

Left to right from top:
 IUCN Secretaries General:
 Jean-Paul Harroy, 1948-1955
 M.C. Bloemers, 1959-1960
 Gerald Watterson, 1961-1962
 Hugh Elliott, 1963-1966
 Joe Berwick, 1966-1970
 Directors General:
 Gerardo Budowski, 1970-1976
 David Munro, 1977-1980
 Lee Talbot, 1980-1982
 Kenton Miller, 1983-1988
 Martin Holdgate, 1988-1994
 David McDowell, 1994-
 [Not shown: Tracy Philipps, SG 1956-1958]

IUCN
 The World Conservation Union

world

CONSERVATION



Leaders in
 conservation

IUCN's
 50 years

3-4/98

world

CONSERVATION

Anniversary issue

FOUNDATION

3 Vision, tenacity, and the roots of the Union Pierre Goeldlin • 4 My dilemmas with IUCN Max Nicholson • 5 Fifty-one years of IUCN Richard Fitter • 7 I remember... Miriam Rothschild • 10 Partnership Michel Batisse • 11 Sudden insight Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt • 12 Sir Julian Huxley and the Lion of Judah Alain Gille

CONNECTION

14 No park is an island Adrian Phillips • 16 Science: the Union's cornerstone Tony Mence • 17 Red Data books and the beginning of conservation monitoring Jane Fenton • 21 Remembering the early days Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin • 23 CITES and the migratory cactus Peter H. Sand

EVOLUTION

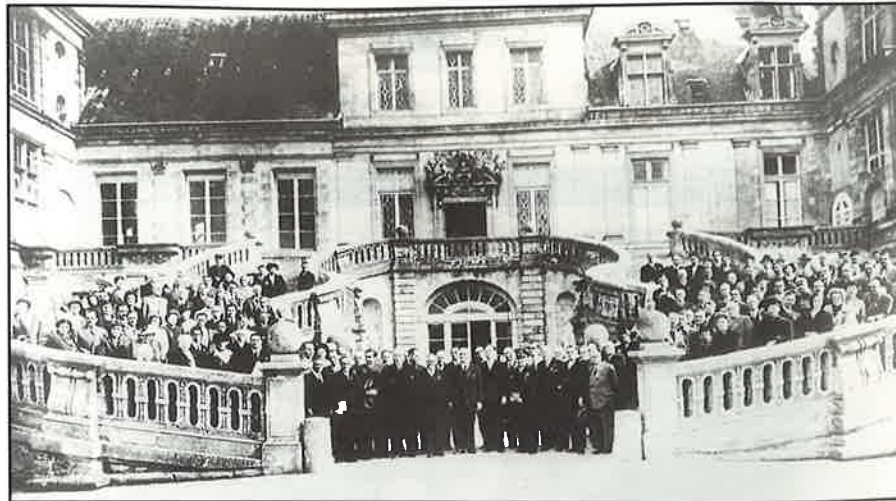
26 CDC: a dream unfulfilled Mike Cockerell • 30 A double anniversary Aban Marker Kabraji • 31 Magnificent obsession Jan Cеровsky • 32 Beltrán generations Gabriela Hernandez • 33 A scientific visionary Gabriela Hernandez • 35 Musiti means forest Bihini Won Wa Musiti • 37 Advocating alongside members Antonio M. Claparols • 38 The pursuit of relevance Delmar Blasco • 41 High Noon at the Heritage site Peter Hulm • 42 Resolutions: ready, set, fight! George Greene • 43 Of pandas, tigers and IUCN in India Samar Singh

REFLECTION

44 A time to remember Sir Martin Holdgate • 47 IUCN'S best kept secrets Jay D. Hair • 49 Quality, if not quantity Rachel Kyte • 50 The best of times... David McDowell • 54 Participating in the Union's future Yolanda Kakabadse

Plus Who's who and index (55), quotes, people on people, key dates

Cover: IUCN's Presidents. Left to right from top: Charles Bernard, 1948-1954. IUCN; Roger Heim, 1954-1958. J.L. Charnet; Jean Baer, 1958-1963. Hallé Studio; François Bourlière, 1963-1966. UNESCO; Harold J. Coolidge, 1966-1972. Carnegie Museum; Donald Kuenen, 1972-1978. IUCN; Mohamed Kassas, 1978-1984. WWF; Monkombu Swaminathan, 1984-1990. IPPF; Shridath Ramphal, 1990-1994. IUCN; Jay Hair, 1994-1996. Tim Wright; Yolanda Kakabadse, 1996-present. Parks Canada.



Fifty years ago the Union's founders gathered on the steps of the Chateau of Fontainebleau to officially commemorate the official establishment of the International Union for the Protection of Nature. UNESCO/Inez Forbes

A personalized tour

This issue of *World Conservation* marks the Union's 50th anniversary. The celebrations in Fontainebleau will be looking ahead, imagining what the world will be like in the future and discussing what we can do about it.

So we decided to take a look back, at the roots of IUCN in the "parks and species movements" of mid-century, and at the Union's subsequent evolution and those who guided it. Instead of recounting facts, we sought impressions, thoughts and images. We seek to offer a feel for life in IUCN, by having people relate some of their most vivid memories, including moments of hardship and hilarity. Instead of imposing our own style and format, we wanted a presentation of, by, and for the members of the IUCN family, in their own words and, wherever possible, with their own photographs. It is hoped that this issue will serve as a complement to the monumental and much more comprehensive history of IUCN by Sir Martin Holdgate to be published in the coming months by Earthscan Publications Ltd. – a taste of which may be found in the summary at the centre of this edition.

We cast our net wide, asking people to tell us what difference IUCN has made in their lives, and what they remember best about the people and events of the Union's first 50 years. The following, which cannot possibly be comprehensive, is simply what we discovered in our net at the end of the process.*

Please keep in mind that memories fade, and are often faulty. Yet impressions can be more "truthful" than facts, and are certainly less elusive.

The Editor

* In the end we received so many responses that we had to do some severe editing – for which we apologize to those voluntary contributors who put so much effort into the exercise. Your full contributions will be presented in an anniversary album and exhibit at Fontainebleau.

You may find a short history, list of major players, and a chronology of events in the "background" section of the Anniversary website at: www.iucn.org/50/

Please note:
a description and
index of all
contributors to
this issue can be
found on page 55.

FOUNDATION

Vislon, tenacity, and the roots of Union

By Pierre Goeldlin

Faced with the growth in industrialized countries of the idea that the Earth is at the service of humanity – a view used to legitimize the pillaging of our planet – the scientific world began to mobilize during the 19th century. By the start of this century the idea of nature protection was spreading gradually among sensitive and educated people. National non-governmental organizations were being created, and, here and there, governmental agencies for the protection of nature. The need to coordinate these efforts at supranational level was increasingly recognized, thanks to our visionary predecessors, the great pioneer naturalists.

IUCN represented something like the third attempt to set up a global organization of its kind. So I think we owe something of a debt of gratitude to those hardy souls who persevered in 1946 during a somewhat bizarre trip around the national reserves and National Park of Switzerland. We must bow with respect to those who gathered at a hotel in Brunnen just short of a year later to set in motion the steps that brought all those people to Fontainebleau on 30 September 1948 to set up the earliest incarnation of IUCN.

In fact, we need to go back to 1910 to trace the deepest organizational roots of IUCN. Paul Sarasin – who with his cousin Fritz had founded the Swiss League for the Protection of Nature – first proposed a Committee "charged to establish an international or world Commission for the protection of nature throughout the world, from the North Pole to the South Pole, and covering both the continents and the seas."

From that point obstacle after obstacle blocked the dream's fulfilment. The work of a Consultative Commission was

suspended with the First World War. Paul Sarasin died in 1929. Pieter Gerbrand van Tienhoven, a major Dutch conservationist, set up an organization in Brussels in 1928 which was to become International Office for the Protection of Nature in 1935. After it moved to Amsterdam in 1940, its activities were again severely restricted by World War II.

Finally, with the end of hostilities, a successor of Paul Sarasin at the head of the Swiss League, Dr Charles Bernard, and League Secretary Johann Büttikofer, organized the famous tour of Swiss nature reserves, bracketed by sessions in Basel and Brunnen to discuss the future development of international collaboration for the protection of nature.

I could say the rest is history, but history never progresses in a straight line. The following pages record some of those meandering paths of IUCN's early years, when so much depended on so few individuals.

Pierre Goeldlin is a Swiss ecologist, agronomist and entomologist whose association with IUCN dates from 1975. He has served as a Councillor representing the Swiss Confederation and Canton of Vaud (1975-93), a member of the Bureau, and Acting Director General (1982). In 1988 he was named a Member of Honour of IUCN for his service to conservation.

Paul Sarasin's dreams of a world commission for the protection of nature was finally realized with the creation of IUPN. He is pictured (standing) in the Swiss National Park. Pro Natura



PAUL SARASIN

Paul Sarasin, the great Swiss pioneer... was able to create in his own country a genuine movement in favour of the protection of natural resources and amenities and was the founder of the Swiss National Park. A far-sighted scientist, he soon realised the uselessness of scattered effort, and saw how urgent it was to concentrate this by achieving the international agreement to unify the various existing laws and coordinate the widespread national measures taken to preserve fauna and flora menaced by man's so-called civilization.

– from a foreword to the Fontainebleau proceedings
Charles Bernard

My dilemmas with IUCN

By Max Nicholson

What difference has IUCN made in my life? As a human being now in his mid-90s, who at the age of 44 was already caught up in the creation of IUCN, I thought I should be able to give some kind of answer to such a simple question.

Born in the country beneath hills and near the sea in Ireland, but in a purely English family, I first came to England as a young stranger to its unfamiliar environment. I was constantly on the move, and my frustrated need to belong was eventually satisfied by an attachment to birds, which mercifully stayed with me wherever I went. While I duly learnt at school about human affairs and thoughts, my close bird companions, with their quicker reactions and in some ways superior capacities, gave me a different perspective.

This detachment was reinforced at the age of 16, when my father's post with the British Army of the Rhine led me to live for a period amid a German culture whose art, opera and forays into the countryside threw new light on what could, and could not, be taken for granted. Going up late to Oxford, my habits as a loner gave place to busy teamwork devoted to exploration of the tropical rainforest and Arctic tundra, to bird censuses and founding of national institutions. World War II plunged me into global operations and shipping strategy, after which I rejoined the civil service as head of the Deputy Prime Minister's office.

Then, suddenly I found myself in July 1946 being led round Switzerland among a strange group of foreigners full of baffling talk about an International Union for the Protection of Nature. Having had only a few months of experience with the subject, in a country where I was kept busy on the vast tasks of post-war reconstruction, I had some difficulty in getting my bearings.

My contact with the leading ecologists Tansley and Elton taught me that the fast-unfolding knowledge of the bio-



In 1963 Max Nicholson received the first John C. Phillips Memorial Medal, IUCN's highest award, from President Jean Baer. IUCN

sphere and its living systems called for vigorous operational development of the field of nature conservation. As my new colleagues and I strove to design the first government agency for modern nature conservation, I found their approach too traditionally based on natural history, too full of missionary zeal, and too oblivious to the new ecological disciplines and to the political and managerial problems that had to be confronted in an integrated way.

My old friend Julian Huxley was about to become the first head of the office of UNESCO, which he not only involved in science but single-handedly committed to the adoption and launch of IUPN. Without him I am sure the Union would never have come into effective existence, nor discovered its only possible role. While he was soon replaced at UNESCO, I was busy launching the UK Nature Conservancy,

and added support of IUCN (then IUPN) to my tasks there. Despite numerous invitations, however, I never undertook any official post, preferring to help wherever possible behind the scenes.

I soon realized that, while we needed to learn what to conserve and how to conserve it, our practical success depended on massive and generous public voluntary support in addition to that from government. I therefore joined in a movement to complement IUCN with a much more strongly supported and funded twin, which emerged under my chairship in 1961 as the World Wildlife Fund. Although at first it progressed as intended, its twinship proved a more difficult goal to realize, and the two bodies eventually diverged.

So I am brought back to the Editor's question, "What difference has IUCN made in your life?" Even if spelt out to convey my struggle to reconcile a deep

concern for nature with my compulsion to bring to its aid my gifts and opportunities in the world of human affairs and management, the answer is still superficial.

Whatever I have performed as a thinker and leader, as a manager and persuader, is founded in my place as one of those human beings who became imprinted (as ethologists say) at an early age with the magic and challenge of the natural biosphere.

However we each choose to face this challenge, we become better human beings as a result. Richly as we profit from human culture and human fellowship, our evolutionary stem arises from our fellow animals and plants.

IUCN is a way to broaden that fellowship.

Max Nicholson was one of the 'founding fathers' of IUCN. In recent years he has pursued conservation as Chair of the UK contribution to the World Conservation Strategy and has extended it to human affairs as the current President of the New Renaissance Group. Still quite busy, he has also brought his ornithology to a climax by initiating and sharing in editing the massive nine-volume Oxford standard work on Birds of the Western Palearctic.

Key dates: founding years

1946: Informal consultations on the Protection of Nature are held in Basel and Brunnen.

1947: International Conference for the Protection of Nature, in Brunnen, establishes a provisional international union for the protection of nature.

1948: The Fontainebleau Conference officially creates IUPN.

1949: The First International Technical Conference on the Protection of Nature, held in Lake Success within the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Natural Resources, establishes major elements of the Union's Programme.

1955: IUPN and the International Office for the Protection of Nature (IOPN) merge.

1956: IUPN becomes IUCN.

Fifty-one years of IUCN

By Richard Fitter

I was present at the conception rather than the birth of IUCN. In my capacity as secretary of the Wild Life Conservation Special Committee (whose report later led to the creation of the UK Nature Conservancy), I took part in the tour of Switzerland in July 1946, during which it was agreed to launch IUPN.

The people on this tour represented several European countries but were mostly British. Very few of them were to play any formal part in IUPN once it had been launched. The exception was Max Nicholson, who as a British civil servant had to act behind the scenes. Nor were they leading figures in their countries' conservation movements, except for our Swiss hosts, Max Nicholson and P. G. van Tienhoven. They were mostly people who happened to be available to accept the Swiss invitation. Nevertheless, the first international move towards creating IUCN took place at an inn at Zerne in the Swiss Engadine, a year before the Brunnen Conference.

Apart from attending the 1951 technical meeting at the Hague, I did not catch up with IUPN again until the Edinburgh General Assembly in 1956, after which I attended every GA up to Costa Rica in 1988.

At the Warsaw/Cracow GA in 1960, I was concerned with the formation of the Law Commission, being drafted by Max Nicholson to help Wolfgang Burhenne in preparing the necessary paper work to put to the Council. This was an important GA because it agreed to move the Headquarters from Brussels – capital of a colonial country – to Morges in neutral Switzerland. I especially remember the mid-conference tour, when we sailed down the rapids of the Dunajec river in quite small boats to be welcomed on the Czech side by loudspeakers blaring out Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony.

In 1969 in New Delhi I remember how difficult it proved to persuade people that the tiger was endangered. In 1972 at Banff I remember being able to



Left to right, IUCN President Dr M. S. Swaminathan, Maisie and Richard Fitter, and Gren Lucas, Chair of SSC. The Fitters had just been made Members of Honour of SSC at the Costa Rica General Assembly (1988). Drake McHugh

overrule the platform and persuade the GA to take whale conservation seriously. My chief memory of the 1975 General Assembly at Zaire was again of the mid-conference tour, when we travelled in an exceedingly cold troop-carrying aircraft (my wife was kindly offered a warm woolly by the prescient Mme Harroy) but still arrived before the more comfortable aircraft, which had had to land twice *en route*.

On the way to Ashkhabad in 1978 I well remember the chagrin of the American delegates, waiting in an hours-long delay at the airport, at seeing the British, who had booked through Intourist, trooping off to a civilized meal, while they had to make do with the airport lounge café. At Moscow airport again, at the end of that meeting, I saw the North Korean delegates physically attack the sole South Korean delegate!

The 1966 Lucerne General Assembly was especially close to my heart, because it was there that the Red Data Books really went public, with the Mammal volume edited by Noel Simon.

Those are some of the events I remember best. It would take too long to talk about the people I have known in IUCN, since I knew most of the leading figures. I will just mention two who stand out especially: Hal Coolidge I first remember at Nairobi in 1963, typically bustling along followed by a trail of acolytes.

And of course there was the oft-quoted Col Jack Vincent, Executive Officer of the SSC from the late 1960s to the mid-70s, with his constant cry of "Yes, but what do we d-o DO?"

Richard Fitter is a prolific natural history writer, especially of field guides. His works include *The Penitent Butchers* (Collins, 1978), a history of the first 75 years of the Fauna Preservation Society (an IUCN member), and *Wildlife for Man* (Collins, 1986), part-edited and part-written for the SSC. He was a member of SSC from 1963 onwards, and latterly served as Chair of its Steering Committee (until 1988).



The Union's first logo, 1954-77.



From top: reading room housing the original van Tienhoven library and archives in the International Office for the Protection of Nature in Brussels (founded in 1935); the library at "Les Uttins" in Morges (1960); a meeting in the new library, inaugurated at HQ in 1992, Ambassador Boddens-Hosang and Sir Martin Holdgate with the portrait of van Tienhoven. IUCN

P. G. VAN TIENHOVEN

Pieter van Tienhoven (1875-1953) was a man with a mission in life: establishing an international nature conservation organization. Formally trained as a biologist and lawyer, van Tienhoven had been actively involved in international protection of birds and numerous other international nature conservation issues at the turn of the century and maintained the pressure for such an organization throughout the 1920s and 1930s. At Fontainebleau, van Tienhoven was nominated honorary Member of IUPN. He can honestly be called one of the first pioneers for international cooperation in nature conservation. Van Tienhoven's legacy lives on not only in the library he donated to IUCN, but also in IUCN's objectives to safeguard our natural heritage through international collaboration.

Joanna Boddens-Hosang

I remember...

By Miriam Rothschild

On my way to the conference at Fontainebleau I crossed the channel in a violent rainstorm and landed at Calais. Although the war was well and truly over, the town was still flat. It looked like a moon-scape except for a solitary inn, standing like a forlorn surrealist dream amidst the sea of concrete rubble. Calais had first been bombed by the Germans and subsequently by the British Air Force. Reconstruction had not begun.

At Fontainebleau, in beaming autumn sunshine, I walked towards the Galerie des Colonnes, a building set aside for the conference. Alongside the path was a row of conventional flowerbeds planted with dahlias and *Gloxinia*, ablaze with bright colours. The contrast between the concrete chaos of Calais and sunny, smiling Fontainebleau filled one with strange, conflicting emotions of doubt and optimism. I required a little encouragement since I had originally been excited at the thought of the rebirth of a plan for international conservation but had found no corresponding enthusiasm in England. Before our first conference at Brunnen, I had tried in vain to persuade various scientific organizations to send representatives to the meeting. They were clearly uninterested. Even the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves (SPNR), whom I represented, appeared indifferent. Cyril Diver, the first Director General of the Nature Conservancy, was frank. "For me," he said, "conservation stops at the channel." There was also a rather pathetic feeling among the British contingent that, despite the many years that had elapsed since the Berne conference (at which Charles Rothschild represented the UK Government in 1913), they had not had time to "get their national nature conservation straightened out" and could not yet contemplate a government-sponsored, grandiose international organization. It is interesting, however, that at the Berne Confer-



Hon. Miriam Rothschild and friends.

ence Rothschild had urged the delegates to press for the protection of the Arctic fauna, but this apparently was not raised by IUCN until the technical conference arranged in Copenhagen 40 years later.

Henry Maurice, appointed a Vice President of the first Executive Board, was an English representative at both Brunnen and Fontainebleau who disregarded the bickering politicians arguing about the future location of our headquarters, and talked of the major threats to the world's fauna and flora. I learned a lot from him, and we found a subject of mutual *angst* in the inexorable waste of surface water in the UK! Maurice courageously ignored the fact he was mortally ill. "My doctors say I will recover," he remarked, "I choose to believe them."

Among the throng at the reception I recognised Roger Heim, subsequently President of the IUPN and IUCN, undoubtedly one of the most remarkable men of his day. He was director of the Natural History Museum in Paris at the time of the fall of France in World War II. Being a Jew, he was arrested by the Germans and sent to the Buchenwald death camp. He was one of the very few survivors. After his release Heim went straight back to his desk at the museum. Someone asked him a question about Buchenwald; he replied "Death was our only friend."

Despite the sheer horror of his experience, Roger Heim still retained his old intuitive skill as a field naturalist and his infectious enthusiasm for the natural world – especially for mushrooms and their chemical secrets. I wondered what he thought of the duties of the energetic, lively Miss [Eleen] Sam (assistant to Julian Huxley) who claimed it had taken her "a day of hard talking" to smooth over one of the squabbles between rival enthusiasts!

George Brewer and William Vogt, impressive American delegates, not only thought internationally but were idealistic and optimistic. Talking to them one felt the future of the rhinoceros and the skylark depended on energetic visionaries, not reasonable men who discussed the basic question of our meagre resources. Like the poet we must listen to "the silver chain of sound".

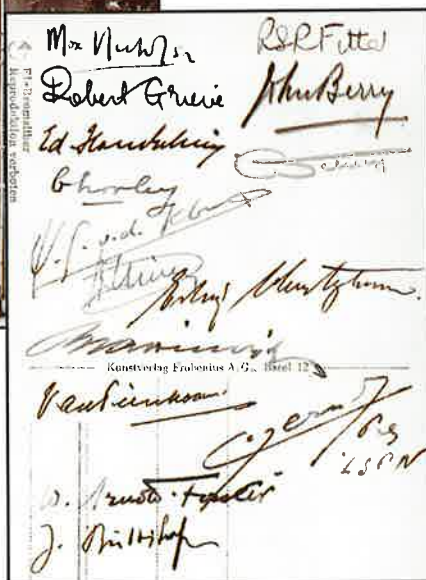
Surprisingly I left France in a sanguine mood. Julian Huxley, in his opening address, had put into words what the 150 delegates present all felt in their bones – the love and fascination of life other than our own, which must be protected. Maybe the necessary flow of energy would come from the New World?

Despite the unmarked graves of Calais and the dark shadow of the Holocaust – yes, there had been something magical about the Conference at Fontainebleau.

Miriam Rothschild, daughter of the Hon. Charles Rothschild, is a Fellow of the Royal Society and recipient of the Victorian Medal of Honour. She has published over 300 scientific papers and twelve books specializing in the study of fleas, their histology, the mechanism of their jump and dependence for reproduction on their hosts' sex hormones. During the last ten years, Miriam Rothschild has concentrated on conservation, in particular the cultivation of the native flora of the UK.



After their 1946 tour of the Swiss National Park, members of the expedition had lunch in the Hotel Storchen in Schönenwerd where they signed the postcard, marking the birth of the idea of IUPN.



