endangered species of animals and plants.

A second resolution calls on all airlines to accept the resolution of the World Wildlife Fund of 11 September 1971 to abjure the promotion of all travel projects that may interfere with wild nature, particularly expeditions to hunt and kill animals threatened with extinction and listed in the IUCN Red Data Book.

Further it asked all airlines to refuse to carry wildlife and wildlife products taken illegally or exported in contravention of the law of the exporting country or falling under any other of the prohibitions of the 1973 Washington Convention on trade in endangered species.

While most airlines are cooperating with WWF, 51 others throughout the world have *not* responded to the appeal. They are: Ariana Afghan Airlines, Angola Airlines, Austria Airlines, CP Air, Eastern Provincial Airways, Quebecair, Empresa Consolidada, Cubana de Aviacion, Ceskoslovenske Aerolinie (CSA), Compania Ecuatoriana de Aviacion, Egyptair, Ghana Airways, British Caledonian Airways, Air Guinea, Iraqi Airways, Aer Lingus, Aerlinter Eireann, Japan Airlines, East African Airways, Libyan Arab Airlines, Air Mali, Compania Mexicana de Aviacion, DETA, Air New Zealand, Mount Cook Airlines, PIA, Aerial Tours, Macair Charters, Territory Airlines, Philippine Airlines, LOT, TAP, Saudi Arabian Airlines, AVNA (Aviation-Natal), United Air Services, Suidwes Lugdiens Beperk, Iberia, Sudan Airways, Syrian Arab Airlines, Turkish Airlines, VIASA, Allegheny Airlines, Braniff, Chicago Helicopter Airways, Continental Air Lines, Flying Tiger Line, National Airlines, New York Airways, Northwest Airlines, United Airlines, and JAT.