



# Bulletin

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## Blow-outs and cover-ups in the Beaufort Sea

As in northern Europe, so in the Canadian Arctic—the summer of 1976 was an exceptionally good one. In particular, ice and weather conditions in the Beaufort Sea greatly favoured the oil explorations of Dome Petroleum, whose drilling technology, so the company asserts, is “equal to the highest standards available in the world”.

However, according to the Canadian Arctic Resources Committee (CARC), explorations proved a “near disaster” with a distressing number of technical and human failures. Not a single well of the five which were “spudded” (the industry’s term for commencement of drilling) reached its target depth and blow-outs occurred in each of the two deep wells—one of which had still not been sealed by the end of the drilling season. The sole mitigating factor was that the blow-outs were of water and gas, not oil.

Furthermore, CARC says, publications and statements emanating from Dome and also from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DINA) have presented a somewhat doctored version of the facts. The Committee for Original Peoples Entitlement has on several occasions urged the Minister to appoint a neutral body to investigate and report. This has not happened and CARC has therefore submitted its own report to the Minister, giving due weight to social and environmental aspects.

Meanwhile Dome has requested the Canadian Government to authorize a further 5-year drilling period. Assent is normally a formality. However hopes are rising that on this occasion the Federal Cabinet is having second thoughts.

### Bravo to the North Sea?

Ironically these hopes have been boosted by the North Sea blow-out. “It will reinforce the kind of warnings environmental officials have been giving to the cabinet” said Dr Stan Winthrop, assistant deputy minister in the Canadian Department of the Environment.

Furthermore these “warnings” will now be couched in still starker terms than

(Continued on back page)

## Key post for Maurice Strong

At its first meeting after the close of the 13th (Extraordinary) General Assembly IUCN’s Council quickly coopted Mr Maurice Strong and then unanimously elected him Chairman of the Bureau.

Both the Council and the Bureau are new bodies created under the newly revised Statutes. The Statutes came into force as soon as they were adopted—in the small hours of Friday 22 April. In essence the Council is a bigger and more professional Executive Board and the Bureau is a strengthened and more active Executive Committee.

Under the Statutes, former bodies—like the Executive Board—carry out the duties of the new ones until the 14th General Assembly at the end of September 1978 in Ashkhabad, USSR. So until then members of the (previous) Executive Board will serve as Councillors. The Council’s powers include the right to coopt on to the Council five other persons and then to appoint from among its number the members of the Bureau: a Chairman, the Treasurer and up to five others.

The Council is a policy-making body acting within the overall policy laid down by the General Assembly. Like the former Executive Board its *elected* members consist of the President, three representatives from each of the geographic regions and the six Chairmen of Commissions. But the Council is bigger than the 22-man Executive Board—and more professional. First the number of geographic regions is increased from five to eight. Second the 31 elected Councillors are empowered to coopt five others. This should ensure a right balance of expertise within the Council. The fact that Commission Chairmen have voting rights on the Council (as they didn’t on the Executive Board) should also add professional weight to Council’s decisions.

From its membership the Council selects up to four Vice-Presidents and the Treasurer. It meets at least annually and members normally serve for the 3-year period between General Assemblies.

The Bureau is a small policy-directing group (Chairman, Treasurer and up to five others) appointed by the Council from among its 24 regional and five coopted members. As well as Mr Maurice Strong, the Bureau’s staff are: Mr Robert Boote (Treasurer), Professor M. Kassas, Dr Pierre Goeldlin, Mr Wolfgang Burhenne and Mr Bill Conway.

A significant Bureau appointment is that of the Treasurer. The purpose is to improve surveillance of IUCN’s finances—for which, however, the Director General is now explicitly accountable, in the first place to the Council and ultimately to the General Assembly. The “up to five other”

appointments are intended (as with the coopted Councillors) to ensure breadth of expertise. The combined skills of the Bureau’s should cover the world of finance, management and public awareness.

The President and the Vice-President are *ex officio* members of the Bureau and may participate in its work. The Bureau acts on behalf of and under the authority of the Council and meets at least twice a year.

### Chairman Strong

In taking up his new appointment as Chairman of the Bureau Maurice Strong stressed the unique character of IUCN as the “nerve centre of a world conservation movement”. While still remaining Chairman of Petro-Canada, Calgary, he will henceforth be devoting a great deal of his energies to the Union’s affairs.

Secretary-General of the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment and then, for the next four years, Executive Director of UNEP, Mr Strong has an excellent conservation background. His immediate aims are to generate greater support for IUCN by governments, aid agencies and the world of business and to seek closer liaison with decision-making bodies.