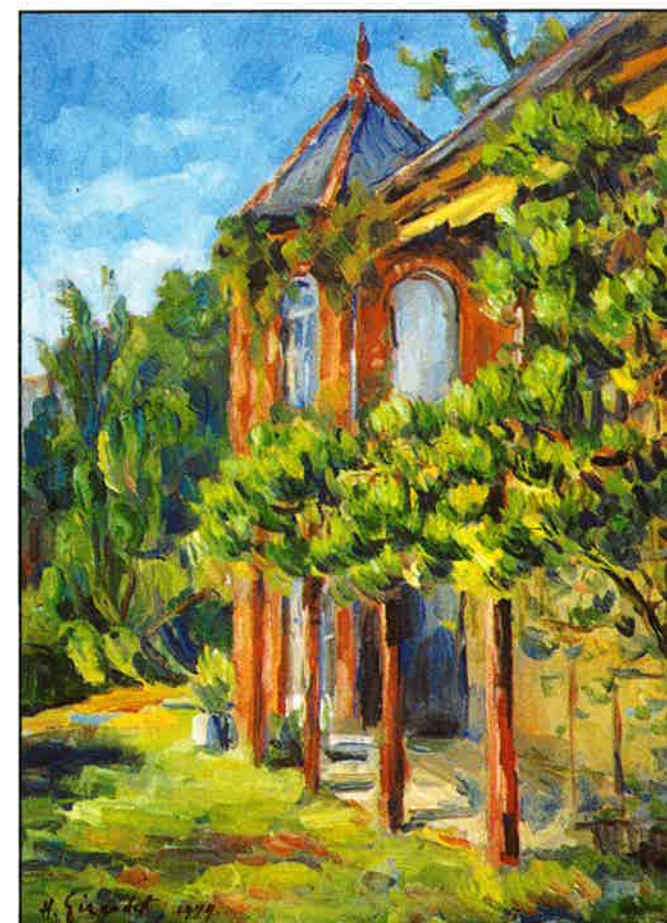
The Brussels-based International Office for the Protection of Nature (IOPN) was created by Pieter van Tienhoven in 1935. Address: 9, rue d'Egmont. IOPN



Left : IOPN documentation section, managed by Mme T. Grain and Mlle L. Johanknegt. IOPN
Below: IOPN reading room. IOPN



Left: In 1961 IUCN headquarters transferred from Brussels to the villa "Les Uttings" in Morges, Switzerland. IUCN Above: in 1980 IUCN and WWF moved to the World Conservation Centre in Gland. WWF-Canon



In Morges, some of the staff overflow was housed in the lovely villa "Floréal," painted by Herbert Girardet, then Head of Personnel. IUCN/Nikki Meith (courtesy of Anette Herforth)



Above: IUCN at last got a spacious Headquarters building in 1992. It was inaugurated by (below, left to right) IUCN President Sir Shridath Ramphal; René Felber, President of the Swiss Confederation; and State Councillor Jacques Martin, among others. IUCN/Nikki Meith



The new building faces a field of varying crops, but has its own protected area in the form of a 'natural garden'. IUCN/Jim Thorsell

Key dates: HQ sites

1935: International Office for Protection of Nature is established in Brussels.

1960: The Operations Intelligence Centre is created at the IUCN Headquarters in Brussels.

1961: April, IUCN headquarters is transferred from Brussels to the villa "Les Uttins" in Morges, Switzerland.

1975: IUCN moves part of its staff from Les Uttins to the villa "Floréal".

1980: The World Conservation Centre is formally opened in Gland, Switzerland, by HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, newly elected President of WWF

1992: IUCN staff move into the new Headquarters in Gland, formally opened on 3 November by the President of the Swiss Confederation, René Felber.

Partnership

By Michel Batisse

Cooperation between IUCN and UNESCO is alive and well. So that the question today is how it may develop in the uncertain future that all international organizations are facing. Everybody claims concern for biodiversity and supports sustainable development but we can see that in reality, irreversible pressures on land, waters and forests keep mounting and there is little change in previous wasteful practices of natural resources use.

Biodiversity is under threat everywhere. Its conservation has to rely upon a variety of local and global measures. It will nowhere succeed if it is not accepted by all stakeholders concerned, accommodating in particular the legitimate claims of local peoples. This implies major efforts in environmental education and in ensuring a fair share of benefits. It will not succeed if it is not integrated within a coherent approach to ecosystem management. This requires political will and institutional changes for effective regional planning.

In this context, it is clear that all relevant organizations, including IUCN and UNESCO, must strengthen and pool their efforts. IUCN should see to it that its basic mission of mobilizing the community of conservation managers and scientists is maintained in the foreground. UNESCO should promote environmental education and research vigorously and develop further a fully functional Biosphere Reserve Network.

SIR JULIAN HUXLEY

The ties between IUCN and UNESCO are as old as the Union itself. Soon after World War II, when UNESCO was still very young, its first Director General Julian Huxley – who had already been active in wildlife conservation in the United Kingdom – was indeed well prepared to revive Paul Sarasin's pioneer efforts toward the creation of an international commission for nature protection. His personal commitment, throughout a rather complicated to-and-fro negotiation, involving a number of strong-minded people from various countries, eventually led to the founding of the new body in Fontainebleau, under the joint auspices of UNESCO and the French Government.

Michel Batisse



September 1968: six scientists from six countries met at UNESCO House in Paris to observe the 20th anniversary of the founding of IUCN. Left to right: Professor Reino Kalliola (Finland); H. Flon (France); IUCN President Dr Harold J. Coolidge (USA); Dr F. Fraser Darling (UK); Johann Goudwaard (Netherlands); and Professor J. P. Harroy (Belgium), former IUCN Secretary-General and Chair of WCPA. UNESCO

Much has been achieved in the last fifty years and we seem to be on the right track. But neither UNESCO nor IUCN, nor indeed anyone else has an other 50 years ahead to succeed in conserving our biological resources and life-supporting systems. We have to move faster. We have to act strongly.

Michel Batisse is Senior Environmental Adviser at UNESCO and President of the Mediterranean Blue Plan. He was Assistant Director-General (Science) at UNESCO until 1984. He is a recipient of IUCN's highest award, the John C. Phillips Memorial Medal (1998), and a member of WCPA.

Key dates: UNESCO

1948: IUPN is founded in Fontainebleau, under the joint auspices of UNESCO and the French Government.

1950: Survival Service Committee is established aided by a grant from UNESCO.

1954: Joint UNESCO/IUCN mission goes to Galápagos.

1959 Charles Darwin Foundation is created in Brussels, under the joint auspices of IUCN and UNESCO.

1964: The Darwin Station is founded on one of the Galápagos Islands.

1972: Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage is adopted. IUCN helps draw up the World Heritage List.

1979: 'Parks' magazine is initiated by CNPPA with UNESCO support.

1983: UNESCO's First International Biosphere Reserves Congress is held in Byelorussia; IUCN contributes a critical analysis of the status of the world's Biosphere Reserves.

1996: IUCN and UNESCO's World Heritage Centre sign a Memorandum of Understanding to consolidate and expand their working relationship.



In the late fifties, UNESCO began to mobilize external funds for concrete field operations for which the Union was the appropriate scientific adviser. Two examples are the early missions to Galápagos and Ethiopia.

Sudden insight

By Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt

"...I had by January 1954 raised and observed a great variety of amphibians, reptiles and mammals, and of course was familiar with bird behaviour. But it was on Galápagos, during the first IUCN-UNESCO mission to the Islands, that I suddenly realized the profound differences in the behaviour of reptiles on the one hand and of birds and mammals on the other. It was what we call an *Aha-Erlebnis*, a sudden insight; and it initiated a train of thoughts about the origins and prospects of individual bonding and prosocial behaviours, the result of which amongst others was the book *Love and Hate* which came out in 1970 and has continued to sell since then.

The following weeks deepened my fascination with the Galápagos Islands, above and under water – the large aggregations of marine iguanas on Fernandina, the flightless cormorants and the ever-present finches of the family *Geospizidae*, which convinced Charles Darwin that species can change in the course of evolution – for me, it was like a great seminar in evolutionary history...

What are the prospects today? The situation may sound grim, but the positive achievements of the last four decades certainly surpass the negative

Clockwise from above: Life magazine photographer Alfred Eisenstaedt with sea lions; local fisherman/boatman Miguel Castro determining the sex of a giant tortoise (male); Dr Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt with exceptionally tame redfooted boobies; and (left to right) Dr Robert Bowman of UNESCO and Dr Anthony Balinsky, President of the Republic of Ecuador, with the expedition team Dr Camilo Ponce Enriquez, Dr Eibl-Eibesfeldt, Rudi Freund and Alfred Eisenstaedt.
I. Eibl-Eibesfeldt



developments. To sustain any human population, the animal and plant life on Galápagos must be preserved. The other natural resources of the Galápagos Islands are limited. There is not much fertile land for agriculture and with the modern techniques of fishing the marine resources could be rapidly depleted. It is the uniqueness of the animal and plant life which attracts the visitor. This could provide a lasting income from tourism, provided it is managed in responsible ways. The Government clearly agrees: in March 1998 the Ecuadorian Congress

passed a Special Law to promote local development and conserve biodiversity in the Islands, including ways to reduce the risk from alien invasive species."

Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt was in charge of the original IUCN/UNESCO mission to Galápagos. He was responsible for stimulating renewed interest in Galápagos conservation in the 1950s and the subsequent founding of the Charles Darwin Research Station. This text is an excerpt from "Galápagos – the past and the present", 1998 (unpublished).

Sir Julian Huxley and the Lion of Judah

By Alain Gille

In 1963 Emperor Hailé Selassie, known as the Lion of Judah, cabled a request to UNESCO for assistance in developing its national parks and reserves. The Director General of UNESCO responded by asking me, attending the 1963 Nairobi General Assembly in my twin capacity as as UNESCO's liaison officer to IUCN and Science Officer for Africa, to put together a mission immediately. Sir Julian Huxley, former Director General of UNESCO, agreed to lead the mission.

Five of us flew to Addis Ababa on 25 September 1963 and started to work. On the third day we were scheduled to be received by the Emperor in his office, after which we were invited to join him for a luncheon. But first – in a rare honour – we were to visit the Emperor's pet lion and be permitted to caress the animal.

When the moment arrived to pay homage to this national symbol, which figures prominently on Ethiopia's flag, I felt a certain apprehension. We were led to a square courtyard in the castle's interior where a large figure stretched out in the shade: the Emperor's lion, attached to a tree by an impressively thick metal chain linked to an enormous iron collar.

Sir Julian was at the head of the line of visitors. I was at the rear. Sir Julian, at the head of the group, was invited to approach the cat, a splendid 200-kg mass of muscle whose head was encircled by



Left: The mission team birdwatching at Lake Langana. Alain Gille

Below: Sir Julian Huxley and a West African Delegate at the IUCN General Assembly in Nairobi (1963). Hallé Studio



a black fringe (ah, the spoils of office!) and to pet it.

Perhaps his courage came from his years prior to joining UNESCO, when Sir Julian had been director of the London Zoo. I can still see him as he walked towards the animal with what looked like a confident gait. His pace became more tentative when, at his approach, the lion raised itself on all fours.

Sir Julian paused, but quickly suppressed his hesitation. Was he not the leader of the mission? Bravely, he extended his right arm, and gently rubbed the lion's back, from its spine towards its rear legs. But he had apparently forgotten that a lion is nothing more than an enormous cat.

In any case, transported by this attention, the animal decided to act like any feline and roll on its back so that we could rub its tummy. Unfortunately, Sir Julian was so close to the lion that he received the force of all 200 kg of leonine muscle against his legs. He staggered and threw up his arms. But with twist of his body, he managed to regain his balance, and honour was saved!

Benefiting from this lesson, we each approached in turn to caress the belly of the Emperor's favourite pet, which made no secret of its enjoyment.

Thirty-five years after, while I still feel regret that the photos I took (surreptitiously) were a failure, I am eternally grateful that the Emperor kept his lion well-fed.

Alain Gille was UNESCO Liaison Officer with IUCN (1949-65), and Director of UNESCO's Regional Office for Science and Technology for Africa. Since he retired from UNESCO he has been the Liaison Officer for IUCN of France Nature Environnement (FNE), an IUCN member.

Frank Nicholls

SIR HUGH ELLIOTT

Hugh Elliott was Secretary-General of IUCN from 1963 to 1966. Hugh had been a British civil officer in East Africa working in agriculture and early in his retirement became engaged in the Special Africa Project. He was a keen ornithologist and my keenest memories are of Hugh, binoculars to the ready, adding to his personal list of bird sightings on every occasion in the field.

Hugh edited IUCN publications for many years and was a caring editor, forgiving of his authors' foibles. He was a delightful companion with a quiet sense of humour and was always gentle with people. I never saw him angry yet he could set out his point of view firmly but without any harshness. Unfortunately his sight failed sometime before he died, cutting him off from some of his greatest pleasures.

Frank Nicholls

FRANÇOIS BOURLIÈRE

The ties between UNESCO and IUCN are well symbolized by our late and regretted friend François Bourlière, a former President of IUCN (1963-1966) and also of the International Biological Programme (IBP). François was one of those persons you always remember once you have met him. He was really a Renaissance man, being at the same time a professor in medicine who made important contributions to gerontology, and a pioneer in the natural history of mammals and in Antarctic and tropical ecology. His curiosity and knowledge extend to all subjects and his culture and talent for communication were remarkable. He disliked frivolous and costly projects, and always opted for achieving lasting and meaningful results.

Bourlière was President of the 1968 "Biosphere Conference" – the first such conference to promote, at the intergovernmental level, what we would now call sustainable development, and which gave rise to the innovative concept of Biosphere Reserves. IUCN was well-represented at that UNESCO meeting, with no fewer than 35 scientists attending as members of the IUCN delegation (including Harold Coolidge, Gerardo Budowski, Luc Hoffman, Peter Scott, Russell Train, Jean Dorst, Wolfgang Burhenne, Théodore Monod, Jean-Paul Harroy, Kai Curry-Lindahl, Lee Talbot, etc.) You can imagine that this was not an easy conference, since many participants had their pet projects. But thanks to the authority and leadership of François Bourlière, the entire IUCN delegation strongly supported the recommendation for a research programme on "Man and the Biosphere", which the Conference accepted unanimously. The programme was launched in 1970 with François again serving as the first Chair of its coordinating council.

Michel Batisse

HAROLD COOLIDGE

Hal Coolidge, IUCN's President from 1966 to 1972, was a scion of the line of US President Coolidge and a hyperactive promoter of conservation.

I remember him on regular visits to my office in Bangkok during the '60s. He would arrive unannounced, sit down, and start on a seemingly never ending stream of information about conservation work throughout the world. From his bulging, battered briefcase he would pluck one paper after another, insist that I make a photocopy for later reference and continue his monologue in a gravelly voice. Then suddenly it would be over and he would pack up and depart.

Hal worked tirelessly looking for funds and he was able to persuade the Ford Foundation to make a major grant for IUCN to set up a professional secretariat in 1970. Without his efforts IUCN might well have fallen by the wayside.

Frank Nicholls

E. J. H. BERWICK

Joe Berwick, Secretary General from 1966 to 1970, was a wonderful personality. Under the facade of a reserved British civil servant beat an admirably kind heart. His deep, unostentatious humanism was rooted in a bitter life experience during World War II, when as a young specialist in tropical agriculture in Borneo he was drawn into the whirlpool of warfare. Joe was always exceptionally warm and generous, especially towards us "Easterners".

Jan Cerovsky



François Bourlière at the Biosphere Conference. UNESCO



CNPPA/WCPA stalwarts: Kenton Miller, Hal Coolidge and Bing Lucas in 1980. Bing Lucas



Joe Berwick and friend. IUCN

CONNECTION

The Commissions are one of the factors which make IUCN special. Other international organizations have members and a secretariat. But the existence of the Commissions – worldwide networks of experts – as part of its structure and governance gives IUCN a unique potential. In fact it was the Commissions which led IUCN's networking and regionalization for many decades. While the Secretariat was still a small group nestled in the centre of Europe, providing scientific and technical advice on request, the Commissions took the message of conservation to the furthest corners of the Earth. In the realms of species survival, protected areas and environmental law especially, they have been, and remain, pre-eminent.

No park is an island

By Adrian Phillips

Protected areas have been central to the work of IUCN from the beginning. The founding of the Union was inspired, in part, by a tour of the Swiss National Park and other reserves. Jean-Paul Harroy, the Union's first Secretary-General (1948-56), was a "parks person" and later chaired the International Commission on National Parks of IUCN (1966-72) (see key dates). Other leading people in the history of IUCN, including Hal Coolidge and Kenton Miller, also came from a protected areas "stable".

Today the Commission maintains a global network of 1300 protected area experts drawn from nearly every country. In 1948 there were barely 1000 protected areas around the world; now some 30,000 places measure up to the definition of a protected area, and nearly 13,000 are large enough to be recorded in the UN list.

As the numbers have grown, many of the earlier notions have been stood on their heads. Thus, where once parks were planned *against* people, WCPA now

advocates that they be planned *with* local people. Where once the emphasis was on setting these places aside, now we look for the many connections which link protected areas to the world around. Earlier language justified the creation of parks on aesthetic grounds; we now advance scientific, economic and cultural rationales as well. Park visitors, engaged in recreation and tourism, were once seen as protected areas' principal customers; now the local community is often recognised as the key stakeholder.

JEAN-PAUL HARROY

To me the giant of IUCN, the Union's first Secretary General and a founding father of what is now the World Commission on Protected Areas, was Jean-Paul Harroy, the eminent Belgian professor who recruited me into the Commission in 1971 – an event which changed my life and continues to be a major influence 27 years later. Pictures of Jean-Paul flood through my mind. Our first meeting was when he visited Aotearoa/New Zealand in 1971. I arranged for him to meet and speak to a group of rangers from all the national parks in New Zealand by a lovely lake near Rotorua. Harroy was a very effective leader of conservation who arranged publication of what became the forerunner of the IUCN/WCMC United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas.

Bing Lucas



Jean-Paul Harroy, first IUCN Secretary-General, was later Chair of WCPA. Here he is pictured with park ranger Bob Neal in New Zealand (1971). Bing Lucas

Where previously most parks were strictly protected sites, now they are complemented by other kinds of protected areas in which people live and use resources. Formerly, each protected area was seen as a unique investment in conservation; now we seek to develop networks and systems of protected areas, planned and managed nationally and at a bioregional scale. Fifty years ago, protected areas were almost entirely a national responsibility; now they are seen as an international concern. Where once the emphasis was on terrestrial areas, marine parks are now the highest priority. CNPPA (now WCPA)

has played a central role in bringing about these shifts in perception and practice.

Fifty years of experience has taught us that protected areas cannot survive and flourish in isolation: they must be planned and managed in a wider social, economic and physical context.

A geographer and planner, Adrian Phillips has been Chair of WCPA since 1994. Before that he was Director General of the Countryside Commission (UK) for 11 years, and Programme Director at IUCN Headquarters (1978-81).



Key dates: WCPA

1958: The Athens General Assembly decides to establish a Commission on National Parks.

1960: The International Commission on National Parks is constituted at the Warsaw GA under chair Harold Coolidge (later to become the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas/CNPPA).

1962: The First World Conference on National Parks is held in Seattle, USA. A List of national parks and equivalent reserves is compiled by IUCN and published as the UN list.

1972: The Second World Conference on National Parks is held in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, USA.

1972: The World Heritage Convention is signed.

1977: A two-volume **World Directory of National Parks and other Protected Areas** is completed by CNPPA to complement the UN List.

1982: World Congress on National Parks is held in Bali, Indonesia, and connects protected areas to the development agenda of developing countries.

1992: The Fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas in Caracas, Venezuela widens the emphasis from national parks to embrace other protected area categories.

1994: Parks for Life: Action for Protected Areas in Europe is launched across 20 countries.

1994: IUCN publishes **Guidelines for Protected Area Management Categories**.

1995: The Commission publishes proposals for a Global Representative System of Marine Protected Areas.

1996: CNPPA name is changed to World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA).

1998: WCPA launches its best practice guideline series, with National System Planning for Protected Areas.



Miklos Udvardy demonstrates his concept of biogeographic provinces to CNPPA members in Garoua, Cameroon (1980). Bing Lucas

MIKLOS UDVARDY

Miklos Udvardy developed the concept of Biogeographic Provinces for IUCN which is still being applied around the world. Armed with this comparative framework structure, it was possible to assess in a rational way just how representative was the system of protected natural areas in New Zealand, and to justify to politicians the establishment of new protected areas. I recall Miklos explaining the Udvardy system in locations as far apart as Bali in Indonesia and Garoua in Cameroon, a system which still forms the basis by which IUCN compares sites nominated for World Heritage status.

Sadly, Miklos died early in IUCN's 50th anniversary year, but his work goes on. His death and correspondence from his widow, Maud, reminded me of Miklos confiding to me on one occasion that one of his biogeographic regions in Antarctica was named Maudlandia in his wife's honour, more than for the Queen Maud Range which lies in that part of the Antarctic Continent.

Bing Lucas



Left: Taking the Union to China. In 1987 and 1992 Bing Lucas took part in evaluations of China's nominations of natural sites under the World Heritage Convention. The latter visit, to Northern Sichuan, was well-covered by the Chinese press and resulted in a great deal of public exposure for IUCN. IUCN/Jim Thorsell

Below: Sir Peter Scott, as painted by his daughter Dafila in 1989.



Science: the Union's cornerstone

By Tony Mence

From its inception, IUCN has been firmly grounded in science, and in the early days that science was ecology – as we understood the term then.

In 1949, the joint IUPN-UNESCO Conference on the Protection of Nature in Lake Success focused on the role of ecological research in the conservation of natural resources, and called on the Union to establish a "Survival Service" to provide governments with reliable scientific advice on threatened species.

As a result Hal Coolidge (then a Vice-President, later President) set up the Survival Service in March 1950 with a grant from UNESCO. It flourished under the dynamic leadership of Peter Scott, who with Noel Simon launched the first Red Data Book (RDB) on endangered animals, followed by RDBs on birds by Jack Vincent of ICBP and plants by Ronald Melville of Kew Gardens.

In the following years, science remained at the heart of the Union's work, sustained by periodic IUCN-sponsored technical meetings to review the scientific aspects of conservation. Some of these coincided with General Assemblies and are now known as workshops. These meetings have stimulated both scientific interest and more widespread popular appreciation of the issues.

Science remained central even when, toward the end of the 1970s, IUCN began to change its programme emphasis from 'protectionism' toward an insistence on sound management for rational and realistic objectives. But the emphasis shifted toward consideration of whole ecosystems, and new attention was paid to the marine environment and to plant conservation (up to then rather neglected). Plant specialists world-wide provided information for cataloguing threatened species and communities of plants. The need to handle this huge amount of data led directly to the establishment in 1981 at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (UK) of a computerized data processing facility – now located in Cambridge as the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC).

While ecology has evolved from the observation and documenting of wild animals and plants to the study of their relationships and interactions, the Union's programme has come to

encompass many new fields such as economics, social science and trade issues. But its roots in the natural sciences still account for much of the authority and respect it enjoys in conservation circles, echoed in the resounding success of SSC and, subsequently, its sister Commissions. For this we can thank the many scientists who dedicated themselves to the Union in those first crucial decades.

Tony Mence joined IUCN in 1973 as Executive Officer of SSC, after which he became Senior Executive in the Director General's office. He later moved to Cambridge to head the Species Conservation Monitoring Unit (through 1982), and served the Union again in the role of rapporteur for several General Assemblies and Conferences before retiring to his home in the UK. This text was based on an unpublished manuscript, "IUCN – how it began, how it is growing up" (1981).

SSC: leading the world in species conservation

If the idea for the Union was inspired by a National Park, it was interest in species conservation which stimulated much of its growth and expansion from 1960 on. This was when the Survival Service Commission helped establish a unit at IUCN Headquarters in Brussels and began collecting its first index of threatened mammals. When two centres of conservation in the UK became involved in SSC work (the Wildfowl Trust in Slimbridge and the Royal Botanic Gardens in Kew), SSC helped the Union to accelerate its transformation from a small intimate group to a global network.

Red Data Books and the birth of conservation monitoring

By Jane Fenton

One of SSC's first major tasks, initiated by Sir Peter Scott, was the production of the Red Data Books for all threatened animals. Dr Ronald Melville first volunteered to start doing a Red Data Book for plants. He came to two or three meetings and then at one of them in his gentle way said, "I think I need some help because I am not going to live long enough to complete this task". It was then that Grenville Lucas was brought on board; the subsequent work on plants he oversaw has become one of the biggest IUCN success stories.

All the people with different specialist interests worked incredibly well together, and the production of the early Red Data Books was largely done in voluntary time. We located a deserted laboratory in a building in Cambridge which could accommodate all the workers on the Red Data books under one roof – this became the Species Conservation Monitoring Unit. Things have changed a lot since then but there is still a splendid building there and a great deal of world-wide conservation work is being achieved under its roof.

Jane Fenton has worked since 1982 for ICBP/BirdLife International, most recently fundraising for the Rare Bird Club. In 1996 she was honoured with the Order of the Golden Ark from HRH Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands.



Left: When Peter Scott considered moving SSC to Cambridge, he suggested that "we can always put portakabins on top of each other and when they get too high persuade the University to let us have a permanent building." This came to pass, but portakabins (left) eventually gave way to more elegant quarters. Jane Fenton



Below: HRH Prince Philip (third from right) helps to inaugurate the new WCMC building in 1993. WCMC

SIR PETER SCOTT

SSC was already a major force within IUCN by the late 1960s, largely because Sir Peter Scott had the art of attracting conservation-minded scientists and naturalists – people who deeply cared about the fate of the animals and plants they were studying and who were prepared to devote much of their time and resources to their cause. In those early days our meetings were not large, and if we were in a tropical country Sir Peter would suggest that we sit outside under the trees, where we would work to the sound of fluttering paper as he dipped his paintbrush into a pot of water! He was fully capable of chairing a meeting whilst painting delectable studies of birds or other animals, usually from the country in which the meeting was being held.

Countless people flocked to Slimbridge to meet Sir Peter and to discuss their concerns with wildlife in their countries. He always listened patiently and never hesitated to write a letter of support if he could. Some of these meetings were held in his swimming pool, and I well remember bobbing in the water with him and Richard Fitter.

Jane Fenton

I grew up with Peter Scott's nature series on the BBC called 'Look'. Along with David Attenborough's programmes they opened up the strange and fascinating world of nature. My interest in conservation dates back to those films. The Scotts – father and son – were legend to me.

I met Peter Scott first at an SSC meeting in Tsavo. This was my first ever trip to Africa. It seemed incredible that here I was in the middle of Kenya sitting down in the same meeting. Scott said very little. Most of the time he painted his watercolours or snatched up his binoculars to spot some bird or another.

After the meeting Ian and Oria Douglas Hamilton organized a trip to a giant bat cave on the coast. I remember entering the cave with Scott et al., peering up at thousands upon thousands of bats and scrunching cockroach-heaving dung underfoot. I can still recall that smell as though it was yesterday. But bats were obviously not Sir Peter's cup of tea. It was not long before he was snorkelling offshore with his underwater drawing pad, making exquisite sketches of the fish on the reef.

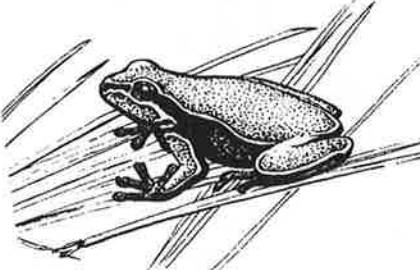
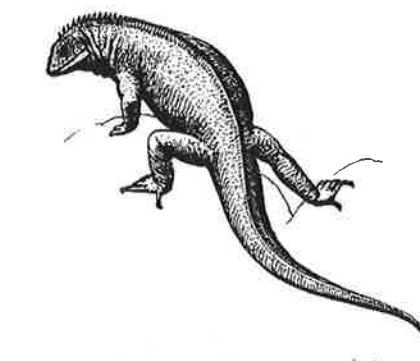
I only met the long-serving SSC Chair and founding member of WWF once more. I had been asked to write a profile of him in an edition of this very publication. In it I described him as the true Renaissance Man (writer, broadcaster, painter, naturalist, sportsman, etc.). The description stands. Without Sir Peter, his vision in helping to set up WWF, and his tremendous work for IUCN and wildfowl, the world would be a far poorer place.

Robert Lamb

I was pretty junior in SSC when I first encountered Sir Peter Scott in a meeting at University of Cambridge and raised the question of lack of attention to the insects and other invertebrates. He was gracious in his response. In later years we had some fine moments jousting over matters such as the feasibility of keeping blue whales going in a protected and managed piece of the ocean (he was on the affirmative side of this debate!).

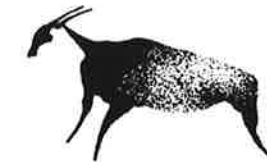
In addition to his own fine example of commitment to conservation, he charmingly engaged others. With Lady Scott's representation of this commitment after his death, the Species Survival Commission came to be the beneficiary of a \$1 million grant in Peter's memory from the Sultan of Oman. The money specifically supported development and publication of conservation action plans by the SSC specialist groups. It was an enormous boost to the activities of numerous specialist groups, and certainly made for a productive time by the SSC network during my tenure as chair.

George Rabb



Peter Scott

Peter Scott's drawings graced the pages of the IUCN Bulletin during the 1960s.



SPECIES
SURVIVAL
COMMISSION

Key dates: SSC

1949: The Survival Service Committee is established.

1954: SSC's first field mission gathers information on the status of various threatened mammalian species of the Middle East and South Asia.

1956: The Survival Service Committee becomes an approved commission (renamed Species Survival Commission in 1981).

1958: The first list of 26 endangered mammal species is published by the Survival Service.

1960: The Operations Intelligence Centre is created at the IUCN Headquarters in Brussels, in which SSC was closely involved; SSC starts a card index of data for the 34 mammalian species considered as threatened.

1962: A double volume, loose-leafed Red Data Book is issued by IUCN for internal circulation only.

1966: **The Red Data Book** (a looseleaf file of endangered species) is published.

1976: SSC establishes TRAFFIC to monitor the trade in wild plants and animals and to help implement CITES.

1978: The first **Red Data Book on Plants** is published.

1979: The Species Conservation Monitoring Unit, a data unit for SSC, is established.

1981: The Species Conservation Monitoring Unit becomes the IUCN Conservation Monitoring Centre, based in Cambridge with units in Kew, England.

1986: SSC's action planning programme starts, now containing almost 50 titles.

1987: SSC prepares the first Analyses of CITES proposals (now in its fifth edition).

1994: The new Red List Categories and Criteria are formally adopted.

1996: The **IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals** is published, using new agreed categories and criteria. The first three Plant Action Plans are published.

1998: The **IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants** is published.

QUOTABLE

Small is beautiful

The seventies and early eighties were the years of informality and "smallness" in organizations like WWF and IUCN, when people had the time to get to know one another and when bureaucracies were behind-the-scenes instead of in-your-face. The most lasting legacy of those days was the network of friends which was created, many of these people going on to make significant contributions to the work of SSC.

IUCN's Plant Advisory Group was set up to advise the Director General on plant conservation issues and to develop projects under the initial leadership of Peter Raven, Director of the Missouri Botanical Garden.

An especially memorable meeting of the PAG was held in Colombia in 1986. This included a field trip to La Planada Reserve, which is one of the world's major hot spots of plant diversity. Such trips were the glue which bonded people together, not just for that meeting, but for years afterwards. In the mad rush of life in the 1990s we may have lost something invaluable – the time to talk, the time to listen, and the time to really get to know one another.

David Given

Commission Chairs George Rabb (SSC), left, and Partha Sarathy (CEC) discuss policy at a 1991 Council meeting. IUCN/Nikki Meith

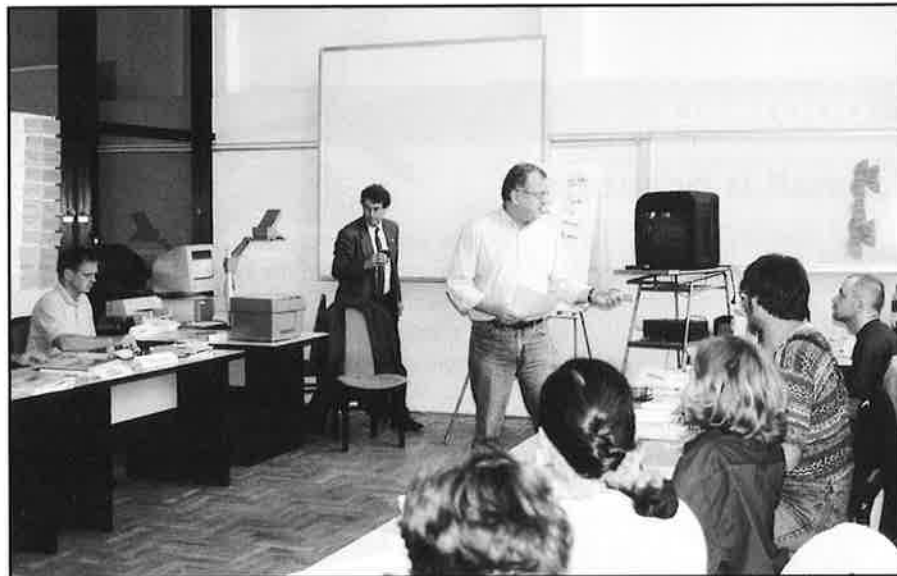


GREN LUCAS

I met Gren Lucas on my first visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. Gren told me about IUCN, and especially the Species Survival Commission. Gren was the Chair of SSC during the beginning of its transition from a relatively small, "chummy" group, with few staff and few specialist groups, to a global movement involving thousands of people and hundreds of groups.

Gren is one of the most hospitable people I ever met. Another memorable characteristic is his direct sense of humour. We invited him to our home in New Zealand one evening in 1980 when the General Assembly was held in Churchill. He walked into our living room, swept it with his eyes and proclaimed, "I know that I am in a botanist's home – they can't grow rubber plants". For the next year that plant almost died of over-attention. If some people's sensibilities are occasionally ruffled by Gren's crustiness, I have always found him an inspiration, and have personally benefited from his encouragement and his interest in my work.

David Given



CEC Chair Frits Hesselink addresses participants in a CEC-organized training programme for government and NGO members in Central Europe. IUCN/Wendy Goldstein

QUOTABLE

Putting communication into conservation

Founded in 1948, the Commission on Education and Communication is one of the Union's oldest Commissions, and since then has played a forceful role in shaping a global acceptance for environmental education.

The challenge has been an enormous one – to encourage the Union to accept that scientific information alone does not bring about a change in people's attitudes and practice toward the environment so they become more willing to take responsibility for its continued health and productivity. Communication and education are the best tools we have to bring this about, and not just in schools but throughout society – in companies, local communities, governments and social groups. The only alternative is to force laws and regulations on a reluctant populace, a solution that would be prohibitively costly and probably counter-productive.

Frits Hesselink

Heady challenge

Application of ecosystem-based management is only partly about science. It is much more about cultures and societies... We cannot wait for a perfect understanding of science of ecosystems – we will never have all the knowledge we would like as scientists. Instead scientists and professionals must assist decision-makers on the basis of best estimates, case histories and sound precautionary principles to convert the new idea of ecosystem-based management into reality. This is the heady challenge to the new CEM.

Ed Maltby

Bridging the globalization divide

The globalization process has seen the re-emergence of the old conflict between the North and the South. This involves conflicts over identities, rights, and perceptions. IUCN, as a union of northern and southern members, could help bridge this divide by emphasizing areas of common interest – for example, biodiversity, consumption, community building – and synthesizing the concerns and perspectives of different constituents.

Tariq Banuri

Key dates

CEC

1948: Commission on Education is established (renamed Commission on Education and Communication in 1990).

1953: The **Handbook of Conservation** is published, the first by a Commission.

1966: IUCN chairs education section at Biosphere Conference.

1969-73: The first executive officer for the Commission is appointed; regional committees are strengthened in NW Europe, East Europe, and established in India, North America, Central Africa; the International Youth Federation is supported.

1970: IUCN produces first internationally agreed definition of environmental education and takes its place as a leading force in the field.

1972-1997: CEC contributes to development of environmental education definition for Stockholm Conference (1972), Belgrade Charter (1975), Tbilisi (1979), Agenda 21 (1992), Thessaloniki (1997).

1994-1998: CEC focuses on capacity building for the integrated and strategic use of communication and education as tools for policy.

CEM

1954: The Copenhagen General Assembly establishes the Commission on Ecology (becomes Commission on Ecosystem Management in 1996).

1996: A Montreal Congress workshop approves 10 draft principles for EM.

1997: The Steering Committee meets for first time to set policy and workplan. A special issue of *World Conservation* is devoted to ecosystem management.

1998: The Steering Committee approves the regionalization of CEM and sets target to establish regional CEM networks.

CEESP

1969: The New Delhi General Assembly establishes Commission on Environmental Planning (later renamed the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1988, Commission on Environmental Strategy and Planning in 1990).

1996: At the Montreal Congress CESP is refocused and renamed the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy.

1997: The Commission undertakes strategic planning and networking, and sets up working groups.

Law Programme: a jewel in the crown

Since its founding in 1960, IUCN's Law Programme has been instrumental in a number of the major international environmental conventions and soft law instruments, working on stage in negotiations and conferences often after long periods behind-the-scenes. In the following pages, two key players recall some highlights.

Remembering the early days

An interview with Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin

Q: How long have you been with IUCN?

FBG: It's hard to believe, now, but I have been working with IUCN for all of my professional life. My first contact was in the early '60s, when I was a law student in Brussels. I had never heard of IUCN, and the term "environmental law" did not yet exist.

I needed a summer job, so I approached a Professor at another faculty who was looking for a student to work for the Council of Europe on legislation for "natural resources conservation" – as the field was called back then. That Professor was Jean-Paul

Harroy, the first Secretary General of IUCN (1948-1956).

After my interview, Professor Harroy told me I would probably not get the job, since I hadn't finished my studies. Fortunately, no one else wanted it, because a few weeks later he called again and offered me the post. So it began.

Q: What happened next?

FBG: I turned up in Bonn and went to the building where today the Environmental Law Centre is still housed. I was shown to my office, a bare room except for stacks of thin envelopes – one for

each country that had sent information on its natural resources legislation. I was to assemble all the material I could find and fill in the gaps. I would be working with Wolfgang Burhenne, who was chair of the IUCN Committee on Environmental Legislation.

Wolfgang was already a workaholic, as was Jean-Paul Harroy, splitting their time between their professional and volunteer work for IUCN and others. I sensed that Wolfgang did not believe that I could do the job properly. And so I set out to prove him wrong. This was the start of the IUCN Environmental Law Information System.

Q: What do you remember most about those first years?

FBG: There is one moment I wish I could forget. After I graduated from university, I was asked to become the Executive Officer of the Commission on Legislation. Soon after I started, IUCN, through Jean-Paul Harroy and Wolfgang, was asked to



Above: The first demonstration of the Environmental Law Information System was given at the June 1972 Stockholm Conference. IUCN/ELC
Right: IUCN President Hal Coolidge (left) visits Wolfgang and Françoise Burhenne at the Environmental Law Centre in 1970. IUCN/ELC



prepare a draft of the African Convention on Nature and Natural Resources for the Organization of African Unity. This was the first major work that IUCN was requested to carry out in the field of law and I was asked to take part in the negotiations for the convention in Addis Ababa. I was only 22, and this was my first trip to Africa. I had absolutely no experience of international diplomacy and no idea of how we were supposed to behave as observers to the talks. In response to a remark by an African delegate, I decided that I must intervene, and declared that his viewpoint was unacceptable to the Union!

Needless to say, this caused a diplomatic storm. Delegates immediately protested that it was not for an observer to decide what was or was not acceptable to States, and I was whisked out of the room by my mentors. Wolfgang had to return to the meeting and smooth feathers.

Q: What part of the work did you like best?

FBG Since then I have come to thoroughly enjoy negotiations and all the patient work associated with preparing international conventions. This has been the most fascinating and fulfilling aspect of my professional life – although I admit it is hard to explain the sense of excitement to non-lawyers! One of my happiest memories is our time in Washington working on the draft that established the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species. The treaty was an initiative of Wolfgang's that was approved by a resolution of the IUCN General Assembly in 1963.

First we had to convince members of the Species Survival Commission that an international agreement was the best way to tackle the problem: most of them thought national legislation was the answer. Then we had to convince governments. When the US government convened the diplomatic conference to adopt CITES, I was "provided" by IUCN to the US State Department as part of the technical secretariat. There were many nights of work. When exhaustion made us childish, we played with the mobile electric carts the State Department

provided for getting around the long corridors.

Q: Were there many obstacles?

FBG: Yes, and sometimes they were quite unexpected. For example, when working on the French text for CITES, we were actually prevented by the translator from using some of the best wording we developed! According to State Department rules, if there were three words in the English text there had to be three words in French. The governments were free to change the wording at a later stage, of course, but we had initially to abide by the rules – a difficult task.

Q: What is the key to the Law Programme's success?

FBG: Our productive team. The African Convention and CITES were just the first of the conventions developed by the Law Programme. These were followed by others including the migratory species and biodiversity conventions. All were really a product of teamwork. Cyrille de Klemm of France was often the thinker of the group.

The most recent draft developed – the

draft International Covenant on Environment and Development – is again an ambitious idea, initiated by Wolfgang in the '80s and pursued in the '90s by Parvez Hassan. Parvez is another person who managed to contribute amazingly to IUCN despite having his own law practice. He would set himself some definite goals and devote himself to achieving them. For IUCN, he took on the jobs of revising the Statutes, bringing the draft Covenant on Environment and Development to a first conclusion, and creating a training programme in Singapore for the Asian-Pacific region. He achieved all three goals, in spite of the amounts of time and personal sacrifice they required.

Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin has been Head of the IUCN Environmental Law Centre in Bonn, Germany, since its inception in 1970, before which she was IUCN Legal Officer and Executive Officer of the IUCN Committee on Legislation.

Wolfgang Burhenne was instrumental in the creation by IUCN of the Commission on Environmental Law in the early 1960s, and served as its chair for most of its existence. He was the Union's Legal Adviser in the early 1990s.

WOLFGANG AND FRANÇOISE BURHENNE

IUCN's pre-eminent position in international environmental law is due to the single-minded efforts of two people – Wolfgang and Françoise Burhenne – who have worked together for more than forty years.

They have established the IUCN Environmental Law Centre at Bonn, Germany, now staffed with a team of lawyers and researchers able to assist in developing environmental law at both country and international level.

Françoise and I worked as a team on the final drafting of many international conservation treaties – helping resolve sticking points amongst the delegations, then harmonizing the texts in English and in French. This was an exhilarating job, involving long hours working against the clock, with accuracy as a prime essential. She was a splendid colleague, wise in legal matters, meticulous in phrasing, always calm, a sheer delight to work with.

Burhenne hospitality is legendary; they have a wonderful manor house in a village above Bonn which preserves its ancient exterior but is up-to-date inside with all the latest technology mixed with beautiful old furniture.

The contribution of this superb team has enriched the Union's professional and personal life for decades, and it is hard to imagine the field of environmental law without them.

Frank Nicholls

CITES and the migratory cactus

By Peter H. Sand

If there is one international treaty for which IUCN should be recognised, it is CITES – the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The very concept of the Convention goes back to a 1963 Resolution of the General Assembly, followed by draft texts produced at the Environmental Law Centre, and culminating in a diplomatic conference in Washington, DC, in February 1973.

CITES pioneered an unprecedented new approach to cooperation between governments and non-governmental organizations. The Convention's NGO participation clause ("qualified NGOs will be admitted as observers unless one-third of the participating governments object") became a standard formula for at least five subsequent international treaties and for the 1992 Rio Conference for the first 10 years after entry into force of the Convention. IUCN provided secretariat services for CITES, under a project funding agreement with UNEP; and the IUCN Species Survival Commission (then the "Survival Service Commission", chaired by Sir Peter Scott) became the principal scientific advisory body of the treaty, mainly for preparation and revision of its endangered species lists.

Red Riding Hood's adventures

The most characteristic innovative feature of CITES, however, was its emphasis on verification of compliance with the rules of the treaty. The Secretariat was empowered to follow up on alleged infractions, and to draw them to public attention. It did so in close collaboration with a small IUCN Specialist Group called "Trade Records Analysis of Flora and Fauna in Commerce (TRAFFIC)" set up in 1976, which has since developed into a world-wide NGO network with offices in 18 countries co-sponsored by WWF. As an independent 'watchdog', the network collects information on alleged infringements of the Convention,

channeling the data to governmental CITES management authorities and eventually (via the international Secretariat) to the Conference of the Parties. In the process, NGO members have undertaken detailed investigations of illegal trade in wildlife and wildlife products, and exposed many suspicious commercial transactions, poaching and smuggling operations.

One of the most effective early ways of verifying governmental compliance with CITES was the "cactus test" – originally thought up by John Burton, one of the co-founders of TRAFFIC. All wild cactus plants (*Cactaceae spp.*) are listed on Appendix II of CITES, and hence require an export permit to travel abroad, or suitable proof that they are exempt, e.g. as artificially propagated specimens. So we went into a department store in Morges, and for five Swiss francs acquired a pretty red-topped cactus advertised as "Little Red Riding Hood". From then on, whenever a CITES staff member went on duty travel, he/she had to take the cactus along. Upon arrival at any destination airport in a CITES member country, he/she would proceed through the red entry gate – instead of the green "nothing to declare" entry – and innocently ask the customs officer whether and how this plant, purchased in Switzerland, should be declared for import.

The reactions at most airports were amazing, and often hilarious. In those days, very few customs inspectors had ever heard of CITES, let alone that their government had ratified the treaty and regularly reported that it was in full compliance with its terms. Their usual reaction was to consult the applicable code of the Customs Cooperation Council, define the cactus as non-commercial import of an ornamental plant, and wave the nosy passenger on. When the passenger insisted on a document, they would either grab some form and stamp it – we built up the most peculiar collection of so-called import documents – or



come up with highly ingenious authoritative explanations why no form was required in this particular case.

Others would proceed to a phytosanitary inspection, including the occasional fumigation – one customs officer at Copenhagen airport informed me that he was far more concerned about the earth in the flowerpot than about the cactus, and returned Little Red Riding Hood naked, without her pot. Once, when travelling to the GA in Ashkhabad with other staff members and walking through the red gate at Moscow airport (even though the others had implored me not to do it lest we all end up in a gulag), I was kept in custody for an hour until the competent official showed up and allowed me, exceptionally, to move on with the cactus, in the interest of international ecological cooperation and in order not to miss my connecting flight.

Cactus-proof customs

In each case, the cactus-bearing staff member had to write a full report on his/her experience, for transmission and follow-up action to the national CITES Management Authority concerned. As time went by, more and more customs services did become familiar with the Convention, and many international airports became cactus-proof or at least cactus-wise. Yet any customs officer who then proudly produced a copy of the treaty text, plus the appropriate form, still faced the problem of identifying the specimen before him. He/she would study the plant intently, ask for her name, enter "Little Red Riding Hood" in the column for species, perhaps declare her exempt as a household item, and mumble something about the new green bureaucracy.

One obvious risk was to hit upon the same embarrassed customs inspector twice in a row – as happened to me at my hometown airport in Munich: what that Bavarian customs officer asked me to do with that cactus (in the native Bavarian dialect) is unfit for print, and therefore could not be fully included in my report to the national CITES Management Authority.