At the General Assembly the President, Professor Donald Kuenen, explained that the search for a new Director General had not yet proved successful. Maurice Strong will therefore also be assuming the functions of that office for the time being, and one of his early tasks will be to direct the search for the right person for this post which has now been vacant for over a year.

# The General Assembly: Statutes and other matters

## The Statutes: changes en route to adoption

The Union has a new set of Statutes. Their adoption was the chief business of the General Assembly held in Geneva last month. The first task of delegates was to decide which of the various amendments submitted by members should, in principle, be accepted. It was then up to the drafting panel to work out the precise wording in both English and French—taking scrupulous care to ensure an exact equivalence of meaning in the two versions. Their efforts then came back to the Assembly for scrutiny, further amendment (where necessary) and adoption.

Certain sections of the draft Statutes underwent radical change en route to their authorized form. An early casualty was Convocation. Delegates considered it was conceived in error and should be aborted in haste as serving no useful function in the fairly straightforward business of balloting members by post. Then again the draft Statutes had the Commission Chairmen being appointed by the Council. The General Assembly, however, insisted on retaining its right to elect them.

In the draft Statutes a Board is proposed. Delegates decided they liked its function but not its name. They opted for Bureau—which has the virtue of being a term common to both official languages. A last-minute addition to the Statutes is Article XVIII, Dissolution. The drafting panel were informed by the Swiss legal counsel that failing alternative provision the assets of a company which goes into dissolution belong under Swiss law to the canton in which it resides. While IUCN has no intention whatever of going into dissolution, it was nevertheless felt that provision should be made for such an *in extremis* unlikely event. In that sad event, delegates said, IUCN's assets (if any) should go to WWF International.

By now it was around one o'clock in the morning of Friday 22 April and "there being no other business" the General Assembly was declared closed—until Ashkhabad, September 1978.

## Members and money

A discussion paper *Members and Money* pointed out that during 1976 IUCN members provided only 17½% of the Union's total income and that over 60% came from just two organizations—UNEP and WWF. There is also an unhealthy imbalance in the composition of the membership. While developing countries form 66% of State members, their membership percentage falls to 40% amongst government agencies and 20% amongst NGOs. Since IUCN's work is mainly carried out in developing countries they should be far more strongly represented.

The paper briefly explored various remedies and these were taken up in turn

by the General Assembly. The discussion was opened by Mr Boote, UK. Resources, he declared, were wholly inadequate to IUCN's needs in a worsening global situation. The biosphere was continuing to deteriorate. Where could increased funds come from? Dr Koepf, West Germany, said that the smaller organizations could not afford to pay any more and that a straightforward raising of subscriptions would be counter-productive. This view was vigorously endorsed by the President. Any increase, he said, must not hit at the poorer members.

Mr Conway, USA, said that development programmes should be made to contribute—perhaps through a system of "tithing". These programmes, government and private, disburse billions of dollars. He suggested a special commission to look into it. Professor Leyhausen, West Germany, expressed shock at the small number of individual contributors (Friends and Life Friends). IUCN must campaign for individual supporters. Dr Poore, IUCN, said that a membership drive was planned for later this year. Mr Geroudet, Switzerland, said that *Ligue suisse pour la protection de la nature* had decided to double its annual subscription, provided IUCN's financial affairs were on a satisfactory footing. He was warmly thanked by the President. Dr Boyd, UK, recommended a worldwide membership campaign lasting for perhaps a year and organized by the various National Committees.

Dr Talbot, USA, took up the issue of graduated membership dues. These at present apply only to State members. They should be extended to other categories. Perhaps there should be a sliding scale on a country basis related to the number of members in the organization and its budget. Dr Carvalho, Brazil, favoured graduated dues because of differing currency values. Mr Dubrulle, Belgium, while supporting graduated dues, was against the idea of national campaigns for IUCN. Such campaigns for Belgium's own environmental needs (eg the nation's wetlands) had been a failure, although plenty of Belgian money had gone to WWF's international tiger campaign.

Dr Dourojeanni, Peru, said that any membership drive was up against the fact that IUCN was not well known. It must become so. Also what were the advantages of membership for small organizations? It was not clear. He favoured graduated dues, but stressed that payment would be easier if allowed in local currency. However since this was impractical, perhaps a scheme could be worked out for payment in kind. The President agreed that this was a good idea.

A resolution was then put. Delegates should take the paper *Members and Money* and, after consulting with their own governing bodies, report back to the Council by 1 October; reports should take account of the discussion on graduated fees and the suggestion for an endowment

fund. The resolution was carried. So too was the follow-up resolution that after considering the various reports from members, Council would draft a proposal and circulate it for members' approval by 1 February 1978.