I don't remember what eventually became of Little Red Riding Hood. She probably ended up getting confiscated somewhere, or suffered an untimely heroic death owing to excessive fumigation. But the effects of her globe-trotting performances, together with other IUCN/WWF activities for compliance control, were quite remarkable.

Some evidence of that impact was an irate letter addressed to the Director General of IUCN at the time (David Munro) from German IUCN Councillor von Hegel (head of the Federal Forest and Wildlife Department, a direct descendant of the 19th century philosopher, and an ardent big game hunter). Von Hegel formally complained about the CITES Secretariat, whose activities amounted to harassment of hard-working national management authorities and unduly singled out German treaty infringements.

The letter received a gentle acknowledgment from Dave Munro and resulted in considerable extra work for the Secretariat – for we now, of course, had to prove our independence and incorruptibility by finding and publicising at least as many CITES infringements in Germany after that letter as during the previous year – which was not easy, since the Federal Government had indeed begun to step up its enforcement efforts, and infringements actually were on the decline.

Peter H. Sand was Secretary-General of CITES from 1978 to 1981 and Assistant Director General of IUCN until 1983. He moved on to become chief of UNEP's Environmental Law Unit in Nairobi, principal Legal officer of the 1992 Rio Conference, and environmental legal adviser of the World Bank in Washington/DC. "Re-tired", he now teaches international environmental law at the University of Munich.



The famous "Little Red Riding Hood" cactus whose travels are legendary in CITES circles. IUCN/Nikki Meith

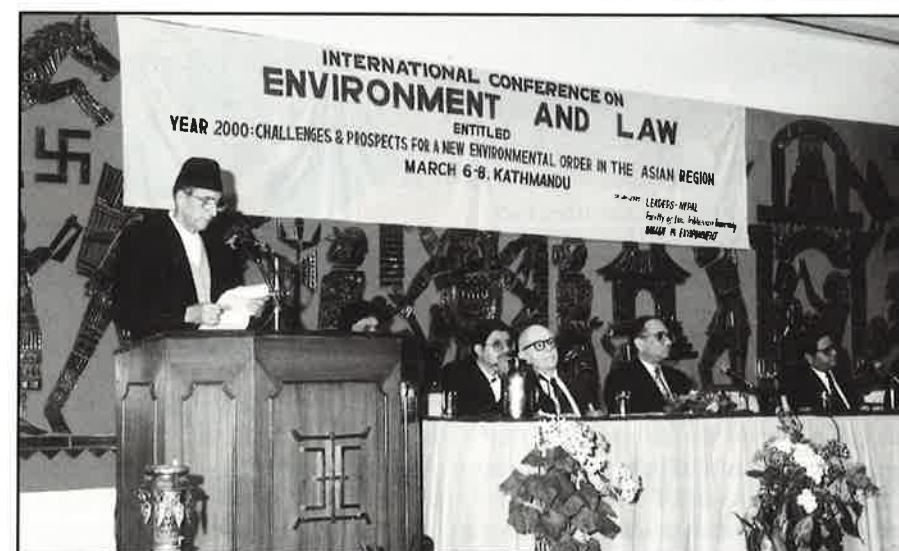


Above: The 9th Conference of the Parties to CITES in Fort Lauderdale (1995) was a proud moment for IUCN, whose team presented the Union's 'Analyses of Proposals to Amend the CITES Appendices'. These Analyses are now an indispensable tool for delegates. IUCN/Nikki Meith

Below: The IUCN/TRAFFIC delegation held regular strategy sessions during the Fort Lauderdale Conference. IUCN/Nikki Meith



At the Rio Earth Summit, ELC's Eric Howard demonstrates the Environmental Law Information System to (left to right) Felix Jankoviak of IBM, Maurice Strong, Wolfgang Burhenne and Angela Cropper. J.Seitz



The Prime Minister of Nepal inaugurates the 1992 Kathmandu Conference, supported by CEC, ELC and the Union's office in Nepal. Keynote speaker and CEL Chair Parvez Hassan is seated in the centre of the table. IUCN Nepal

WOLFGANG BURHENNE

Wolfgang Burhenne has an image and reputation that reflects the "larger than life" impression he makes on people. His size, his great knowledge and his air of authority can even alarm some people, but I discovered within an hour of meeting him that behind his assertive manner lies a wealth of reason, flexibility, and warmth.

A new entrant into the IUCN family was generally treated as a "junior senator" who was expected to learn a lot about IUCN before speaking up on the issues in the Council. Not knowing this practice, in the very first hour I took issue with what was being said, expressing my opinion on an important legal matter introduced by Wolfgang. Well, when Wolfgang spoke, he virtually commanded – such was the quality of respect that he enjoyed. So as a novice I caused quite a stir by showing the audacity to disagree with him. But I was soon vindicated when Wolfgang revised his opinion and agreed with me! This caused quite a commotion in the Council, and during the break it was explained to me that Councillors had learnt not to disagree with Wolfgang. But, in reality, that moment alone accelerated my acceptance in the IUCN family, and Wolfgang developed into one of my better lifelong friends.

Parvez Hassan

Key dates: Law programme

1963: The Committee on Legislation becomes a permanent commission (renamed Commission on Environmental Policy, Law and Administration in 1969, and Commission on Environmental Law in 1990).

1968: The African Convention for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources is adopted in Algiers.

1970: The IUCN Environmental Law Centre (ELC) is established in Bonn, Germany. ELC now maintains one of the world's largest and most comprehensive databases on environmental law and policy.

1971: The Convention on the Protection of Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat is adopted in Ramsar, Iran. Its Secretariat is entrusted to IUCN.

1973: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) is adopted in Washington following ten years of work and successive drafts from CEPLA.

1976: The Convention on the Protection of Nature in the South Pacific is adopted in Apia, Western Samoa.

1979: The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, drafted by the Environmental Law Centre for the German Government, is adopted in Bonn.

1982: The World Charter for Nature, prepared with IUCN's assistance, is adopted by the IUCN General Assembly.

1985: The ASEAN Agreement for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, prepared by CEL for ASEAN, is adopted in Kuala Lumpur.

1990: The IUCN Environmental Law Service is established within the ELC.

1992: The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is adopted in Nairobi, Kenya, after 12 years of work and preparation by the Law Programme. With the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the CBD, prepared in initial draft by ELC, is opened for signature in Rio de Janeiro on 5 June 1992.

1994: The Nature Conservation Protocol under the Convention on the Protection of the Alps, drafted by ELC for the German Government, is adopted in Bonn.

1995: The Draft International Covenant on Environment and Development, prepared by CEL, is launched.

EVOLUTION

In 1981 IUCN and the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) established a new unit at IUCN Headquarters to support implementation of the World Conservation Strategy. The Conservation for Development Centre (CDC) was an advisory service aimed at giving countries technical assistance in the formulation of national conservation strategies. When IUCN began setting up regional and country offices in the developing world under the auspices of CDC, it was the first step in the process of regionalization and decentralization of the Secretariat and Commissions.

CDC: a dream unfulfilled

By Mike Cockerell

The Conservation for Development Centre (CDC) was the inspired idea of Maurice Strong, the first Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. Maurice is one of those people who has contributed greatly to IUCN behind-the-scenes, as well as on centre stage as Chair of the Bureau.

Maurice envisioned CDC as a way to fill a gap he saw among conservation organizations: If IUCN was the scientific, policy oriented Union, he asked himself, and UNEP was the coordinator of environmental activities within the UN, and

the young WWF was the fundraiser, then where was the professional organization devoted to the development and implementation of conservation projects? Maurice proposed that IUCN should set up such an organization, and David Munro, DG at that time, launched a study. UNEP provided the consultant for the study, Adrian Phillips, who is now Chair of WCPA; WWF provided the finance; and IUCN provided the desk and chair.

The study confirmed Maurice's view and proposed the establishment of a new



Conservation for Development Programme, to be nested, at least at the start, in the IUCN Secretariat.

In most ways the CDC experiment, which was conducted throughout the 1980s, was a massive success. It brought operational assistance to many member organizations in less developed countries and started the process of decentralization of the Secretariat to the regions. It also built up operational reserves, which staved off bankruptcy for IUCN in the difficult years of the early 1980s.

Ultimately the name CDC was dropped as the centre became an integral component of IUCN. WWF and UNEP set up their own operational programmes. So, it never really fulfilled Maurice Strong's dream of an independent agency, serving IUCN and other organizations alike.

Mike Cockerell came to IUCN in 1981 as the Director of the new Conservation for Development Centre. In 1985 he took on added duties as Director of Operations, and in 1987 he became Assistant DG, Management, and remained in that role until his departure at the end of 1995. He is now Special Assistant to the Director at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK.

QUOTABLE

Support, friendship, action!

What distinguishes IUCN is its immensely broad spectrum of conservation action, from international advocacy and leadership at forums such as the Earth Summit, to practical, hands-on conservation action, working with villagers and farmers in often remote places to develop ways of utilizing natural resources wisely and to conserve biodiversity.

The growth of IUCN's regional and country offices over the past decade or so helped the Secretariat to broaden its impact and relevance to today's conservation issues. But it also created a problem: how could the Secretariat maintain coherence between its global policies and priorities and what it wanted to accomplish on-the-ground?

Visits by headquarters staff and Council members to field offices and projects helped, by introducing them to the Union's members and partners, from senior government officials to individual farmers in our project areas. In turn it gave them a glimpse of the real conservation and economic issues facing local communities and developing country officials.

Rob Malpas



Lee Talbot was instrumental in setting up the Union's early regional programmes. Before joining IUCN he was WWF Director of Conservation, here discussing the situation in Kenya with Matthew Ogotu, Kenyan Minister for Tourism and Wildlife. Peter Jackson

Key dates: regionalization

1961: The Africa Special Project culminates in the Arusha Conference, marking a change in IUCN's focus toward natural resource management.

1981: The Conservation for Development Centre, an environmental advisory service initiated by IUCN and IIED, is established at IUCN HQ to support implementation of the World Conservation Strategy.

1984: IUCN's first Regional Office, for Eastern Africa, is established in Nairobi under the auspices of the CDC. IUCN establishes its Environmental Impact Assessment Services to assist developing countries in the initiation and implementation of a proposed development procedure. The Madrid General Assembly passes a Resolution on the formation of a Sahel Programme, which four years later is CDC's largest programme.

1986: The Conference on Conservation and Development: Implementing the World Conservation Strategy is held in Ottawa. EARO represents IUCN alone.

1988: IUCN establishes a Regional Office for Meso-America in San José. Over the next decade Regional Offices are established in South America; Eastern, West, Southern and Central Africa; and Europe. An Asian Regional Directorate is set up, as well as some 20 Country Offices and a dozen project offices.

1994: The Buenos Aires GA endorses IUCN's new Strategic Plan and Mission statement, and directs the Director General to pursue regionalization.

1995: HE President Daniel arap Moi inaugurates the new IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office at the Wasaa Conservation Centre outside Nairobi.

1996: The First World Conservation Congress in Montreal adopts Revised Statutes which officially recognize IUCN's members' committees at national and regional level.

QUOTABLE

Astronauts and music-makers

As one of the longest, possibly even the longest, technical programme person working for the Union (I started in 1974), I have seen people come and go and policies and programmes be invented and re-invented. Most of these activities happen at the stratospheric level where our astronauts live and operate at HQ. Those of us on-the-ground just keep ticking away, limited in our endeavours by well-defined contracts with donors (and IUCN). The decentralization and regionalization policy is the one change that has made us sit up and pay attention to HQ happenings. Suddenly we became part of the larger IUCN organism, and needed to be more responsive to the tune of its music-makers.

Rod Salm

LEE TALBOT

When Lee Talbot came to IUCN as Director General, he inherited a Union in a difficult financial state. Council immediately instructed him to balance the budget, and he moved rapidly to do so – a thankless job since it meant greatly reducing costs and shedding around a dozen staff from the small Secretariat. So when I arrived in 1981 to head the new Conservation for Development Centre (CDC), it was a time of considerable gloom at Headquarters. In coming to IUCN, Lee simply moved downstairs for he had for several years been the director of Conservation at WWF International. Apart from his work and his young family, Lee's passion was motor racing, not as an observer but as a very successful driver and his slow gentle speech belied a very quick and agile mind. He was a very strong advocate for bringing the word development into alignment with conservation at a time when many other conservationists were resisting. As such, his support for CDC was extremely important and it was an enormous pleasure working with him through his relatively brief tenure.

Mike Cockerell

Members meet

IUCN's members now get together regularly between General Assemblies, both by country and by region.



Members in Southern Africa have been meeting since 1992. IUCN/ROSA



South America's members met for the first time in 1990. Pictured: their third meeting in Paraty, Brazil, 1992. IUCN/Mariano Gimenez Dixon



Above: The March 1998 pan-European meeting of members was actually pan-regional, including members from Western and Eastern Europe plus North and Central Asia. IUCN/Wendy Goldstein



Jordan, 1998. Regional Conservation Forum of the members of North Africa, West and Central Asia. Left to right: Dr Abdulaziz Abuzinada, Chair of the Regional Advisory Council; IUCN Director General David McDowell; IUCN Patron HM Queen Noor Al-Hussein of Jordan; Tawfiq Krishan, Jordan's Minister of Municipality, Rural Affairs and the Environment; and IUCN Vice-President Mohamed Abroughi. IUCN



Below: In 1993 members from Asia attending a meeting in New Delhi chaired by Regional Councillor Ashok Khosla (fourth from right). IUCN

The Green Web

Fifty Years Of International Conservation

A Summary by Martin Holdgate

"The Green Web" is a book within a book. It describes how IUCN has evolved as an institution over the past 50 years, and the people who made it happen. But it also looks outwards. Since 1948, environmental concerns and bodies demanding environmental action have multiplied dramatically. Governments have established Environment Departments. Environmental law has been a growth area. Conferences have become almost incessant. The evolution of IUCN has to be viewed within this context of surging greenness.

Beginnings

Although conservation has deep roots in many societies, IUCN is very much a product of European and North American culture. Concern for nature gathered momentum there in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, stimulated by romantic writers, scientific explorers, and revulsion at the cruel destruction of some wild species, especially birds. Writers and thinkers like Jean Jacques Rousseau, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau had a profound influence, the latter arguing that "in wilderness is the preservation of the world." In 1866 the German scientist Ernst Haeckel first used the term 'ecology' to describe the web that linked organisms and their surrounding environment. National societies to protect various kinds of animal began to appear in Europe in around 1820, and the world's first National Park – Yellowstone – was established by the United States Congress in 1872. In the same year the Swiss Federal Council took the first steps that led to the creation of the International Committee for Bird Preservation, or ICBP, now BirdLife International in 1922. In 1909 President Theodore Roosevelt planned an international conference in Washington DC, to address the conservation and wise use of world resources.

With his departure from office, the baton passed back to Europe. It was picked up by Paul Sarasin, who with his cousin Fritz founded the Ligue Suisse pour la Protection de la Nature (the 'Swiss League') in 1909.

His initiative led 17 nations to establish a Consultative Commission for the International Protection of Nature, constituted in 1914 but rendered inactive by war. A similar fate overtook the International Office for the Protection of Nature established by a Dutchman, Pieter van Tienhoven, in 1935. As World War II drew to its end a new American initiative glimmered briefly: President F. D. Roosevelt proposed a meeting of "the united and associated nations" for "the first step towards conservation and use of natural resources" commenting that "I am more and more convinced that conservation is a basis of permanent peace". But he died before it could happen.

After the war there were two world priorities: national reconstruction and the creation of the United Nations as a new international order to maintain peace and security. From Switzerland, the Chairman of the Swiss League, Charles Bernard, and its Secretary, Johann Büttikofer, looked outwards at the turmoil of activity, and felt that the threats to nature had redoubled. In June 1946 they argued the case for new international action with a group of British, Belgian, Dutch, Czech, French and Norwegian conservationists invited to tour Switzerland and look at the National Park and nature reserves. In 1947 they convened a larger International Conference for the Protection of Nature at Brunnen.

There were cross-currents of argument, not least with van Tienhoven who wanted to preserve the independence of his Office, but thanks especially to the influence of the first Director General of UNESCO, Dr Julian Huxley, the various strands were woven together in

ultimate harmony. The Brunnen Conference agreed on the text of a Provisional Constitution for an International Union for the Protection of Nature, gave the Swiss League a mandate to act as its agent, asked the League to send the Provisional Constitution to UNESCO for transmission to Governments and requested UNESCO to convene a congress that would adopt a definitive constitution for the Union. UNESCO and France cooperated: representatives of 23 governments, 126 national bodies and 8 international institutions met at Fontainebleau on 30 September 1948, and IUPN was born.

Some of its features persist today. The General Assembly of Members was the supreme body determining policy, and like that of the United Nations, it was originally supposed to meet every year. The Executive Board was to run things between Assembly sessions, and although dominated by Europeans and North Americans, it did include founder members from Argentina and Peru. After some argumentation (because Huxley and the British wanted an American) Charles Bernard was elected as the first President, while a Belgian, Jean-Paul Harroy became the first Secretary General. Brussels was chosen as the seat of the Secretariat. A European and African Technical Symposium debated (among other things) action by Governments to protect nature, the scientific management of wild life, the definition of National Parks and Nature Reserves, fauna conventions and international legislation. And – years ahead of its time – it called for a World Convention “as a basis for future cooperation for nature protection and to assist in developing national legislation.” Environmental law has deep roots in IUCN.

IUPN was unique as the world’s first ‘GONGO’ – Governmental and Non-Governmental Organization. It was conceived as an “international alliance of the friends of nature protection” (as Pieter van Tienhoven put it). It was a network of conservationists “who knew one another personally, who corresponded with one another, who exchanged documents and who helped one another”, to quote Jean-Paul Harroy. It drew on the values and concepts of people like John Muir, prophet of the wilderness, Gifford Pinchot, architect of sustainable resource use, Aldo Leopold, pioneer of species management, and Julian Huxley who astounded the first General Conference of UNESCO by arguing that the enjoyment of nature was part of culture, and that conservation was a scientific duty. IUCN’s dominant concern down the years has been the conservation of what we now call biological diversity, in its own right and as an essential resource for humanity.

Stage 1 Establishment

The Union that emerged from Fontainebleau was a compromise. While it was constituted as a Governmental and Non-Governmental Organization, a number of Governments had, quite deliberately, made sure that the intergovernmental element would *not* predominate, and that they were not committed to injecting money into it. The Secretary General was only employed part-time. Budgeting was almost impossible because there were no set scales of dues. In its

early years, UNESCO’s subventions were IUPN’s life-line. It also succeeded through the personal efforts of Jean-Paul Harroy – “a real bulldozer” – and his tiny, dedicated team headed by Marguerite ‘Gogo’ Caram.

The first stage of development lasted from Fontainebleau to the fifth session of the General Assembly held in Edinburgh in 1956. In that period the first flush of enthusiasm peaked, the first programmes were set in motion, the first Commissions became active, the first financial crisis shook the Union when UNESCO’s support was interrupted for a while, and the capacities and limitations of a body of IUPN’s peculiar character be-

came very evident.

The Board set Jean-Paul Harroy three main objectives. First, to make the Union known and accepted. Second, to weld the tiny embryonic nucleus of European and American naturalists already converted to conservation into a powerful, expanding, worldwide network. Third, to start promoting information, education, local action and coordinated ecological research. From the outset, the Union was a network, a facilitator, a catalyst and a synthesizer.

The first achievement was the IUPN-UNESCO Conference on the Protection of Nature, held in 1949 at Lake Success (the temporary base of the United Nations, in New York), in parallel with UNSCCUR – the UN Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Natural Resources. There was a deliberate emphasis on building nature protection on modern ecological principles, drawing on the strong representation of scientific research centres and natural history societies in IUPN. The Conference also proved that an independent and professional non-UN body, working in partnership with a UN agency such as UNESCO, could deliver results of real value. The subsequent programme had six themes: safeguarding threatened habitats and species; spreading knowledge of the art and science of nature protection; environmental education; promoting international agreements

on the protection of nature; encouraging new research; and promoting conservation by disseminating information. It is striking that so many of IUCN’s concerns today can be traced right back to the Union’s beginnings.

So can aspects of its style of working. Partnership with other bodies was important at the outset. And as early as 1950, an American Vice President, Hal Coolidge, devised the Survival Service as a voluntary network – the first of the Commissions, and fore-runner of the Species Survival Commission. By 1954 the Service was reporting on the status of several endangered species, and supporting expert symposia. Drawing on the assembled information, IUPN pressed Governments for action – and most returned favourable answers. The Union also began to issue publications, including a major volume on *The Position of Nature Protection Throughout the World*. It advanced education by working closely with UNESCO, and through establishing an Education Commission. The latter produced a *Handbook of Conservation* – the first publication attributable to a Commission – in 1953. There were technical discussions of the impact of agricultural chemicals on wildlife (years before *Silent Spring*), on the management of nature reserves and on rural landscape as a habitat for flora and fauna in densely populated countries. The dissemination of knowledge was helped by the publication, starting in January 1952, of the *IUPN Bulletin*. The 1950s also saw a first step to the south – with the holding of the third General Assembly in Caracas, Venezuela, in 1952: the first major international conservation conference to be held in the Latin America.

Stage 2 Science to the Fore

Charles Bernard was succeeded as President in 1954 by the distinguished French scientist, Roger Heim, who led a phase of increasing scientific activity. The year brought another landmark – the first IUPN field mission, by Dr Lee Talbot, to collect information on the status of various threatened mammals in the Middle East and Southern Asia. But the most dramatic event of the period was the alteration of the Union’s name to IUCN – International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources – at the General Assembly held in Edinburgh in 1956.

Ecology, species conservation, protected areas, and education remained central themes. The ecology programme took off under the leadership of a new Commission. The management of ecosystems used by people, and especially ‘rangeland’ – pasture for wild and domestic animals, or mixtures of them – gained new emphasis, and this practical approach brought

It is striking that so many of IUCN’s concerns today can be traced right back to the Union’s beginnings.

Russian scientists into the Union, especially at the Warsaw General Assembly in 1960. Another major change was the creation in 1958 of a Provisional Committee on National Parks under Hal Coolidge’s Chairmanship (it became a full Commission in 1960). Coolidge lobbied successfully at UN Headquarters for a mandate under which IUCN was requested, in 1959, to prepare and publish a UN List of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves: the first list appeared in 1961. In 1960 a Committee on Leg-

islation was formed (with Wolfgang Burhenne at its head). Another landmark was the creation in 1959 – the centenary year of *Origin of Species* – of the Charles Darwin Foundation in the Galapagos Islands following a joint UNESCO-IUCN initiative.

But the early 1960s were the Era of Africa. The Africa Special Project was set up in 1960 to convince the leaders and citizens of newly-independent African states of the importance of “conservation practices based on ecological knowledge.” It hit a high point at Arusha in 1961 when Dr Julius Nyerere gave the keynote speech later known as the Arusha Declaration and set the tone for African conservation for years to come. The ASP and the Conference were in turn the stimulus for an African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (drafted by the new IUCN Committee on Law at the request of the Organization of African Unity), and the establishment of the College of African Wildlife Management at Mweka in Tanzania, where generations of African parks directors and wardens have been trained.

As these events rolled on, the Secretariat changed. Jean-Paul Harroy was succeeded in 1955 by Tracy Philipps of the UK, and M. C. Bloemers of the Netherlands followed in 1959 – only to resign in 1960 when the General Assembly (prompted by the new Swiss President Jean Baer) decided to transfer the seat of the Union to Switzerland. Gerald Watterson came on secondment from FAO to take over in March 1961, to be followed by Sir Hugh Elliott in 1962. New office premises were secured in a former small hotel called ‘Les Uttins’ in Morges, and the Union was registered as a legal entity in Switzerland.

IUCN arrived in its new home with important action in hand, especially in Africa. New opportunities awaited it, not least in Asia. But the chronic financial problems that had plagued most of the Union’s fifteen years of existence seemed certain to cripple its response. Then, in April 1961 the Executive Board heard dramatic news. Peter Scott (a Vice President) reported plans for “a world fund-raising organization which would work in collaboration with existing bodies to bring massive financial support to the conservation movement.” They called it the *World Wildlife Fund*. Its prospectus, the Morges Manifesto,

was signed at IUCN Headquarters by Charles Bernard, Julian Huxley, and most of the senior dignitaries of the Union. The UK, American, Swiss, Dutch, German and Austrian campaigns were all up and running by February 1964.

IUCN, ICBP, the International Waterfowl Research Bureau, the Charles Darwin Foundation and the International Youth Foundation (regarded at the time as the 'junior arm' of IUCN) were beneficiaries of the first five WWF projects. From the beginning the working partnership was very close. The Secretary General of the new Fund, Fritz Vollmar, was given an office in the IUCN Headquarters building. The Coordinating Committee for the Fund was joint with IUCN and ICBP. All project proposals went to the HQ staff of the two bodies as well as to two independent referees. In 1962, WWF made its first major grants to IUCN – rescuing it from yet another financial crisis that it might not have otherwise survived.

As WWF gained momentum, IUCN had to get on with as much active conservation as it could. The agenda was still dominated by Africa (the General Assembly met in Nairobi in September 1963, and elected the great French biologist, François Bourlière, as President) but an Asian Project, directed by Lee Talbot, followed in 1965. The First World Conference on National Parks, held in Seattle in 1962, raised IUCN's profile in North America. The Survival Service Commission produced the first Red Data Books in 1962. But – strangely – IUCN as an institution made very little contribution to the International Biological Programme that began in 1964, although leading IUCN personalities like Baer and Bourlière were deeply involved, as they were in the 1968 UNESCO 'Biosphere Conference', from which the Man and Biosphere programme (MAB) and the concept of Biosphere Reserves both sprang.

Stage 3 the Union Reconstructed

Between 1965 and 1975 there were immense changes on the world environmental scene. Popular environmentalism was stimulated by widely-publicised disasters and by hard-hitting books like Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, Paul Ehrlich's *The Population Bomb* and Barry Commoner's *The Closing Circle*. New, energetic, bodies like Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace began campaigning for action. It was clear to Hal Coolidge when he assumed the Presidency in 1966 that unless IUCN could expand with the new tide of demand, events would sweep past it. He sought a major

grant from the Ford Foundation, and this permitted the appointment in 1970 of a scientist – Dr Gerardo Budowski of Venezuela – as head of a much strengthened Secretariat, with a tough administrator, Frank Nicholls of Australia as Deputy and two senior ecologists, Ray Dasmann and Duncan Poore, heading the research group. The IUCN Secretariat became a strong professional team.

UNEP recognized IUCN as the leading agency for addressing the conservation element of the global environmental agenda.

They made a substantial input to the first intergovernmental 'summit' on global environmental policy – the UN Conference on the Human Environment held at Stockholm in 1972. Stockholm was driven by its Secretary-General, a dynamic 41-year-old Canadian, Maurice Strong, who went on to head a new United Nations Environment Programme, UNEP. It also gave powerful impetus to international environmental law, and IUCN helped to draft and promote the Ramsar Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands

of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the Convention on the Conservation of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

Under Budowski, Dasmann and Nicholls, the IUCN programme placed considerable emphasis on 'Conservation for Development'. A major book *Ecological Principles for Economic Development* was written by Raymond Dasmann, John Milton and Peter Freeman. Ecological guidelines were developed for the conservation of tropical forests, mountains, arid lands, coastal regions and islands. A second edition of the UN List of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves and five volumes of the Red Data Book – for mammals, birds, amphibia and reptiles, fish and flowering plants – were published. As the Ford Foundation grant came to an end, UNEP recognized IUCN as the leading agency for addressing the conservation element of the global environmental agenda, and agreed to use it as its nature conservation arm. The Union's reputation in the developing world grew fast.

IUCN was well adapted by its structure and culture to work with bodies like the UN agencies and with Governments, but its scientific caution and the strength of its government-sector membership inhibited it from campaigning with the vigour of many of the new 'green' bodies of the 1970s. Moreover, its specialist area – nature and natural resources – was to one side of the passions that gripped them. As an organization of organizations it left its members to campaign, supporting them with information and helping them with General Assembly resolutions rather than taking up collective cudgels. These features kept it out of the public eye – and helped to make it 'the conservation world's best-kept secret'.

Stage 4 the World Conservation Strategy

The idea of a World Conservation Strategy took shape early in the period of partnership with UNEP and WWF. But before it gained momentum there was a dramatic upheaval within the Secretariat at the IUCN Twelfth General Assembly in Kinshasa, Zaire, in 1975. Gerardo Budowski and Frank Nicholls left soon afterwards, followed by Ray Dasmann, leaving Duncan Poore as Acting Director General.

IUCN was rescued from bankruptcy by WWF (at the cost of further trauma), and then by a new contract with UNEP. The latter established an Ecosystems Conservation Group to help coordinate the UNESCO, FAO, IUCN and UNEP programmes. An Extraordinary General Assembly in Geneva in 1977 agreed to replace the Executive Board by a Council with two thirds of its members representing regions which were defined on both political and biogeographical criteria. That same year, Maurice Strong joined the IUCN Council and became Chair of a newly-created Bureau, and Dr David Munro was appointed Director General.

The General Assembly in Ashkhabad in 1978 marked a seminal change in the world conservation movement. It decided to back the World Charter for Nature, to support the World Conservation Strategy and to switch IUCN's emphasis decidedly towards the needs of the Third World. That switch was aided by the election of the Union's first President from 'the south', the Egyptian botanist Mohamed Kassas. The partnership with WWF grew closer, and the two moved in 1979 to a new shared headquarters in Gland. IUCN was given responsibility for running all WWF's field projects, while WWF took over the management of the financial, personnel and administrative services on behalf of both organizations.

The World Charter for Nature, eventually adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 28 October 1982, was important as the only global statement of humanity's responsibility towards the natural world. But the World Conservation Strategy was arguably IUCN's most important single contribution in the whole of its history. Its preparation (by Robert Prescott-Allen) went through two phases, the first a consultative process largely internal to IUCN and WWF and the second involving the UN partners – and especially UNEP and FAO. The latter pushed the balance strongly towards the needs of their development constituency.

The World Charter for Nature...was important as the only global statement of humanity's responsibility towards the natural world.

The final statement speaks strongly for both conservation and development. It was the first IUCN product to achieve worldwide acclaim, not only among the nature conservationists who made up the 'inner circle', but among Governments and even in industry. According to David Munro, it "did more to put conservation on the world's agenda than any other event". Whether they acknowledged it as the source of their inspiration or not, the world environmental movement from 1980 right up to 1992 when the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development met in Rio de Janeiro, was debating the central, development-oriented, message of the WCS.

Stage 5 Uneven Expansion

The message fitted Maurice Strong's vision, and as Chairman of the Bureau he supported a 'Conservation for Development' programme which would link IUCN's expertise to the programmes of the development assistance agencies. In April 1981, Michael Cockerell was appointed to lead it – with funding from the Ford Foundation. The World Conservation Strategy also attracted new members to IUCN, including the first from China. The Union also became more deeply involved in supporting international Conventions. It backed action for conservation in Antarctica, and on desertification and tropical forests, as well as 'fire-fighting' actions in many regions.

But the ride was bumpy. Soon after Lee Talbot succeeded David Munro as Director General in 1980 a massive financial storm broke. An internal audit showed a deficit of around SFr 2 million, and the accountants warned that if this continued the organization would be dissolved under Swiss law. Heavy staff cuts and another WWF rescue package followed. The causes of the crisis were not evident, but some in IUCN blamed the joint financial services operated by WWF for not providing essential information. Recovery was slow, and it was not until January 1982 that solvency was again in sight. There were frictions, especially arising from IUCN's economic dependence on WWF. There were also confrontations between Directors General and staff. In the midst of such a period of difficulty came Lee Talbot's resignation as Director General. Kenton Miller was chosen to replace him, from 1 July 1983.

International environmental activity went on growing between 1982 and 1988. The theme of 'sustainable development' expounded in the World Conservation Strategy was seized upon, elaborated and publicised by the World Commission on Environment

and Development. IUCN resolved to prepare a new World Conservation Strategy for the 1990s, with more of a 'human face'. Traditional conservation programmes continued, with the Third World Conference on National Parks held at Bali, Indonesia, in 1982 as a highlight. By the time the General Assembly met in Madrid in 1984 and Mohamed Kassas was succeeded as President by the World-famous Indian plant geneticist, Dr Monkombu Swaminathan, the overall programme had become integrated about a central theme – 'partnership in conservation: towards a World Conservation Plan'.

The Conservation for Development Centre helped development assistance agencies to build conservation into their projects and supported developing countries with National Conservation Strategies and other actions. Its growth led inexorably towards regionalization of the IUCN Secretariat, and by 1984 there were project offices in Kenya, Zimbabwe, Senegal, Costa Rica and Pakistan. The Union began to attract support for thematic programmes on such topics as tropical forests and wetlands, and the Secretariat became more operational. As the overall programme got bigger, its balance changed and the Commissions ceased to be the dominant players – at least in expenditure terms. The membership demanded that the Union become a truly supportive network. Members' meetings and newsletters were initiated. Several Commissions set up their own regional networks. National Committees were encouraged, and the *Bulletin* became a key instrument for network-building.

By 1984 IUCN was managing some 496 projects supported by WWF – mostly in Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa. But in May 1985 WWF decided to take back responsibility for the management of its field programme, and to 'phase down' core support for IUCN. Separation became more complete when the IUCN Treasurer, Leonard Hentsch, led IUCN to withdraw from the joint financial services. Ultimately, this separation was healthy – it led, in Prince Philip's words to 'interdependence without dependence' – but it did not prevent another IUCN financial crisis in 1986 and 1987, and this raised questions of the costs of operation in Switzerland. The Netherlands State Member responded with the offer of a new, free, Headquarters: the Union's hosts made a counter-proposal and in 1988 the General Assembly confirmed the Council's decision to remain in Switzerland.

In February 1988, after a cheerful and constructive General Assembly in Costa Rica, Kenton Miller handed over as Director General to Martin Holdgate of the UK. That same year, the Fortieth anniversary of the Union was celebrated in both Switzerland and France. Growth and expansion resumed. By the time of the 18th General Assembly in Perth, Western Australia,

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from 28 November to 5 December 1990, IUCN had nearly 600 members and an annual budget of SFr 32 million. The handful of project offices had grown into a regional network. The programme had broadened to place new emphasis on 'the social sciences', including economics. In Perth, both the outgoing President, Dr Swaminathan, and his successor, Sir Shridath 'Sonny' Ramphal, emphasized the human dimension of conservation, catering for "the poor as well as the penguin." But the Assembly de-

manded a balance between sustainable development and more traditional conservation. Prince Philip, speaking as President of WWF and Patron of IUCN, called on IUCN to "stand up and champion nature".

Stage 6 Regionalization

The most remarkable feature of the period between 1990 and 1996 was the decentralization of the IUCN Secretariat, and the emergence of members' groupings as new foci of power. Whereas much of IUCN's history had been headquarters-centred, it now became truly world-centred. But in the same period IUCN made three substantial contributions to worldwide thinking about the environment. The first was the publication and launch, in 1991, of the second World Conservation Strategy entitled *Caring For the Earth*. It stressed the need for a new ethic for sustainable living, set out nine principles for a sustainable society, and listed 132 actions and 113 specific targets to be achieved by set dates. Like the WCS, it was launched in 65 countries, worldwide.

The second major contribution was the Fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas, held in Caracas, Venezuela, from 10 to 21 February 1992. It urged that parks and protected areas should not be seen as 'islands set aside from human use' but as positive assets to the communities living in and around them, and to the nations in which they were situated. Much of its re-thinking of the role of protected areas was also relevant to the third major contribution – a global campaign for the conservation of the world's biological diversity. The idea of a Convention in this area was first ventilated at Bali in 1982, and the Environmental Law Centre and the Commission on Environmental Law prepared successive draft texts, later taken into a UNEP-led intergovernmental negotiating process. In parallel, IUCN and others produced a *Global Biodiversity Strategy*, published in 1992.

These initiatives flowed into the international environmental ocean at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development – UNCED or 'Earth Summit' – held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. For

IUCN and its members, perhaps the most encouraging thing was that the area of biological diversity emerged as one of the most active of the post-Rio initiatives.

The year 1992 was also memorable because a new, purpose-built IUCN Headquarters generously given by the Union's Swiss hosts was opened by the President of the Swiss Confederation, René Felber. A Symposium on the Future of IUCN concluded that the Union must base its work on its mission and be driven by its membership. It must continue to decentralize, and link Regional Councillors, Regional and Country Secretariat offices and Commission members at country and regional level. It must strengthen the role of regional and national institutions in its governance. It should build stronger partnerships with its NGO membership, but must also reinvigorate its working links with the UN agencies, with multilateral development banks, bilateral official development agencies, the business community and the scientific community. It must greatly improve its communications and must be an effective advocate for the views of its members.

When, in January 1994, the General Assembly met again in Buenos Aires and Shridath Ramphal was succeeded as President by Dr Jay Hair of the United States, the composition of the Union had changed. Western Europe remained the region with the most members, but they now accounted for only 31% of the total of 788, and Europe and North America together for only 42%. Central and South America had the second largest regional total by 1994, with Africa third. The scale of the Union's activities had expanded further, and the budget had reached SFr 52 million. The Secretariat numbered 464, of whom 339 were based away from Headquarters, most of them in developing countries. More and more expenditure was managed from Regional and Country Offices.

History turned something of a circle when the Strategy and Mission of the Union were debated. The Mission was re-stated as "to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable." As fifty years before, it emphasised the facilitating role, and by stating the conservation of nature as the primary aim, it upheld the traditional goals of the Union. Moreover, while demanding that any use of natural resources be sustainable, the statement makes clear that there is no obligation to use all such resources. And the Strategy emphasized that regionalization and decentralization must continue, and that the membership must have a central role in determining the policies of the Union. This message rang loud and clear in the ears of David McDowell, who succeeded Martin Holdgate in April 1994.

A Council and Secretariat Task Force on Regionalization and Decentralization made it clear that the elected Councillors must have a decisive role in determining the policies of the Union. The Commissions once again emerged as important 'think fountains' (to use Mohamed Kassas' term, with its suggestions of dynamism and sparkle). A Commission Summit, led by the President set out 8 principles "for promoting partnership between the 3 pillars of IUCN – the Commissions, Members and the Secretariat".

As the years passed, the Headquarters was slimmed and by 1996 four-fifths of the 820-strong Secretariat were located in the developing world and nearly 60% of the Union's expenditure was managed by regional or country offices.

The process of growth and regionalization was evident at IUCN's biggest-ever event, the First World Conservation Congress, held in Montreal, Canada in October 1996, when over 3000 people participated in one part or another of

an extraordinarily diverse 10-day programme. It was really three Conferences linked into one – a formal business session, rendered abnormal by the devotion of two days to the approval of new Statutes, Rules of Procedure for the General Assembly, and Regulations, a massive programme of 49 Workshops, grouped in ten thematic 'streams', and a series of panel discussions on the big issues of the time. Yolanda Kakabadse, the first woman and the first Latin American to be President of the Union, was in no doubt of the challenge to the future: "to create an awareness of what we are really talking about. For we are not talking about protecting a few species or some national protected areas and reserves. We are talking about life and death".

The Balance Sheet

The World Conservation Congress was held fifty years after the post-war excursion in the Swiss Engadine discussed the need for international cooperation in conservation. What have been the strengths and weaknesses, successes and failures of global action for conservation in that period? How successful has IUCN been?

On some evaluations, the world conservation movement has failed. Greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere continue to rise. There is still too much pollution in the world, biodiversity is in decline, and precious natural resources are being squandered. But how much worse would all this have been had there been no global conservation movement? Surely very much worse.

It is but difficult to dissect the special contribution of IUCN out from the intergovernmental efforts of

UNEP, UNESCO and FAO, the Conventions and other agreements of the past fifty years, and the vast mass of projects supported by WWF, IUCN and many other conservation bodies. The world environmental movement is an interlocking whole. But I believe that IUCN has been outstanding in three broad fields.

First, by meeting a world need to bring environmental bodies – State and non-State – and the world's leading individual conservationists together to debate, pool knowledge, and cooperate. Its General Assemblies and Technical Meetings have for fifty years been the unchallenged global conservation forum, with a broad agenda, flexible discussions, and tremendous promotion of personal contact. Its voluntary networks – especially in the fields of species conservation, protected areas and environmental law – are the world's largest, most productive and most authoritative bodies in their fields. If IUCN did not exist, it would have to be invented, for this purpose at least.

Second, by developing policy. At the highest level, the Union has made an immense contribution to the basic concepts of conservation. It has synthesized new thinking in ecology, and applied it to the conservation of species and habitats and the sustainable management of natural resources. The World Conservation Strategy of 1980 was one of the seminal environmental statements of the century. *Caring for the Earth* and the Global Biodiversity Strategy – also partnership products – are documents of the first importance. At a more detailed level, well over a thousand Resolutions and Recommendations adopted in General Assembly have fed into and influenced a mass of decisions at international, regional, national and sub-national levels and greatly strengthened the hands of non-governmental conservation organizations.

Third, by developing reference works, practical methodology and legal instruments. IUCN's classification of categories of threatened species, and its Red Data Lists and Action Plans have won universal

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acceptance, and have been used by all significant conservation bodies in their own campaigns. Its classification of categories of Protected Areas, the United Nations List of National Parks and Protected Areas which it compiles, and the conclusions of the four World Congresses on Parks and Protected Areas stand as global authorities. Its many handbooks, strategies and overviews are referred to by conservationists everywhere. No other body – even in the United Nations system – can rival IUCN's record as a promoter

and drafter of new national and international conservation law.

This comes down to providing knowledge, techniques and support. And the supporting role is really the fundamental one – and what IUCN was established for. But its capacity to support – to provide value added for its members – stems from its professional credibility and authority. It has to be able to harness expert knowledge, provide penetrating analysis, define concepts, problems and priorities, provide compendia of information that practitioners of conservation can use on the ground and advocate actions in terms that carry conviction because they make sense. As David Bellamy put it in Montreal, it has been the body the world actually believes in when it comes to a decision about conservation.

The First World Conservation Congress showed IUCN on a pinnacle. Its power of convening people from many ways of life was well established. Its President and Director General had access to Heads of State and senior Ministers. Although never wealthy enough to do half what it wanted, in 1998 the budget for the total activities of the Union was over SFr 90 million, it had a worldwide Secretariat, and had made major strides in balancing north-south interests. The policies the membership wanted were in place. The direction of evolution was clear. The founding fathers, staggering from deficit to deficit, with a handful of people at their disposal, would (one hopes) have been well satisfied. But they might have been astounded, too.

This text is a summary of
The Green Web: A Union for World Conservation,
by Martin Holdgate, to be published
in December 1998 by
Earthscan Publishers Ltd, London.

The greening of glasnost

By Bing Lucas

From my many years with IUCN, the most moving moment came in November 1989, when I walked through a gap in a barbed wire fence – breaching a barrier that had once been part of the "Iron Curtain" but which would soon lie at the heart of the first East-West transfrontier park.

One November day two fax messages came to my desk in Gland – one from Budapest and one from Vienna – urging that IUCN send a small mission to advise the governments of Hungary and of Austria and Burgenland Province on the establishment of a transfrontier national park. The park was to incorporate Europe's third largest lake and its magnificent surroundings – land known to Hungarians as Fertő To and to Austrians as the Neusiedler See. Both countries wanted to make sure that their proposals met IUCN's criteria for national parks.

At that time, parts of the area on either side of the border had been recognized as having international significance,

and designated as Biosphere Reserves by UNESCO and Wetlands of International Importance by Ramsar.

Hal Eidsvik (then CNPPA Chair) and I were privileged to be part of the IUCN mission to evaluate the site. Our tour lasted several days, but my most vivid memory remains the afternoon when, from the Hungarian side, we approached and briefly crossed the barbed wire fence marking the border. Bottles of champagne appeared, somewhat miraculously, and with the Austrian and Hungarian officials who accompanied us, in the midst of one of Europe's natural wonders, we toasted the proposed park and the new and lasting friendship it symbolized.

This was a momentous time in the history of Europe, as at amazing speed the barriers that had separated Eastern and Western Europe for a generation were breached, and borders that for years had been guarded from watch-



Border between Czech Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany, 1986. Today, IUCN is working to keep such little-used border areas in Europe and elsewhere as transfrontier Peace Parks. IUCN/Jim Thorsell

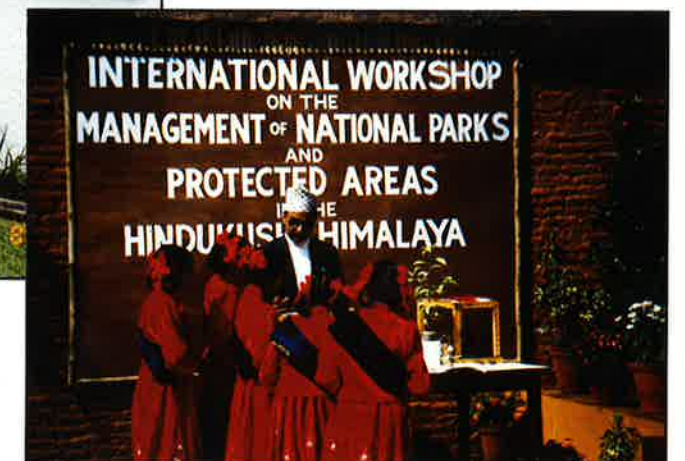
towers opened once again. Our 'transnational' champagne toast at the border – between former antagonists, between a dark past and a bright future – is a moment that Hal and I will never forget.

P. H. C. "Bing" Lucas has been a member of CNPPA/WCPA since 1971, and Chair from 1990-94. He was twice an IUCN Councilor (1978-84, 1990-94); in 1994 he received the CNPPA Packard Award and was named a Member of Honour of IUCN. Bing is currently Vice-Chair of WCPA for World Heritage.



The Union's team in Meso-America, 1990. IUCN has been working in Central America since 1985. Alberto Solar

The Commissions continue to spearhead much of the Union's work in the world. IUCN Nepal



A double anniversary

By Aban Marker Kabraji

It is difficult to pinpoint a beginning for the environmental movement in Pakistan. Does one start with independence and the laws on forestry and wildlife inherited from the British? Or from the folklore of Sassi and Punnoo, of Marvi and Omer, of the mythical *palla* and the *bhulan* (Indus dolphin)?

A consciousness of our land and its natural heritage – its mountains, deserts, waters and animals – has always pervaded Pakistan's culture. However, it is only when this consciousness translates into a realization that all is not well, and urgent action is needed to stop the mindless and wasteful destruction of nature, that an environmental consciousness catalyses into a movement.

Information is, therefore, the key to this transformation. And IUCN Pakistan's journals like *The Way Ahead* attempt to provide the tools to mobilize the movement and give it the grist to forge direction and focus.