## Commissions—changes at the top

Within IUCN's six Commissions there are two new Chairmen and three new Deputy Chairmen. Dr Kenton Miller is now Chairman of the National Parks Commission and Mr H. K. Eidsvik is his Deputy. Mr Wolfgang Burhenne becomes Chairman of the Commission on Environmental Policy, Law and Administration. Mr V. C. Robertson is Deputy Chairman of the Commission on Environmental Planning and Mr John Perry is Deputy Chairman of the Survival Service Commission.

Commission Chairmen now have more status and power. Under the new Statutes they are voting members of the Council—previously they were non-voting members of the Executive Board. And if for any reason they are unable to attend a Council meeting, then attendance and voting rights devolve upon their Deputies.

## Ted Swem

Special mention should be made of Mr Ted Swem, retiring Chairman of the National Parks Commission. In the short time since Kinshasa he has reestablished the Commission as a leading force in the work of IUCN. In cooperation with UNESCO the Commission has greatly contributed to advancing the concept of the biosphere reserve in relation to other categories of protected areas and to working for the effective implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The CNPPA is much the better for his chairmanship.

## Kagera river basin development

During the Assembly Mr Van der Goes van Naters, Netherlands, raised the issue of a UNDP project in East Africa which has caused great concern to environmental organizations. Indeed the issue had been raised in Kinshasa in September 1975 and representations to UNDP have been made since that time. Hydrological and agricultural development affects Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

The concern is basically on two scores: first, that the project as planned will have disastrous effects on the valuable Kagera National Park and, in particular, adversely affect the unique floating savannah; second, that the advice of environmentally concerned bodies, notably IUCN and UNEP, has not been sought.

The UNDP survey has been completed. However its implementation does not appear to be imminent. The issue will be treated at greater length in a future number of the *Bulletin*.

# Books

## The poverty of power—energy and the economic crisis

by Barry Commoner

Jonathan Cape, 314 pp, £5.50

Few subjects of popular concern have more direct impact on the future of conservation than a nation's energy policy. Few subjects also are more difficult to comprehend both because of deliberate efforts to confuse and mislead and the inadequacies of the data base. It is therefore a relief to be able to recommend a book which can go a long way toward removing the confusion and presenting the truth.

Commoner examines the interaction between three systems: ecosystem, production system and economic system—and describes why the relationships between them seem to produce neither efficient use of resources nor protection of the environment. Through use of efficiency analysis based on the second law of thermodynamics he is able to underscore the gross inefficiencies involved in most forms of energy production, conversion and use.

Proponents of nuclear energy will receive no comfort from Commoner's analyses, but neither will those who seek an easy solution to the world's energy problems. Solar energy in its various forms comes through not only as a source of power for the distant future, but one which can be made to work now. There is petroleum enough to carry us through the solar transition, after which most energy requirements can be met by this inexhaustible, non-polluting energy supply—but only with changes in the production and economic systems.

Skulduggery in high places is abundantly revealed throughout the book, including the conspiracy which destroyed the highly efficient electric railway system of the United States. Commoner's emphasis is on the United States but his analyses can be applied anywhere. One can hope that this book will be widely read and its findings put into practice.

Ray Dasmann

## A field guide to the birds of West Africa

by W. Serle, G. J. Morel and W. Hartwig

Collins, 351 pp, 515 species illustrated, 335 in colour, £5.95

This first field guide to the birds of West Africa is certainly welcome. It covers the whole West African region from the Atlantic to Chad and the Central African Republic in the East, and northwards from the Zaire river to the Sahara. Over 500 species are illustrated and fully described and all the other species known from the region (almost another 600) are dealt with more briefly or just listed. The scientific list also gives English, Spanish,

French and German names. Though not an ideal field guide (very few field guides are), since less than half the species are illustrated and then not always in colour, this undoubtedly fills a gap.

## Eagles of the world

by Leslie Brown

David and Charles, 224 pp, 40 half-tone illustrations, 10 other figures, £4.95

This book is a rich source of information. It describes and discusses the various species of eagles, their characteristics, their behaviour outside the breeding season, the breeding cycle and many aspects of the life of the young eagle. Both indirectly and directly the book also deals with the conservation of eagles and is thus another of Leslie Brown's admirable contributions to the conservation of birds of prey of the world.