Some of the best sources of information on Pakistan's environment before 1947 remain the British gazetteers. After that, many a Forest and Wildlife Department library will yield treasure. As one browses through these, there are three seminal authors – one American, and two English – who defined and articulated much that has formed the basis of Pakistan's subsequent environmental consciousness. George Schaller's *Stones of Silence*, for instance, tells us more about our country and what we stand to lose through ignorance and neglect of its wild places, than many a subsequent ponderous tome. Guy Mountfort's records of his missions that identified Pakistan's ecosystems are another important storehouse of knowledge. His work, and that of Schaller, laid the basis for our national parks. And then there is Tom Roberts who painstakingly cata-



Dr Javed Ahmed, Stella Jaffri, Aban Kabraji and Mohamed Rafiq of IUCN Pakistan. IUCN Pakistan

logued and gave us, through his books on mammals and birds of Pakistan, a compendium of what we stand to lose.

We have our Pakistani heroes too. The first wildlife legislation in Pakistan was produced in the province of Sindh in 1972 by W. A. Kermani, the granddaddy of conservation. Kermani's foresight and vision laid the foundations for a protected areas system and several species conservation projects, including the Marine Turtle Conservation Project. Fehmida Asrar, one of our unsung heroines heads that one – as enthusiastic 17 years later as when she started the pioneering work.

As conservation moved in Pakistan from protection to sustainable development – guided by the thinking encapsulated in the World Conservation Strategy (WCS) and the Brundtland Report – the Government of Pakistan invited IUCN to establish a presence in the country and implement with them the principles advocated by the WCS. Thus it came about that IUCN began operations in Pakistan in 1986 and worked to bring about and support the major beginnings of policy design, reform and change that started

with the creation of the Pakistan National Conservation Strategy.

Eleven years down the line one looks back with ambivalence. One can take justifiable pride in how far we have come. IUCN now has 24 member institutions in Pakistan that represent a powerful force for change and are the backbone and leadership of the environmental movement (both government and NGO) in the country. Their achievements are considerable, and the foundations laid over the past decade are sound. But the edifice

for which the foundations have been laid is still to be built. And we do it against the increasingly daunting odds of poverty, debt, demographic pressures and resource capture by vested interests.

Even as I write this in the year that Pakistan and IUCN both celebrate their Fiftieth Anniversary, the mood of the nation is sombre. We have much to be thankful for, but there is little to celebrate as one considers opportunities lost through mismanagement, opportunism and sheer greed. The environmental movement, by its very ethos, defines a new paradigm: one that takes as its basis the possibility of renewed hope in rehabilitation and regeneration, and builds on foundations of good governance, participatory planning, democratic norms, integrity and decency. These are all as much a part of sustainable development as is the nurturing of an ecosystem or the sighting of snow leopard cubs near Khaiber.

Aban Marker Kabraji has been Country Representative for IUCN Pakistan since 1988. She also currently serves as Regional Director for South & Southeast Asia. This article was adapted from *The Way Ahead*, the journal of IUCN Pakistan, now on-line at the IUCN web site (www.iucn.org), under "places".

Magnificent obsession

By Jan Cerovsky

I am person obsessed by IUCN. When IUCN was founded I was a student in high school, already deeply interested in nature study and conservation. I read about the establishment of the Union, and immediately was seized with an idea – fantastic or even absurd in relation to the time and the country I was living in – to be allowed, some time in the future, to work for this organization.

This seemingly crazy desire has been fulfilled in ways I never dared to dream. I was delegate of my organization to IUCN meetings (beginning in 1966 with the 9th General Assembly in Lucerne, Switzerland). I then became successively a Commission member and Vice-Chair, staff member at headquarters, Regional Councillor and Vice-President, Editor of a newsletter, and finally Honorary Member.

Professor Michel Maldague of Laval University in Canada, a former member of the IUCN Commission on Education, used to say, "IUCN is a unique organization. They let you work for it in your free time and for your own money." This is true. Working for IUCN requires

a great deal of sacrifice. But the results, the experience, the friends and colleagues all over the world are more than rewarding. I am indebted to the Union for the greater part of my knowledge, and for my most exciting adventures. IUCN has pervaded all my life. I am an IUCNaholic.

View from the "East"

When I started to work with IUCN, its East European Region was practically identical with the "Soviet bloc". In this regard, I remember a funny story. At an international conservation congress in Germany in the mid-1960s, specialists from Czechoslovakia and Poland were present for the first time. The German presiding expressed his particular pleasure in his opening speech at having representatives from East Europe.

After this welcome, Professor Syörinki of Finland took the floor, pulled out his very small pocket diary and pointed to its very small map of Europe. "I just found out," he said, "that I am the delegate of the easternmost country

here. So let me thank you cordially on behalf of the East Europeans."

Some people from the other regions looked at us "East Europeans" with a certain amount of curiosity, perhaps even suspicion and distrust (or was this our imagination, a sort of "inferiority complex"?). I am happy now that IUCN is finally beginning to accept us, the conservationists from the post-Communist countries, as equal partners, and to fully recognize the expertise we are able to offer. Among other international organizations involved in conservation, IUCN is perhaps the most advanced in this regard. Many people in our region, however, think of international cooperation mainly in terms of financial support. Here again it's up to us to try to mobilize our own resources more effectively.

The light side

If my years with IUCN brought many rewarding encounters and experiences, there were also some very strange and amusing ones as well.

In 1970 I was on an IUCN mission in an African country, during which I was also invited to a high-level state reception and introduced to several ministers. When I was shaking hands with the Minister of Interior, the man surprised me by saying, "Yes, I very much admire your country, Czechoslovakia, and in particular your President Josif Broz Tito". I hesitated for a moment: am I to swallow this error, or should I remind His Excellency that Tito was the President of Yugoslavia?

Behind the Minister, there stood two merry chaps, their leather coats conspicuously swollen at the armpit. Seeing my embarrassment, one of them stepped forward, patted my shoulder in a friendly way, and told me in perfect Czech with an unmistakable Prague accent: "That's all right, mate. He's a blockhead." Both the young Africans were freshly graduated from a Prague university.



At the 1996 Montreal Congress, Jan Cerovsky (right) is named a Member of Honour of IUCN by President Jay Hair on behalf of Council. IUCN/Nikki Meith

The Union's importance

The founding of IUCN was a momentous event. If it had not been founded in 1948 or since, we would have to do so now. Gerardo Budowski, my second IUCN boss and the first Director General, often said to us, "Remember, the most important thing about international organizations is the fact that they do exist. If they didn't, they would have to be established."

The founding of IUCN had special importance to those of us in Eastern Europe: during the first four decades of the Union's existence, our contacts with IUCN helped a good deal to "keep our windows open" to the wider world. Fortunately, in the last decade we have been able to open even the doors.

The opportunities, information and experience offered by IUCN or mediated through IUCN have been invaluable for

helping us "Easterners" develop our careers, our minds, our perspectives, and our concepts regarding our natural environment.

Jan Cerovsky, an IUCN Honorary Member, was a Vice-Chair of CNPPA/WCPA, a Regional Councillor for East Europe, and IUCN Vice-President (1990-1994). He was also the Union's first Education Executive Officer at Headquarters (1969-73).

Beltrán generations: nature in their veins

By Gabriela Hernandez

Recognised as one of Latin America's top scientists, author of almost 40 books and nearly 500 articles, Dr Enrique Beltrán was Mexico's first professional biologist and a veritable institution within IUCN. He died in 1994, but his son and grandson are continuing his work and making his scientific legacy known throughout the world. Together they represent three generations of Latin American heritage for science and nature.

Enrique Beltrán taught biology, philosophy and protozoology for 36 years as a professor at the Universidad Autónoma de México. Beltrán also held posts in the Secretariats of Agriculture, Education, and Health for 30 years. Enrique Beltrán, the son who was closest to his father, recalls: "His integrity was truly remarkable. This was his finest legacy, the standard of honesty he transmitted to us."

Sixteen Mexican and foreign researchers expressed their respect and admiration by giving his name to biological species they discovered. For example, *Hyla beltrani* is an amphibian, *Plasmodium beltrani* a protozoan, and *Trombicula beltrani* an arachnid.

How did he achieve so much? "My father was a harder worker than practically anyone I've ever known," explains Enrique Jr. "He used to get up every day at five o'clock in the morning, and went to bed at midnight or 1:00 a.m." Apart from this, he had an innate sense of scientific rigour, and a incisive intelligence.

Beltrán was invited to join the select founders group of IUCN in 1948 and



Environmental family: This photo from 1978 shows Dr Enrique Beltrán and his wife Trini with their sons Hector (left) and Enrique (right). IUCN

from then on was closely connected with the Union. He was Vice-President for four years (1954-1958), served as President of the Parks Commission, and in 1966 received the John C. Phillips Medal, IUCN's most prestigious award.

Economic reasons prevented Dr Enrique Beltrán from travelling to Fontainebleau to take his place at IUCN's founders' table. But 50 years later, when the Union celebrates its half-century, his son Enrique will be there at the ceremonies. Architect Enrique Beltrán will be present in his capacity as IUCN Regional Councillor for Mesoamerica and South America, the post he currently holds. But

it will also be a way of representing his father, continuing his work, and perpetuating his dreams.

The scientific heritage of the Beltráns continues to flow in the blood of yet a third generation: grandson Enrique, now 30 years age and a computer specialist, has joined IMERNAR to take charge of modernizing the institute's technical capacity.

Gabriela Hernandez Herrera is a journalist and communications adviser on environmental issues, based in Costa Rica. This article was translated from the Spanish by Leslie Simmons.

A scientific visionary

A Venezuelan-naturalized German who left UNESCO to become Director General of IUCN (1970-1976), Dr Gerardo Budowski takes pride in having helped position IUCN as the foremost scientific authority in the field of conservation. Under his directorship the organization's budget increased eight-fold and membership swelled to include eighty countries. More important, he encouraged the new global vision of conservation that emphasizes its relation to economic, political, ethical and social aspects – what today is called "sustainable development". He understood quite early that to achieve significant change it is necessary to influence decision-makers in the countries, so they come to share his deep belief that, "conservation is an instru-

ment for development. It is not just for protecting animals, it is a more efficient way of improving human welfare."

Today Dr Budowski is Director of Natural Resources at the University for Peace, an honorary or active member of three IUCN Commissions, advisor and member of honour of WWF, and professor emeritus of the Center for Research and Training in Tropical Agriculture (CATIE). He is a declared fan of ecotourism and in his future envisions serving as an expert guide for high-level scientific and technical expeditions.

Tireless, multifaceted, polemical, and a skilled strategist (he was Venezuela's chess champion for several years), he is above all a scientist. Drawing on the lessons he learned at IUCN, he advises his scientist colleagues: "be specialized, but maintain a generalist vision; take into account the social, economic and political aspects of environmental problems, but never lose your love for science."



Director General Gerardo Budowski speaking in 1972 at the Second World Conference on National Parks in Yellowstone National Park (USA). USIS



Gerardo Budowski's first scientific love was identifying trees. "Even today, when I travel, I look at trees. Identifying one is like finding a friend." IUCN

At 73 he still has a quick step, candid smile and eyes that seem to light up when he speaks of the things that inspire him: his daughters, his work, classical music, chess, and of course, his soulmates, the trees.

And he still has new thoughts to offer: "Catastrophes will help us to attain that famous sustainability," he says. "Catastrophes will make humanity react. It is not fine words or logic, but catastrophes that will change us. I want to be an instrument for achieving those changes, and I am optimistic. I believe humanity will react. I have faith, especially in young people."

Gabriela Hernandez
(translated by Leslie Simmons)

DUNCAN POORE

After Gerardo Budowski left IUCN in 1975, Duncan Poore served as Acting Director General. During this period we both attended long-running meetings of UNEP in Nairobi. Duncan is a keen observer of wildlife and its habitat, and is always happiest when he is in the field.

Each morning while in Nairobi we would rise early to watch and photograph happenings in Nairobi National Park before breakfast and the start of formal business, always a pleasant start to the day. Our excursion over a weekend to Amboseli turned into an unexpected adventure; we strayed into Tanzania but recovered without getting into trouble.

Duncan left IUCN in 1976 to become Professor of Forest Science at Oxford University, and can regularly be sighted at IUCN meetings. He has made outstanding contributions in the dynamics of plant communities and their vital role in achieving effective conservation.

Frank Nicholls

QUOTABLE

Our only hope

I have found that the greatest challenge of my job as Regional Director for Eastern Africa is to harmonize the different interests of these many partners – government agencies, donors, NGOs and local groups – while somehow accomplishing the specific aims of each project, assuring the quality of our final product, and keeping in line with the Union's global mission. This is a difficult assignment indeed.

It is hard to imagine that anything will be conserved without the active participation of all stakeholders. Pulling all of them along will inevitably be difficult and slow. It will at times present seemingly insurmountable problems to Regional Directors like myself and those who work with us. But if this is the real and perhaps only hope for the future, then it is worth the trouble for IUCN as an institution and for all of us as individuals at the coal face.

Eldad Tukahirwa

Running out of options

IUCN in Gland was still a small, cosy, somewhat self-centred organization when I joined it in January 1987. My role was to take over an expanded plants operation based at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew (UK). Being outposted at Kew had many advantages, apart from the superb location. Many alliances were forged and our efforts helped put plant conservation on the world stage.

What of the future? David McDowell admits in his preface to the special issue of **World Conservation** on plants (2/98) that the proportion of effort and resources devoted to conservation of plant life remains inadequate despite its recognized importance in terms of global ecological sustainability and economics.

I tend to share a widely held view that, once again, plants deserve a separate programme that impacts across the Union. I believe that much stronger links should be established with bodies such as FAO and IPGRI, and national and regional agencies concerned with genetic resources and agriculture, so that agroecology and the conservation of agrobiodiversity become areas of concern and effective action by IUCN. We have heard plenty of rhetoric about the impending fate of plant diversity, but we still lack a coherent strategy for tackling it. We are rapidly running out of options.



Ravanella madagascariensis.

Peter Scott.

Vernon Heywood

Finding our own way

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of IUCN, and part of what makes it unique, is that each of the Regional and Country Offices is allowed to discover its own character. Our office was created in 1994, a few years after the Union started work in South America, because of the interest of the members.

I have been very gratified by our good relations with our members – some 100 in 10 countries – and their satisfaction with us. Another satisfying aspect of my years at IUCN, so far, has been the wonderful atmosphere of teamwork at SUR – partly because we have such a good team.

Juanita Castaño

Genuine commitment

IUCN always – perhaps very properly – appears so serious in everything it does, that one adventure stands out as an exception. It involved a group of senior contributors to the deliberations of the 1961 Arusha Conference (see key dates, page 27).

My companions in the Landrover had arrived hotfoot from Arusha and we were visiting Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda. I had been warden of the Park for exactly one week, and to call me "green behind the ears" would have been a compliment! Max Nicholson, Ritchie Calder (later Lord Calder) and a third party whose name sounded like "Monsieur Bouffe" wished to see as much as possible, and I was driving them to the top of the spectacular falls. In the process I got somewhat engaged with a large group of elephants who seemed rather upset by our presence and showed it by much charging about, tearing up of bushes and an incredible cacophony of rumbling and trumpeting. 'Monsieur Bouffe' liked to photograph everything he saw, to the extent that when each new opportunity presented itself a general cry would go up, "Monsieur Bouffe en le roof!"

On this particular occasion, however, he was very much helping to maintain a low centre of gravity for our vehicle! Ritchie Calder remained very stoic, sitting bolt upright in his seat watching the elephants' display with some awe. Max Nicholson, on the other hand, held binoculars to his eyes and exclaimed, "yes, yes, a lesser chanting goshawk, I am quite certain." Indeed, the bird was cowering in the bushes even as the elephants wreaked havoc on the surrounding vegetation.

I was enormously impressed at the tremendous [and single-minded] commitment to ornithology that was being demonstrated by this senior member of IUCN.

Roger J. Wheeler

Musiti means forest

An interview with Bihini Won Wa Musiti

Q: When did you begin working with IUCN?

Bihini: I first became closely involved with the Union in 1983 when I was working for the Zaïre Institute of Nature Conservation, which is responsible for the management of protected areas of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Our white rhino was facing extinction. From a population of thousands in the 1950s it fell to 200-300 in the 1960s and by 1982 it was down to 13, because of heavy poaching. The northern white rhino is found only in our country, so the threat was serious.

IUCN and government representatives – that is, our institution – went to the President (Mobutu Sese Seko) with a plan for the rhino to be taken away from Zaïre for breeding and to ensure their survival. The answer came from the President that it would not be opportune to let these animals go abroad. But since then, conservation of the species became his concern and protection measures got his support. This came about all because of the intervention of IUCN.

Q: Was the protection effective?

Bihini: Today we have more than 30 northern white rhino. The project initiated by IUCN has to be considered a model of species conservation, both for its flexibility and for its achievements. To me it proved that IUCN was truly a global leader in conservation.

Q: Was this your first experience with the Union?

Bihini: In fact, my very first contact with IUCN came even earlier, through the Elephant Specialist Group of the Species Survival Commission. There was a proposal for the country to be allowed to sell ivory because of our large elephant population. Rowan Martin from Zimbabwe came to conduct a survey on behalf of CITES (the Convention on Interna-

tional Trade in Endangered Species). He put me in contact with the specialist group and I became co-chair. I believe the specialist groups are some of the best publicity organs of IUCN, and the Commissions bring countless numbers of people to IUCN, much more than anything that the Secretariat does.

Q: On a more personal front, how has life changed in your home village over the past 30 years with regard to conservation?

Bihini: For a long time it changed for the worse, in my view because of the impact of the market economy. Many of the people have to struggle to pay for their children to attend school. The only way people can earn money is through agriculture or fishing – hunting is no longer possible because of the reduction of species in the wild, both in numbers and diversity. Individual species were heavily poached because of the prices they could fetch. The pressures brought a great change to our culture. People started to think only of themselves and

their families. They focused on their problems instead of being concerned about the life of the community.

It was a big sociological change: the community forest had been managed for a very long time by the villagers, who planted fruit, useful trees and some vegetables there. Everyone abided by the rules governing harvest time and village custom barred people from fishing in the local wetland except once a year. All this elaborate traditional system of customs and laws was destroyed.

Q: Are things getting worse?

Bihini: No, fortunately things are beginning to change back again. The traditional chief, with support from the government, sent round a notice that Fridays are to be given over to village business. People are not supposed to go to the forest or do any similar work on Fridays. They sit in the village and deal with local issues. Now they are even talking about building a school. The district officers support the system because it is their responsibility to decide how many

QUOTABLE

Rhino rapport

In 1985 I had the unique privilege to lead a mission to Zaïre in response to a GA resolution about Rhino conservation. I was to accompany IUCN's founding Secretary General Jean-Paul Harroy and the eminent Swedish Conservationist Kai Curry-Lindahl to meet President Mobutu of Zaïre to persuade him to take better care of his rhinos. We waited for five days in our hotel whilst intermediaries liaised with the Mobutu minders at his palace. At last we were admitted to his private quarters at the palace and told to wait. Finally this epitome of all things wicked and corrupt breezed into the room in a Hawaiian style shirt – he was relatively slim, relaxed, totally unpretentious and remarkably well-informed about conservation and rhinos. We had a highly convivial discussion lasting about an hour and were served fruit juice from the President's farm. Mobutu did follow up on our discussions and the rhinos have outlived everyone who was in the room except me. But the lesson for me was the corrupting ability of absolute power – and that many of the evil dictators that we read about in the newspapers were probably people with considerable qualities and charisma when they assumed power.

Jeff Sayer

bags of peanuts, how many sacks of cassava, will be sent to market to be sold and how many will be kept for village use. They have an interest in sustainability.

Q: How has your early experience affected your work with IUCN?

Bihini: It has had a very big impact because I am very aware that any ideas I seek to put forward cannot be simply theoretical. They have to offer practical means. And when I go to a village, I learn from the people I meet, I learn from what I see with my own eyes. There are lessons to be learned, messages to be extracted, from the way people live and use their natural resources. The relationship between conservation and traditional knowledge must be encouraged. And learning by doing is the best way.

This is one reason I am glad to be involved with the Sustainable Use Initiative. Sustainability of resource use means managing people rather than resources, of course, but how can we manage people *vis à vis* resources if poverty is the overwhelming problem? Solving population issues is the golden gate to conservation. And land tenure and resource tenure are the basis for the solution.

Q: What should IUCN do in Central Africa?

Bihini: Our region provides a good example of IUCN filling a niche that no one else can fill. There is a lot of competition, even conflict, between NGOs, civil society and governments with regard to the environment. What is usually missing is an intermediary who is not involved in this competition. The Central African Forest Development Forum was set up on IUCN's initiative precisely to provide this kind of forum for states of our region. It is the sort of service which no other body can offer.

One of IUCN's newest staff members, Dr Bihini Won wa Musiti speaks nine languages. A trained vet, he studied in his home country of Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire), Belgium and India before joining IUCN's Central African Programme, based in Brazzaville, Congo, in 1995.



Villagers in Buba, Guinea-Bissau, place heavy sacks on fish to help dry them. An IUCN project to promote sustainable management of fishery resources has greatly benefited and empowered village women. IUCN/Wendy Goldstein

QUOTABLE

Guinea-Bissau: conflict over resources

On 7 June 1998 the majority of Guinea-Bissau's military joined a rebellion led by Brig. Ansumane Mané, the former Army Chief of Staff. Inside Guinea-Bissau's borders, the first reaction was incredulity. Many could not believe the gunshots heard at the start of fighting. After that, feelings were divided between fear of a regional flare-up and relative equanimity. This was certainly true of the small IUCN team and its numerous partners, who see what is at stake beyond the short-term issues of power.

The IUCN programme in Guinea-Bissau, with the support of Coopération Suisse, is trying to find ways to avert conflicts over natural resources. The approach depends essentially on flexibility. In multiplying and diversifying its activities to involve local populations, traditional systems and administrative authorities, the programme is helping Guinea society to evolve towards sound management of the coastal environment through applied research, control of access to resources, and proper commercial exploitation of natural resources.

Our route has been plainly marked: the coastal populations of Guinea-Bissau do not have much to be taught about sustainable utilization of resources. However, peoples' livelihoods are under extreme pressure as abuses of the environment accelerate, from clear-cutting of mangroves and forests to destructive harvesting of sharks and other commercial fish for export.

Each day of conflict, even if it does not bring death, costs Guinea-Bissau dear. It destroys another fragment of the country's three main assets: its natural resources, its traditional systems which have conserved those resources, and the energy by which its burgeoning democracy was expanding further and further to the benefit of the whole nation.

For the moment we hope that the war will not destroy all that has been achieved in the ten years of work to strengthen Guinea-Bissau's efforts to manage its natural resources sustainably, and that it will soon be possible to resume our efforts and to do even more.

Philippe Tous

Advocating alongside members

By Antonio M. Claparols

Many IUCN members may not realize just how important membership status is to some of us, giving us the authority and moral support we need to fight some of our region's



most forbidding environmental battles:

– in 1983 IUCN supported the effort of the Environmental Society of the Philippines (ESP) to stop the operations of the BNPP-Bataan nuclear power plant in Morong, Bataan, which lay ominously on top of an earthquake fault.

– In the same year IUCN supported ESP and local NGOs in their campaign to stop construction of the Chico River dam.

– IUCN, with the help of ESP and the Animal Welfare Institute as well as other US-based NGOs successfully lobbied for an Amendment to the Black Bass and Lacey Acts Amendment to include corals, thereby preventing their shipment from the Philippines to any port in the USA.

But the battle is far from over. A number of environmentally destructive projects have nevertheless received permission to proceed.

Today, as we tackle these issues – many of which have important regional and global implications – I am gratified to serve as an elected Regional Councillor. IUCN and ESP are linked more strongly than ever in the pursuit of the Union's mission.