## Lambert's birds of garden and woodland

by Alan Mitchell with paintings by Terence Lambert

Collins, 128 pp, 57 paintings, £4.95

## Birds of western North America

by Laurence Binford with paintings by Kennet Carlson

Collier Macmillan, 223 pp, 50 paintings, no price given

In both books the illustrations take the form of large full-page paintings. Lambert's book features some 60 bird species, most of them common in Great Britain, with brief descriptions of the species. The paintings are excellent—among the best I have ever seen. In the other book the paintings are almost as good, even if the reproductions are not of quite the same quality. The book contains "portraits" of 50 birds, from the widely distributed rufous hummingbird to the highly endangered California Condor.

## A guide to the birds of Panama

by Robert Ridgely and John Gwynne

Princeton University Press, 394 pp, 32 colour plates, 50 line drawings, \$19.00

This is a checklist of Panama's birds but with extended coverage through Middle America. Included are valuable notes on climate, migration and local movements, and conservation. (As in many other areas, forest destruction is causing grave loss of habitat.) This book—once again—is not an ideal field guide; only 650 of 880 species have colour illustrations. However some 50 line drawings add to the good text descriptions of the species.

## The winter birds

by Malcolm Ogilvie

Michael Joseph, 224 pp, 32 colour and 100 black-and-white photographs, 45 maps, £5.75

Malcolm Ogilvie looks down at the top of the globe from above, describing Arctic bird life including winter migration. Almost 140 species are dealt with, and in this Marine Campaign year it is important to note that the abundance of life in the Arctic is produced by the sea. From a conservation point of view the significance of books of this type lies in the demonstration that biology is international. Breeding areas span national borders and migration routes cross many others. Ogilvie's text reflects the appropriate international spirit.

## Guide to the pigeons of the world

by Andrew McNeillie

Phaidon Press, 160 pp, 75 colour illustrations, £3.50 cloth, £1.95 paper

## Guide of the mammals of Britain and Europe

by Maurice Burton

Phaidon Press, 256 pp, 170 colour illustrations, £4.50 cloth, £1.95 paper

The first of these little books is of small direct interest to the conservationist. It describes 55 breeds of domestic pigeons and discusses pigeon keeping. The title is thus somewhat misleading—and throughout the book one wishes that part of the money and efforts spent on the breeding of fancy pigeons had been employed for saving wild bird habitats.

The second book is a comprehensive guide to every mammal species found in Europe, containing notes on their range, habits and life history. The illustrations are in colour and most—but not all—are good. Emphasis is placed on species habitat relations which is commendable. However, as stated in the preface, mammals are adaptable and are rarely limited to a single habitat. The book is therefore not easy to use as a field guide—especially as many of the species are very similar and easily confused. *Mats Segnestam*

## Soviet "Nessie"?

A monster resembling a camel with the head of a serpent has been sighted in Lake Kok-Kol, Soviet Kazakhstan. Local legends have long told of such a creature. Now an expedition from the USSR Geographic Society claims to have seen it—or something very like it.

Andrei Pechorsky, the expedition leader, describes how suddenly, some six metres from the shore, the water became disturbed. Below the surface they could clearly see the movement of a body; it was about twelve metres long. The head and tail then surfaced. The head is described as being about one metre by two and looking serpent-like.

## Beaufort Sea (continued)

before. In trying to anticipate the effects of a blow-out in the Arctic, the experts had hitherto assumed a *worst* situation of only a tenth of the 3,000 tonnes a day gushing from Bravo. "A massive blow-out, this will change all the numbers" said Dr Bob Stewart, director of the Canada Institute of Ocean Sciences. "There's never been anything that's released so much oil into the sea."

A Bravo situation in the Canadian Arctic would be ecologically disastrous—and perhaps very difficult to bring under control. And with the sea iced over for half the year there is the real and frightening possibility that a blow-out occurring in late summer would not be plugged before the seasonal close-down. It would then continue unchecked and uncheckable throughout the winter. Lending fuel to this nightmarish prospect is the fact that water and gas are still escaping from one of last summer's Beaufort Sea blow-outs.

### Controlled from Texas

A curious side-issue is that according to DINA "drilling operations in the Beaufort Sea were essentially conducted from Dallas, Texas". It appears that the Beaufort operation, which Dome and proclaimed as "a Canadian project... conducted by Canadian Marine Drilling, a wholly owned subsidiary of Dome Petroleum, a Canadian oil company" is in fact controlled by Lamar Hunt from Texas.

### Ekofisk—next time an "ecofiasco"

130 tonnes of oil an hour for 181 hours is a lot of oil. And all of it gushing straight into a sea which already has to cope with "cleaning up" the wastes of half of industrial Europe. Of course it could have been worse—and sooner or later will be unless the lessons are taken to heart.

In a press release put out on 29 April (before the well had been capped) IUCN said that every effort must be made to prevent the oil reaching inshore areas where the damage to marine life would be very much greater than in the open sea. At the same time, the Union warned, there was a localized danger to mackerel. Sinking the oil could be harmful to breeding (which was imminent); and the slicks unless cleaned up would be lethal to mackerel eggs and larvae rising to the surface.

IUCN called for improved precautions against future blow-outs and pointed to the urgent need for detailed maps showing where seabirds gather to breed and moult and where fish collect to spawn and have their nurseries. The Union also stressed that cleaning-up methods must ensure minimum risk to seabirds and fish. ("It is clear we have to buy more modern and efficient equipment" said Norway's environment minister a day or two later, referring to the abject failure of Norwegian booms and skimmers to cope with "normal" North Sea conditions.)

## Duncan Poore becomes Scientific Director

Dr Duncan Poore, who was Acting Director General during the past year, has become Scientific Director. He is responsible for all programme matters and is in charge of the secretariat's operations whenever Maurice Strong is absent.

Duncan Poore took over as Acting Director General on 1 March 1976 in peculiarly difficult circumstances. The Union's deficit then stood at SFrs 700,000 and appeared all set to exceed SFrs 1,000,000 by the year's end. Dark predictions of ultimate disaster were not uncommon.

However, thanks in large measure to Duncan Poore's energy and incurable optimism, all prophecies of doom were confounded. By the end of last year the overall deficit had been cut back to SFrs 168,000.

Then in January this year fruitful

meetings were held with IUCN's two principal backers, WWF and UNEP. Confidence in IUCN took the tangible form of hard support. WWF raised its main contribution from SFrs 900,000 (1976) to SFrs 1,350,000, while UNEP expressed satisfaction and said that IUCN should plan on the assumption that its contract would be renewed.

In 1974 Duncan Poore was on the committee which drew up the 3-year Programme adopted at Kinshasa. One of its chief architects, he was thereafter its chief exponent and advocate to those bodies, governments and others, whose support was required. In this he was highly successful.

Compared with a year ago the Union today is in sound shape and excellent heart. It owes Duncan Poore no small debt of gratitude.

As part of the \$10 million WWF programme, *The Seas Must Live*, IUCN declared itself ready to join other organizations in improving and disseminating knowledge of marine life in the North Sea.

### Harp seal quota not reached

For Canadian and Norwegian ships this year's harp seal hunt is over. The closing date was 24 April. The Canadian catch was 46,700—well below their 62,000 quota. And although the Norwegians exceeded their 35,000 quota by 500, the total "large ship" catch came to only 82,200 as against a quota of 97,000.

The landmen's final catch is not yet known. For them there are no official opening and closing dates and hunting continues until May. By mid-April they had caught exactly half their quota of 63,000. However this year for the first time their quota is controlled. So whatever their final catch it is certain that the total quota of 160,000 for Canadian waters will not be reached.

Ice conditions were unfavourable for the ships, especially towards the end of the hunt. The low catch is also being blamed on the 3-day postponement in the opening of the hunt to allow extended time for an aerial census of the breeding colonies. But the postponement served its purpose. The census was apparently completed and its findings should be of great help in determining future policy.

### Antlers hold a powerful medicine

Now that spring has arrived male deer are beginning to sprout new antlers. However in the Bogd U1 Reserve in Mongolia, established as long ago as 1778, not all male maral deer (*Cervus elaphus maral*) will be able to display fully-grown antlers later on in the season. In February about 400-450 of them were driven to an enormous fenced enclosure. In June they will be caught and before being freed their

velvet antlers will be sawn so as to extract a medicine reputed to have remarkably rejuvenating powers.

Since each animal produces around two kg and prices are as high as \$200-\$300 per kg (dry), the profits are assured once the necessary fences (45 km long in the case of Bogd U1) are erected—especially as the operation can be repeated every year. During it less than 3% of the deer are lost. About half the production is treated locally for extraction of active principles and about half is exported after drying.

With demand exceeding supply the Mongolian authorities have decided to expand facilities in the two existing areas. Other areas in which the deer can reproduce naturally and be driven to fenced enclosures once a year are also planned.

At the beginning of this century the maral deer was almost exterminated in Mongolia and this valuable source of revenue was nearly lost. Strict conservation measures saved the species and its future is now perfectly secure.

### Jordan and Yugoslavia accede to Wetlands Convention

Jordan and Yugoslavia have become respectively the 16th and 17th Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat. Jordan acceded to the Convention on 10 January and Yugoslavia on 28 March.

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