It is difficult to imagine where we would be today without the Union's help, and without the strength and influence – and indeed protection – we enjoy as a result of IUCN membership.

Antonio M. Claparols is President of the Ecological Society of the Philippines, and an IUCN Regional Councillor for South and East Asia.

QUOTABLE

Riding the roller-coaster

IUCN-US is unique among the RCOs in that it was originally created in the 1980s as an NGO to promote US state membership of the Union. This was achieved in 1990, thanks in large part to Cameron Saunders, a long-term career service officer in the State Department, who continued to push the issue in Washington year after year.

The Office suffered from one major drawback, however: it was not recognized as having international status under US law and therefore did not qualify for exemptions such as US hiring practices for foreign nationals. That was remedied by special legislation enacted by Congress in 1994, thanks largely to the efforts of my predecessor Byron Swift, and confirmed by Executive order of President Clinton. I think that the Red Cross is the only similar body that has been accorded this special status.

Scott Hajost



Pierre Goeldin, Councillor for the Swiss Confederation and Canton de Vaud (left), presents former IUCN President Mohamed Kassas with the John C. Phillips Medal (1990). IUCN/Nikki Meith

MOHAMED KASSAS

My recollections of Mohamed Kassas (IUCN President, 1978-84) are of a wonderfully warm, humble, inspiring, intelligent, polite and amusing professor. He attracted great respect and affection from everyone he knew, and IUCN benefited hugely from his presence and guidance. He was able to navigate his way through the most difficult Council discussions, always with a smile on his face. His manner of chairing Council was somewhat unique and did occasionally lead to confusion – and even irritation – in that he tended to use the agenda as a rough guide rather than a rigid plan; things could change very quickly!

His one regret, as far as I know, was that IUCN refused to bring the desert into its agreed programme. While he agreed that diversity was important, he believed that the fragility of the desert biome made it equal in importance to the more diverse biomes that IUCN focused on. In fact, his farewell speech at the Madrid General Assembly inspired those of us at the Conservation for Development Centre (CDC) to launch the Sahel Programme.

Mike Cockerell

The pursuit of relevance

An interview with Delmar Blasco

Q: How has the Union changed in the last couple of decades?

DB: I first came to IUCN in 1985 to be the head of the Membership Unit. Since then the Union has become a much more multicultural and multi-disciplinary organization – and much more in touch with the 'real world'. This makes it a great deal more relevant today than it was 15 years ago.

Q: What was the Union's relationship with members at that time?

DB: In November 1984, when I was working on a short contract as a consultant with WWF International in Gland, IUCN invited me to join their team of volunteers for the Madrid General Assembly. My only specific role was to introduce a paper that we had prepared with Tom Stoel, who at that time was with the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, about how to make the Union a membership-driven institution. We presented the paper, and it stimulated some talk about involving the members more actively in the work of the Union. But that was the end of it, at least for the moment.

Q: What happened then?

DB: Before I joined the Union, the work of the membership unit was mainly administrative, collecting dues from members and keeping the membership and mailing lists up-to-date. There was little intention of making the Membership Unit a real force within the Secretariat.

There was something wrong with this. On paper and according to the Statutes, IUCN was a membership institution, and yet members had very little say in what the Union was doing. The Secretariat did whatever it thought was right and expected members to follow. For all practical purposes, the Union *was* the Secretariat. Those who didn't follow or who disagreed were considered "bad

members" and the Secretariat didn't worry much about what they thought.

Q: What did you do about it?

DB: Kenton Miller, the Director General of IUCN at that time, clearly wanted to change the situation when he hired me. Nevertheless, for the next five years I had to struggle to make the Secretariat understand and accept that the institution should be membership-driven. We had some internal discussions, and there was a special seminar in which all the staff were invited to discuss the notion. But a lot of the high-level staff at that time – with the exception of Kenton – were very sceptical, and not very happy with the idea of moving the Union in that direction.

When the Costa Rica General Assembly came round in 1987, we renewed our attempts to give power to the real stakeholders of the institution. This resulted in some minor improvements, but no real change. We went from Costa Rica to the Perth General Assembly in 1990 in more-or-less the same predicament. By now the Secretariat had changed its ideas about membership participation, but there was no real implementation of these ideas.

KENTON MILLER

The World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas held in Bali in 1982 was an outstanding success, and Kenton Miller's reputation as Chair of CNPPA stood high. He was therefore a natural choice to become Director General when Lee Talbot resigned. In his period of office between 1983 and 1988 the Conservation for Development Centre became operational, and the project offices it established in developing countries became the forerunners of the worldwide network of Regional and Country Offices that now dominate the Secretariat. In 1985, Kenton created the Headquarters Membership Unit as a focal point for the expanding membership, and a means both of supporting them and realizing their enormous untapped potential. He himself – as a fluent Spanish speaker – did much to enhance the Union's attractiveness to members in Latin America and to promote Spanish as an official language.

Martin Holdgate

Q: Was the Union starting to change in other ways?

DB: There were several other realities the Union needed to come to terms with. As the first Latin American to have a relatively important role in the Secretariat, I felt that one of these issues was cultural diversity. The staff at Headquarters at that time was heavily dominated by "Anglo-Saxon" culture in all its aspects. As a Latin American and one of the very few non Anglo-Saxons to be in a post of responsibility, I fought really hard for other cultures to have a say in what the Union was doing. I also started to establish stronger links with the Latin American membership, which at that time were very weak.

I worked with Yolanda Kakabadse, now the President of the Union, to organize the first meeting of Latin American members in Ecuador in 1987, just before the Costa Rica Assembly. It was a huge success, and I think that was the beginning of a really strong presence of Latin American members in the Union and the beginning of strong push from the members themselves to really change things. I also fought to have Spanish adopted as the third official language of the institution, a battle



IUCN President M. S. Swaminathan addresses the 1986 Conference on Conservation and Development: Implementing the World Conservation Strategy in Ottawa, Canada. His wisdom and humanity helped sensitize the Union to the problems of the developing world. IUCN

we finally won at the Perth General Assembly.

Another battle was to recognise that there were two groups of members in IUCN, the governmental membership and the non-governmental membership, and that the Union had to find a balance in obtaining, respecting, embracing, and using the views and contributions offered by each. I sensed in the Secretariat a certain disdain for the NGO cluster of members in IUCN. They were, in some respects, considered a second class of membership. I thought – and I continue to think – that NGOs have a very important contribution to make. IUCN should take full account of that contribution, and balance it with the contributions that governments can and should make.

Q: Who else, besides Kenton Miller, were the allies of change?

DB: At the end of the 1980s, IUCN had the great privilege of having Dr Swaminathan as President. He displayed a deep sensitivity that was in many ways quite uncommon in the Union at that time. To be frank, I do not think that the Union knew how to take advantage of all the wisdom that Dr Swaminathan had to

offer. But he was a great President, and very important at a moment when the Union did not have very much real sensitivity to Third World issues and towards making environment and development two sides of the same coin – in spite of the 'lip service' it paid to these matters.

A major issue during that period was how to bring conservation nearer to development concerns. I think that the Union had a painful journey towards accepting that conservation must be fully integrated into development concerns globally – that is, not only in the developing world but also with regard to the type of development that has happened and is happening in the 'North'. Though IUCN had helped launch the World Conservation Strategy, the notion of sustainable development seemed very remote from the IUCN that I found at the end of the 1980s. Dr Swaminathan played a large part in sensitizing the Union to these issues.

Q: How did things develop from there?

DB: I had the pleasure of organizing the Perth General Assembly with the Australians, and it was very successful in many aspects. But the idea of a real membership-driven Union was still not fully accepted.

When I left the Secretariat in early 1991 I felt that although I had had some success in promoting the issues that I really care about, it was not enough; some things had changed, but not sufficiently to my taste.

Maybe I left too soon. My impression is that the real turning point in the culture of the Union was the Buenos Aires General Assembly in 1994. I think it was then and there that the membership really imposed on the Union and the Secretariat the notion that IUCN should be a fully membership-driven institution, and that the real roots of the Union should be in the regions, and in the individual countries.

Q: Has that idea been realized today?

DB: I think that in spite of the mistakes that may have been committed in the period since Buenos Aires, overall the Union has moved in the right direction

and advanced in very significant and important ways. What the Union may have witnessed in the recent past has been precisely the consequences of a profound and genuine change that was long overdue.

The 50th anniversary finds the Union in a good position. It finds a Union that is much more in tune with the real world and with the real expectations and needs of this world. Institutions always have room for improvement. They have to be in a permanent state of change in order to keep up with the times.

But I think the Union has come to the very place where it has to be at this point in time. Consequently, it has a chance to make a true and significant contribution to sustainable development on this planet – possibly a better position than ever before.

Delmar Blasco is from Argentina. He served in IUCN as Head of the Membership and External Relations Unit from 1985 to 1991. Since 1995 he has been the Secretary General of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), which now has 112 member countries.

QUOTABLE

IUCN who?

In a developing country where the Union was not very well known, I began to introduce IUCN to a group of interested ladies. One of them asked:

"Where is it made? In India?"

"No, it is not made. It was born in France..." I said.

"No, no. I mean, where can I get it?" she asked.

"Get what?" I said.

"This new device," she said.

I got the point. "Madam," I said, "That is called IUCD (intra-uterine contraceptive device). What I am talking about is IUCN."

"OK," she said, and lost interest.

M. A. Partha Sarathy

General Assemblies

For most members of the IUCN family, General Assemblies are their major chance to directly influence the Union's Programme. Over the years they changed greatly, from essentially technical meetings to general conservation free-for-alls. By the most recent – the World Conservation Congress in gathering in Montreal – they had evolved into truly "world" events, where global agendas are set and long-term problems addressed.



Christchurch, 1981. Bing Lucas



IUCN's team in Perth, Western Australia, 1990. IUCN/Nikki Meith



Madrid, 1984. Imagen Fotografos



Buenos Aires, 1994. IUCN/Nikki Meith

High Noon at the Heritage Site

By Peter Hulm

My hotelkeeper said: "If I see any greenies around here, I'll take my gun to them." In the restaurant, a very loud and drunk customer wobbled up to the table and blurted out what sounded like: "You know what they're trying to do? Destroy our way of life. Over my dead body."

The reason for the brown backlash? Jim Thorsell was in town.

Jim is IUCN's World Heritage adviser, charged with evaluating natural sites proposed for the World Heritage list.

We were stopping over in one of Australia's most amazing natural environments. Off the coast, herds of up to 1000 dugongs fed on acres of seagrass, dolphins cruised inshore to be fed by human beings. Down the road were pools of blue-green algae pre-dating Earth's oxygen-dependent life forms. Beaches of tiny pink seashells ran nearly ten metres deep. Just a few hundred kilometres away was one of the world's most spectacular coral reefs, and all around we feasted our eyes on the turquoise and emerald water of the Indian Ocean.

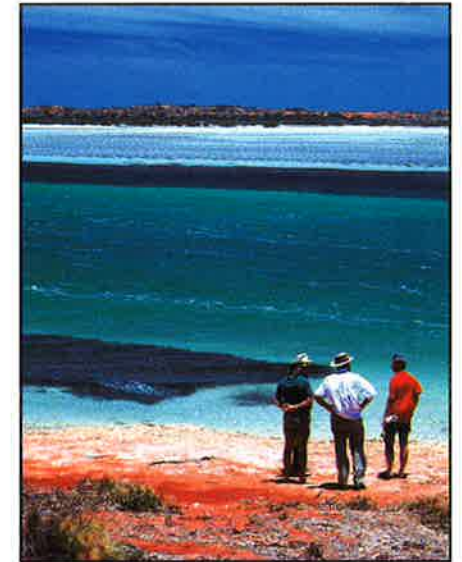
This was Shark Bay, north of Perth, Western Australia, a treasure trove of coastal marine life and home to some of Australia's most endangered mammals. By chance, we arrived in 1990 at the same time as Jim, IUCN's scientific adviser to

the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO (the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), had turned up at the town of Denham on an inspection tour to decide whether to recommend that Shark Bay should become a World Heritage Site.

It was a good way to learn that conservation is a passionate subject for people on both sides of the fence, and that when you debate the environment, you may think facts are all that count, but truth has nothing to do with it – unless you can communicate the relevance of your findings. For the truth is that Denham depends on tourism to survive, but is already suffering from overload.

The Perth General Assembly a few days later couldn't have been a greater contrast: Australian demonstrators who felt IUCN wasn't green enough gathered with their banners outside the conference hall. But the 'wild greenies' proved as Parliamentarily savvy as any of their suited opponents, and won respect for their willingness and ability to use democratic techniques.

Peter Hulm went to Perth on behalf of the Population and Development Programme of IUCN, and shared production credits on 'Caring for the Earth'.



Australia's own natural wonders were very much on the agenda at the Perth General Assembly. Shark Bay (above), one of the excursion sites, demonstrated on-the-ground some of the controversies that erupted in the Conference hall. IUCN/Jim Thorsell

QUOTABLE

Antarctic action

IUCN has been involved in Antarctica as far back as 1960, when the Warsaw GA passed a resolution urging that protected areas be established there. Nearly every Assembly since then has passed a resolution on Antarctica.

The culmination of all these efforts came in 1991 when the then Director General, Sir Martin Holdgate – a longtime "Antarctophile" – led the preparation of "A Strategy for Antarctic Conservation". This landmark document was provided to the Antarctic Treaty Consultative meeting and remains today the most comprehensive source on what is needed to conserve the frozen continent.

The Antarctic Protocol finally came into force at the beginning of this year, and now IUCN and other groups are working to make sure it is implemented.

Jim Thorsell



Left: "Ecotourists" visit Cape Hallett, Antarctica. The Antarctic Conservation Strategy contains a large section on tourism management. IUCN/Jim Thorsell

QUOTABLE

Costa Rica: affirming a human right

Among General Assemblies, that of Costa Rica in 1988 looms large in my mind. It was a milestone primarily because of its emphasis on two long-neglected issues in conservation: economics and population. Members were invited to look at these two issues in the context of the World Conservation Strategy, the 1980 document that changed the course of conservation.

The WCS was a survival plan for humanity, with a simple message: we must not destroy the natural resources on which life immediately depends, leaving behind a legacy of destitution and cyclical poverty for future generations. Its central objective – sustainable utilization of nature's resources – is analogous to maintaining one's capital reserves while spending the interest.

The WCS was perhaps IUCN's crowning achievement. Together with its successor Caring for the Earth, it demonstrated the growing awareness in the conservation community that environmental issues are "people" issues. Today it remains a strong and vigorous instrument, and should be appreciated for what it is: a social and political document affirming an essential human right, the right to survive. As Costa Rican President Oscar Arias put it, "We have no authority whatsoever to deprive our fellow men of the right to live."

Gunavant M. Oza



The WCS and its successor, Caring for the Earth, are considered by many the Union's crowning achievements. IUCN

Resolutions: ready, set, fight!

By George Greene

The General Assembly of IUCN has over the years been a fairly staid affair, although the Montreal Congress provided a measure of excitement as a public event. The elections of IUCN officers and the various mandatory decisions which are taken by IUCN members do provide the necessary programme and budget guidance essential to the governance of IUCN, but they are usually not very dramatic. What does stand out is the resolutions process, for the emotion as well as the heartache that it evokes.

I have witnessed and participated in the resolutions process as an IUCN member, volunteer and Secretariat member. I also had the honour and grief of chairing the Resolutions Committee at the Buenos Aires General Assembly and can vouch for the trials and tribulations that members, Secretariat and volunteers go through in ensuring that IUCN produces a valuable set of policy directions.

Resolutions are essential to the functioning of the Union. However, at the same time, they can be a huge source of dissension. They can be an effective

means for the governmental and non-governmental houses of IUCN to reach common ground and influence international and national conservation policy. Or they can lead to sharp divisions, or what is worse – an opting out by one or other of IUCN's governing houses.

I remember in Buenos Aires having to take long but hurried walks before each session on resolutions to steel myself for the sometimes raucous behaviour and often strong views expressed from the floor by members in dealing with resolutions.

Let's hope that with a streamlined process, one which has broader support from members – some of whom are now saying that the resolutions process is out of hand – we can regain not only the vigour but the import of IUCN resolutions when they are raised on the international stage.

George Greene is Assistant Director General of IUCN. An environmental engineer, he was previously Director General of Policy Development at the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

QUOTABLE

Grab the moment....

Conceived as the restoration of an entire Central American tropical dry forest ecosystem, and a new kind of user-friendly and society-friendly tropical wildland administration, the Area de Conservación Guanacaste (ACG) in northwestern Costa Rica evolved out of the seeds planted by the classic national parks (Parque Nacional Santa Rosa and Parque Nacional Rincón de la Vieja) and forest reserves (Orosi Forest Reserve).

Because the 1988 IUCN General Assembly was held in Costa Rica, it had some unexpected and profound local consequences that led to the endowment of the ACG. By bringing together the world's conservationists to discuss global problems, it gave ACG staff a chance to lay out their work and dreams to the Swedish Government. And today, the 131,000 ha ACG has a \$12 million management endowment, 119 professional staff, most of its land acquisition bills paid, and minimal infrastructure, and very peaceful neighbours.

Without the IUCN meeting, would this have happened? Maybe, but more likely, maybe not.

Dan Janzen

QUOTABLE

Waltzing with Bannikov

The IUCN General Assembly in Ashkhabad, USSR (1978) was a memorable one for SSC. Professor A. G. Bannikov organized the Assembly and produced a magnificent book on the threatened animals of the USSR to mark this occasion. An IUCN Vice President, he was an influential figure in conservation, greatly ahead of his time in terms of "glasnost" and relationships with the new Russia of today. We were splendidly entertained with official opera and ballet and unofficially with the local opera house, which put on a different opera every night for 10p a seat. Professor Bannikov whirled me around the dance floor at the closing ceremony, which must have been impressive as IUCN staff apparently still talk about it.

Jane Fenton

Discovering the Union

Looking at IUCN through NGO eyes, I was not aware of the complex reality of the organization. I saw it as a rather simple collection of members. But over the years, particularly my recent five as a Councillor, I began to see it as a hydra-headed being. As soon as one head become clearly visible, another appears just behind it.

Perhaps my greatest revelation came at my first General Assembly, when the many layers and dimensions of IUCN were revealed through the range and diversity of issues being discussed, the amazing richness of the discourse, the infinite hair-splitting, the thoroughly upsetting politics. I saw how an apparently simple solid object like an elephant's tusk can symbolize many different things to many different people.

It has been a journey of continual discovery.

Khawar Mumtaz



Indira Gandhi was closely involved in the launch of Operation Tiger. WWF-India

Of pandas, tigers and IUCN in India

By Samar Singh

Most people in conservation know that IUCN and WWF have enjoyed a long history together, including a period of about twenty years when they shared a joint headquarters in Switzerland. What is not so well known is the role IUCN played in the creation of WWF-India, coinciding with the launch of a campaign for tiger protection that eventually led to India's Project Tiger.

The key figures in this respect were Dr Karan Singh, then Union Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation and Chairman of the Indian Board for Wildlife, and K. S. Sankhala, who later became the first Director of Project Tiger. Both spearheaded the campaign for saving the tiger at the Tenth IUCN General Assembly in New Delhi in 1969. Earlier, Dr Karan Singh had persuaded the Government of India, led by Indira Gandhi, to declare the Tiger as the National Animal and then to place a ban on the export of tiger skins. K. S. Sankhala presented the IUCN Assembly with a detailed paper titled 'The Vanishing Indian Tiger'. This received wholehearted support and the Assembly passed unanimously a resolution recommending (1) a moratorium on

the killing of tigers pending research into population trends, (2) that tourism be shifted from commercial hunting to tiger-watching in national parks and sanctuaries, and (3) that legal protections be better enforced.

Acting on this resolution, which really represented the force of the world conservation community at that time, Indira Gandhi's Government imposed a moratorium on the killing of tigers in the country and took a series of other steps which started the Project Tiger in India. Needless to add that IUCN and WWF played an active role in moving this process forward, and WWF committed considerable financial support to the initiative.

Samar Singh is Secretary General of the World Wide Fund for Nature-India (WWF-India). He has served as Chair of the CITES Standing Committee (1981-1985), Vice-Chair of CNPPA for the Indo-Malayan Realm (1981-1989), and IUCN Regional Councilor for East Asia (1981-86). A recipient of the Order of the Golden Ark, he is the author of *Conserving India's Natural Heritage*, (1987).

REFLECTION

We invited contributors to tell us what IUCN means to them, how it has changed their lives, and what they remember most fondly from their years of association with the Union.

A time to remember

By Sir Martin Holdgate

Did IUCN change my life, the Editor asks? Did I change IUCN? What was the funniest or most embarrassing or most memorable event in my time of association with the Union?

IUCN certainly changed my life – indeed our lives, for it was the first job I had had in which Lizzie could really share, and she loved the family feeling that was so evident in Gland (even when parts of the family were squabbling).

I had known IUCN for a long time. In 1966, as Deputy Director of the UK Nature Conservancy, I attended the General Assembly in Lucerne (bringing a letter from Max Nicholson that confirmed British State Membership). I knew Hal Coolidge, Jean Baer and François Bourlière, partly because I was also very much involved in the International Biological Programme in which the two latter figured prominently. Hugh Elliott and Frank Fraser Darling were old friends. But I was never deeply involved in IUCN affairs until one day by the pool at the Norfolk Hotel in Nairobi in May 1987.

Rapid recruitment

It was during the Governing Council of UNEP, and I was there as Head of the UK Delegation. Wolfgang Burhenne took me aside during one of the interminable rounds of evening parties and receptions. "Kenton Miller is leaving IUCN,"



Sir Martin Holdgate addresses the General Assembly in Perth, Western Australia. IUCN

he said. "Would you be interested in becoming Director General?"

It fitted with family and career and we sent a cautious message of interest. Embarrassing Moment Number 1 soon followed. A telegramme arrived in the

UK Department of the Environment congratulating me on my appointment. Signed [IUCN President] Swaminathan. I hadn't told anyone in the Department I was even considering changing jobs. We hadn't been to Gland to see what we would be letting ourselves in for. Swift footwork followed, and we came.

Getting to know you...

The GA in Costa Rica was our first real exposure. Politics began on the 'plane, where Raymond Junod of the Canton de Vaud expressed puzzlement at why he had to go to San José to confirm the Swiss offer of a new Headquarters when the Council had already accepted it... But the GA has all the ingredients I now know to be typical of IUCN. A warm feeling as

conservationists from almost everywhere renewed old friendships. Lively and highly professional workshops. Excursions – for those who weren't tied up in politicking. And agonies over the budget as Mike Cockerell presented a scenario of doom and demanded a ten percent cut...

And some splendid light touches, like the walk through the streets from the Opening Ceremony to the Host Country Reception, led by President Arias, President Swaminathan and Prince Philip.

Changing course

We arrived in Gland in February 1988. I had told Lizzie that after running a big slice of a big Government Department (and taking responsibility for steering privatization of the national water industry as well) leading IUCN, tiny and rather amateurish as it seemed, would be "as easy as falling off a log." There should be time for some science – maybe even to research and write a book or two.

In October 1988 frustrations erupted. I wrote a memo to senior staff entitled 'Six months of Glandular fever' (as colleagues know, I am prone to weak puns). In it I castigated them for excessive individualism, refusal to work as a team, and a poor sense of priorities. I like to think that by the time we left, six years later, some of these problems had been attended to. Certainly the Union was a lot bigger, we did have a new Mission Statement and Strategy, had spread our Secretariat around the world, were getting closer to our members, and had made a real effort to blend conservation and sustainable development in new ways.

On the move

But IUCN was fun. One attraction was the diversity of people and places it took you to – often with dramatic juxtapositions: Ministerial meetings in dark suits in capital cities today, bumpy tracks rising to the mountain mists or winding through the savannah tomorrow.

Perhaps the most memorable of many 'days out' was with Aban Kabraji and Mark Halle, when we flew by helicopter from Islamabad northwards past the tangled glaciers and soaring ridges of Nanga Parbat to see villages near Gilgit and Hunza, where we were working with the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme led by that dynamic and inspiring man, Shoaib Sultan Khan.

The idea was simple. The villages needed a sustainable source of income. The secret was to tap the rivulets that trickled down from the snows to the arid valley floors, and irrigate gardens and fruit orchards. AKRSP provided the start-up finance. The villages provided the labour. IUCN provided the ecological know-how. Meetings explained to village

men and women (separately, of course, in that society) what was in it for them. Enthusiasm and energy transformed productivity: profits went to repay the start-up loan and fund new projects, and the snowball rolled. And – hopefully – overgrazing of the high pastures and destruction of the natural forests on the mountains would slow and cease. It was too soon to be sure, but development and conservation clearly had to go hand in hand in that marvellous world amid the Earth's highest mountains, and we felt that IUCN was really helping that process.

Such moments were jewels on a string of paperwork. Wrestling with the text of *Caring for the Earth*. Watching the new Headquarters slowly emerging from a hole in a cornfield. Preparing for two General Assemblies in Perth and Buenos Aires. Trying to balance conflicting values passionately held by members, not least on the legitimacy of sustainable wildlife use (an argument that had rumbled since the days of John Muir and Gifford Pinchot, a century ago). Perhaps the most satisfying administrative task

was watching the Union's programme and worldwide range of activities expand steadily, thanks to the support of governments and their bilateral aid agencies – especially in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and our host country, Switzerland.

The Union's folk

People were real highlights. It is clear from my study of history that they have been the key to IUCN's very survival in times of crisis and have been spearheads for its achievements. Jean Paul Harroy, builder of the infant Union, was in tremendous form and voice in 1988 at our 40th anniversary. We had a visit from Max Nicholson, participant in the original tour in Switzerland that led via Brunnen to Fontainebleau. Maurice Strong – who, as Executive Director of UNEP and then Chair of the Bureau, rescued IUCN on at least two occasions – drew us into the 'Rio Process' where Yolanda Kakabadse, now President, wrestled with the almost impossible task of keeping the non-governmental

QUOTABLE

Diverse, democratic and diverting

If it did not exist it would have to be invented but o' what a struggle!

For those who have got the IUCN bug it is a constant trial of strength. It was in 1976 that I first walked into the château in Morges and caught it. It was to sell an Antarctica agenda to the ever sympathetic pipesmoking David Munro.

I can see all the potential yet also all the reasons why it is so rarely fully realized. For IUCN is one of those institutions that is perhaps a shade too diverse, democratic and diverting. In order to arrive at truly representative programmes and policies it gets tied up in process, endless paper and debate. At times I crave the autocratic option, the situation work. The union of members – the family – would not be interested in such a top down approach. The Union would no longer be a union.

But I must not despair. Just think – we would not have a biodiversity convention without the Union. Endless protected areas would be unprotected, indeed we would not even know what was in need of protection in many parts of the world.

Nor would we have so many other local, national or international initiatives and work in furtherance of conservation.

How IUCN has changed since 1976! But the need for an international family with deep sincerity, commitment and expertise in the furtherance of conservation is as constant as ever.

Richard Sandbrook

community happy despite myriad frustrations. Wolfgang Burhenne, Gren Lucas, George Rabb, Hal Eidsvik and Bing Lucas stood out as leaders of the Commissions which, in different ways, have forged the most powerful conceptual implements for world conservation. Past Directors General – Gerardo Budowski, Duncan Poore, David Munro, Lee Talbot and Kenton Miller – continued to serve the Union long after their departure. Presidents, Councillors, partners, even critics – the web of interactions has been what had made IUCN the exciting experience it is.

Comic relief

Funny moments? you ask. Certainly some odd ones. Like receiving two invitations for a General Assembly, from two Heads of State (President Menem of Argentina and President Salinas of Mexico) within two hours in Rio. Like sitting at lunch with President Bush in Rio and listening as a whole series of NGO leaders – including Ashok Khosla and Jacques Cousteau – told him how wrong he and the United States were to abdicate the position of leadership they had enjoyed at the time of the Stockholm Conference twenty years before. Like setting out to fly from Nairobi to Garamba with Hugh Lamprey, Ian Grimwood and Rob Malpas – only to find that Hugh's chart locker for Zaire contained nothing more navigational than an Esso road map – not all that useful in a region of nearly continuous forest. "It's OK," said Hugh, as he skirted a thunderstorm. "We just head north, and where the forest gives way to grassland, that's Garamba – we just have to scout about a bit to find the right landing place!" Like finding, six months into the job, that I had to make a speech in French in front of a thousand people (headed by the Foreign Minister of France) at the 40th Anniversary celebration gala at UNESCO, where Barbara Hendricks and Jose Carreras sang for us. Thanks to Frédéric Briand, the grammar was impeccable and the delivery passable. "I didn't know you spoke such good French," said Charles de Haes (then Director-General of WWF International). Well done, Frédéric!

The memories are like a Persian carpet. An intricate pattern of happenings,

SIR MARTIN HOLDGATE

To exalt, enthrone, establish and defend,
To welcome home mankind's mysterious friend

To anyone in Gland between 1988 and 1994 those opening lines of Hilaire Belloc's Heroic Poem In Praise of Wine immediately identify Martin Holdgate. Working for IUCN in that period guaranteed you an education in minor Victorian verse, a fund of hilarious tales about the rich and famous or not-so-rich but notorious, and an appreciative audience for the quirks of human as well as the rest of nature. I don't know anyone better at making conservation a joyous activity.

For serious students of chairmanship, it was an edifying experience to watch a mandarin of the British civil service at work, summarizing a rambling discussion into a neatly balanced paragraph and showing almost visible satisfaction at the result. An ignorant remark would tease him into revealing the breadth and depth of his own reading in environmental issues, wrapped up in a commentary that treated your remark as if it was as well-informed as his. It was also refreshing to hear a leading conservationist who could talk the political language of the UN at international meetings.

In most things literary Martin Holdgate set standards for IUCN that have not been excelled. But in one category he has to accept second place. The best DG's Christmas party speech was given by his wife Lizzie, when once she was persuaded to stand in for him.

Peter Hulm

many richly coloured, bounded by a frame of time. The memories are vivid because IUCN is a unique organization. Unique as a GONGO (Governmental and Non-Governmental Organization). Unique for its voluntary networks, the Commissions. Unique in the way it blends science and social sensitivity, to create conservation that is tailored to the needs of communities around the world. And especially unique in the people it attracts to its service.

Six years of feverish activity in Gland passed all too quickly – but as other Directors General have found, you never really leave the IUCN family, and we have been happy that "retirement" has still given its opportunities to contribute to the work of a truly wonderful family business...

Sir Martin Holdgate was Director General of IUCN from 1988 to early 1994, before which he was Chief Scientist and Deputy Secretary (Environment Protection) in the British Department of the Environment. "The Green Web" is his title for his major History of IUCN, to be published later this year (see the summary in this issue).

Key dates

1980: The World Conservation Strategy, prepared by IUCN in partnership with WWF and the UN Environment Programme, is launched in 35 countries.

1982: UN General Assembly adopts The World Charter for Nature, prepared with IUCN's assistance.

1991: IUCN launches with WWF and UNEP the second World Conservation Strategy, **Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living**, in 65 countries.

1992: Global Biodiversity Strategy, prepared by IUCN, the World Resources Institute and UNEP is launched.

1996: First World Conservation Congress in Montreal adopts Revised Statutes, officially recognizing IUCN's members' committees at national and regional level. The Green Accounting Initiative, Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) Sustainable Use Initiative (SUI) are launched; the International Centre on Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) is established with IUCN cooperation and fundraising.

1997: The World Commission on Dams is established at a workshop held by IUCN and the World Bank Group.

IUCN'S best kept secrets

By Jay D. Hair

I have lost track of the number of times I have heard someone say that "IUCN is the best kept secret in the world of conservation" and I am no longer surprised when I hear it. My own experience has given me an idea of why that impression is so prevalent.

While I was President of the National Wildlife Federation (USA) from 1981 to 1995, I had numerous interactions with IUCN. As a member I participated in General Assemblies, served on Commissions and, in 1990 at the Perth GA, was elected to the IUCN Council. During my three years on Council I learned a great deal more about the Union – this time from the Gland perspective. But it was only during my tenure as President of IUCN from 1994-98 that I truly began to appreciate the impressive breadth and depth of the grassroots contributions being made by this remarkable organization.

In retrospect, my experiences as an IUCN member were only small slices of the Union's overall rich and complex organizational culture. It was not until I took my first field mission as President that I began to realize the importance and extent of IUCN's impact at the grassroots level of conservation. Over the intervening years I learned a great deal about our programme activities on-the-ground. Those experiences helped to peel back the tedium of IUCN's organizational complexity and to reveal internal secrets which had eluded me for years.

East Usambaras: hope and empowerment

In March 1994 I visited Eastern Africa where many of the field projects are prime examples of IUCN's best kept secrets. One of these was in the East Usambaras where IUCN has been working with the Tanzanian Government and the EEC to curb the illegal cutting of timber while promoting nature conservation and sustainable development.

The aspect of the Usambaras project which impressed me most was the establishment of a women's sugar cooperative. While that may not sound like a big deal – or particularly conservation-oriented – it was in fact a profound achievement. Sustainably harvested sugar cane was being pressed, boiled and rendered into raw sugar. This sugar was transported off the mountain and sold at a local market. Why was this so important? Quite simply, not only did it support an education programme which helped reduce the illegal cutting of trees, but this also was the first time in the history of that village that women had participated, at any level, in the cash economy. This project fostered community-building by bringing together the women in a cooperative effort, it provided cash through which the women were enhancing the quality of life for themselves and their families, and it raised the status of the women in the village. Clearly, poverty alleviation and the empowerment of

women are inextricably linked with IUCN's conservation and sustainable development goals.

Our visit to this remote village was an occasion of great celebration. The women, adorned in beautiful traditional dresses, demonstrated – with my wife Leah as a full participant – all stages of the sugar making process. I suspect most of the folks were not quite sure what an "IUCN President" was, but they clearly were appreciative of the success of this project and the excellent support received from the IUCN staff. Before our departure they hosted us with "sweet tea" made from the same pot which had been used to boil the sugarcane syrup. It was a welcome and delicious treat!

To have witnessed the happiness and sense of pride on their faces was a gift that I shall always treasure. It was at that point that I really started to "get it". I began to understand the essence of IUCN's mission of assisting others to resolve on-the-ground conservation

QUOTABLE

Convenor par excellence

Getting the parties to a conflict around the same table may not be easy, and few institutions are permitted to play the role of convenor. It is a position that has to be earned, based on a credible track record of promises kept.

In the case of IUCN partnership with the World Bank in setting up the World Commission on Dams (see **World Conservation** 4/97-1/98), IUCN proved that its mission and institutional credibility lend themselves to such a role. In fact it has proven its capacity in this domain time and again (e.g., Biodiversity Convention; CITES; African Elephant Range States Dialogue). The convening power of IUCN as a Union, as a scientific body and as a voice for conservation in sustainable development makes it one of the few international bodies with a capacity to assist the global community in addressing both emerging and rampant conflicts over natural resources management.

Responding to a continuously evolving mandate has allowed IUCN to develop a track record and profile few would have believed possible when its founding members first met in Fontainebleau in 1948. As the Union plans for its next fifty years, its greatest challenge may lie in reconciling its two identities: one as a scientific authority in conservation and the other as a Union with a unique, worldwide constituency, demanding that their, and the wider IUCN, voice be heard.

Achim Steiner

conflicts while developing culturally appropriate ways to improve the quality of the human condition. At the IUCN macro level, where most members acquire their perception of the Union, we get the big picture but we often do not develop an understanding of the importance of this kind of basic, on-the-ground conservation assistance.

Celebrating the Union

As Sir Martin Holdgate has so eloquently documented in his forthcoming book, IUCN has evolved a colourful – and complex – history over the past 50 years. IUCN is a fascinating organization and has established a remarkable record of achievement. And, of course, the best kept secrets I noted here were not really secrets. No one at IUCN had purposely hidden them from me or anyone else. But even as someone who has had an active volunteer presence with IUCN, I was surprised that many of our unique organizational and grassroots conservation achievements had eluded me – as I suspect they have for many of our members – for years.

Why was this the case and what can we do about it?

Perhaps it is because IUCN is a complex organization whose full story is not easily told or experienced. We are a uniquely complicated international conservation organization whose members include sovereign states, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and thousands of Commission volunteers. Perhaps all of us associated with IUCN have not done an adequate job telling our own members – let alone the public – about the Union's important conservation achievements throughout the world. Perhaps we have just been too busy doing the important work of conservation to focus on the need to communicate those achievements to others.

What I do know is IUCN will continue to be referred to as the "best kept secret in the world of conservation" if we do not take a more proactive and creative approach to shining light on these so-called conservation secrets. We do a pretty good job of communicating the "big picture" of IUCN but we need to be

far more aggressive in communicating our on-the-ground conservation achievements. It is important to celebrate our success and to learn from our failures. It is essential to let our members know what the IUCN team is achieving for them, with them and on their behalf. It is likewise important to let our donors and other funders know what their support has accomplished and to use this as a basis for encouraging continued funding in the future.

Finally, as we celebrate our golden anniversary in 1998, and envision an even greater leadership role for the

Union in the future, I strongly encourage IUCN to place communicating the Union's story at the top of its organizational priorities. We must take every opportunity to use advances in communication and information technologies to turn these "best kept secrets" into the "best known stories of conservation achievement" throughout the world. The most important cause on Earth deserves nothing less!

Jay D. Hair was President of IUCN from 1994 to 1996, and is President Emeritus of the National Wildlife Federation (USA).

VO QUY

Professor Vo Quy is known in Viet Nam as "giao su voi nu cuoi" or "the professor with a smile". Director of the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Studies at the Vietnam National University in Hanoi, fluent in five languages, discoverer of new species, teacher, renowned scientist and active IUCN member, Vo Quy is one of the world's truly remarkable educators and conservation leaders. From promoting the designation of Ha Long Bay as a World Heritage site, to organizing the planting of millions of trees throughout Viet Nam in areas destroyed during the war, to promoting the establishment of the Tram Chim National Reserve and inspiring the restoration of the populations of the Eastern Sarus cranes, his positive influence has touched the lives of countless individuals.

I shall always treasure the friendship of this wonderful man and remain eternally grateful that our lives crossed paths because of IUCN.

Jay D. Hair



Left to right: Jay Hair; Jacques Lecup, former Head of the IUCN Viet Nam office in Hanoi; IUCN Regional Councillor Dr Le Quy An; Dr Vo Quy and Leah Hair visit Ha Long Bay. Jay Hair

Quality, if not quantity

By Rachel Kyte

As is so often the case, behind every great organization there are great women. In IUCN's history they have ranged from Marguerite Caram, whose leadership of the Secretariat in Brussels was pivotal in the critical early years, to the first woman President, Yolanda Kakabadse, elected at Montreal in 1996 by the first World Conservation Congress. The history and development of IUCN is diamond-studded with women.

However, as we celebrate our half century our growth seems stunted in one regard: throughout the organization there are precious few women in positions of responsibility. If our mission is to influence societies, then missing out on the resources, the talent, the perspective and the wisdom of over 50% of the world's population seems self-defeating. So is our temerity in coming to grips with why.

Of course the situation is improving, slowly. But why is it that women find it hard in the Secretariat to stay the course at senior levels, that we have only a smattering of women on the Council, that there are no women as Commission Chairs? More importantly, what do we want to do about it?

Is it that we are saying that the stewardship of nature, of natural resources



Marguerite Caram. At the time of her death in 1961, IUCN wrote in the Bulletin that it had lost "the most devoted member of its staff". She worked for the Union since its founding, as Secretary to Jean-Paul Harroy and later as Editor and Assistant Secretary General. IUCN



IUCN women contributed to "Women weaving the World Together", an international initiative at the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. IUCN's banner combined fabric from all the field offices and Headquarters. IUCN/Nikki Meith

and their sustainable use is a male domain, even when in reality across cultures and communities world-wide, the reverse is true? Is it that we are saying that the policy arena is the male domain, when if we look at the brilliant policy makers and advocates of recent years, it is women who stand out in one's mind. Are we saying that IUCN, which has pushed back the boundaries of understanding on our relationships with ecosystems and pushed biodiversity to the front of decision makers' minds, finds the lack of women in the organization something too complicated, difficult or irrelevant to turn its mind towards?

And what should we think about the old chestnut – that one cannot enforce one's own cultural proclivities (this time those of the liberal West) on the rest of the world. Well, women have news for you. Equality and equity are not concepts invented or defined by Western liberal men, or women. They are universal and embraced by women and men the world over. Their most recent expression is in the new ways in which human rights are and seen to be fundamental to sustainable development and in acceptance of

the view that human rights means women's human rights too. For IUCN, social, economic and cultural rights are something we deal with every day. And then there was Beijing, the Fourth World Conference on Women: a women's conference on peace, equality and justice which was transformed into a global conference on women with a Platform for Action relevant to all.

In writing this short piece and showing drafts around, some colleagues have winced – too strong or too close to the bone? – I am not sure. But I am left wondering: in IUCN who will have the last laugh? Those who know where energy, ideas and solutions are shared – in communities of women and men, or the organizations that presume to preach diversity, yet are afraid to embrace it? That is our millennium challenge and it is to meeting that challenge that I raise my glass to the extraordinary women in IUCN today and together with them, remember and thank those who have gone before – they are truly pioneers.

Rachel Kyte is IUCN's representative to the European Union.

The best of times...

An interview with David McDowell

David McDowell, former New Zealand diplomat and conservationist, has been Director General of the Union since April 1994. Having completed the five years he promised, he will move on in early 1999. He has overseen the period of regionalization and rapid expansion. Here he reminisces with the editor of *World Conservation* about his five years with IUCN.

Nikki Meith: When did you first hear about IUCN?

David McDowell: I drew on some of its publications when I was restructuring the Department of Conservation (DOC) in Wellington in 1988-89, but I did not begin focusing on the nature of the beast until a bunch of New Zealand NGO people who had worked with me in the past rang me in Tokyo in early 1993 and suggested I apply for the DG's job. I said no – I was only one year into a four-year term as Ambassador. They rang me back a month later and my wife and I agreed to think about it.

The rest is history (as they say) but unlike virtually all of my predecessors I was not an old IUCN hand. Nor was I a scientist.

NM: So why did the Council appoint you?

McD: You had better ask them. I think that they were looking for a different sort of profile. Perhaps they wanted someone who had no IUCN baggage from the past. The Union was becoming a big business to manage and there were demands for change. They wanted someone who would respond to the emerging pressures to loosen the grip of Gland on the institution and who would drive the regionalization process through. And they wanted someone who knew the international development scene – I had run a national development cooperation agency, worked in the developing world and been on the UNDP Governing Council, as well as the stint heading up DOC.

NM: What was your first impression?

McD: I got to the Buenos Aires Assembly before taking over from Martin Holdgate and was amazed – and to be frank, somewhat appalled – at the huge range of interest groups there seemed to be floating around the Sheraton. That remains the Union's biggest challenge – getting hundreds of interest groups to move in more or less the same direction at around the same time. It's a full-time conflict resolution and motivational job. But I loved the informality in Buenos Aires and the good humour and the expertise and the passion for the cause.

NM: What pressures did you come under as DG-elect?

McD: I was heavily lobbied by the developing country delegations. They wanted more of the Union's resources and more decision-making power and they wanted to break down what they saw as the excessive power of the West European/North American elements in the Union. As a New Zealander I felt some sympathy for all that.

NM: So what happened when you got to Gland?

McD: It took me a while to get the measure of the place and the people. Used to a national public service where change was the expected constant, I found the resistance to change fascinating. The role and place of the volunteer Commissions baffled me for a long time – though I came eventually to recognize them for the actual or potential powerhouses of talent they are. Two long field trips to regions where DGs had not often been before – Latin America and West Africa – helped me get things in perspective.

Gland – and the Union as a whole – look a lot different from La Paz or Mopti. I commend the perspective to all.

NM: What were the surprises, both pleasant and unpleasant?

McD: I guess the slenderness of the resources to do the job was both a surprise and a disappointment. The global Secretariat at the time numbered a third of the staff I had had at the national level in DOC. And twenty years before I had had a development cooperation budget three times as big (in constant values) as that part of the Union budget which the DG oversees. The Nordics and the Dutch and the Swiss are very generous contributors to the Union but they could not meet the needs alone.

NM: Was this inhibiting?

McD: The problem was that with such modest resources the Buenos Aires mandate to regionalize and decentralize could only be achieved by shifting resources as well as decision-making powers from the centre to the regions.

As was only natural, people at the centre did not adjust easily to giving up funds or power. They had to be convinced. Most of them did so graciously once they understood why. Those who did not had to be moved on. So there were ructions. And some of the people in the field had to be shifted too because there were new demands on field representatives. All in all it was by far the most demanding time I have had as a chief executive.

Another disappointment in a way were the gaps in our global coverage. To someone coming out of Tokyo the Asian



Sir Shridath Ramphal bestowed IUCN's John C. Phillips Memorial Medal on Professor Vo Quy of Viet Nam at the Buenos Aires General Assembly. IUCN/Nikki Meith

membership was far from comprehensive and the programme was minuscule for such a vast and biodiversity-rich region (or set of regions as it really is). Japan and China have joined since as State members and Aban Kabraji and the country representatives have done a very good job in bringing some coherence to a programme which was just a series of project activities in most places. But Indonesia and India are still largely gaps and in other regions there are gaps too – the Union's contribution in Brazil, for example, is negligible. So we have a way to go still.

NM: What was the most exciting thing that has happened during your tenure?

McD: Realizing in a tiny mangrove community on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica one day that what we talked about in Gland (being catalytic, conserving natural resources, creating the nexus between conservation and development, working with communities, addressing gender issues – the whole equity and “sound science, socially delivered” bit) actually happens on-the-ground on occasion. That was uplifting.

NM: And the most “fun”?

SIR SHRIDATH RAMPHAL

“Sonny” Ramphal, President of IUCN from 1990 to 1994, was well-known internationally well before then. A former Commonwealth Secretary-General, he was able to speak the language of ministers and political leaders, and I think he was very useful for IUCN in securing credibility with both politicians and development planners.

As a person, he was extremely erudite, and always very focused and direct in promoting his two main causes, which he had adopted well before becoming associated with IUCN. These were equitable use of resources, including the insistence that any permanent process of development had to open its doors to the poor, and a wider recognition that conservation has to go hand-in-hand with the use of resources for development. However, he was not the kind of person to take a narrow view of these concepts, or to consider how individual members might benefit from IUCN by adopting such policies. He was more concerned with making IUCN a global force to speak on such issues, and he warned several times of the dangers of fragmentation in the Union. I think that today he would suggest his fears are still as relevant, and that IUCN must be careful not to lose its global effectiveness while it pursues its process of regionalization.

Angela Cropper*

* from an interview.

McD: Lots of them. But one was a hot day (40°C plus) in a spectacular cliff-dwelling community on the Dogon plateau in Mali when what had been a semi-academic interest for many years for me (collecting Dogon carvings) and my son Tim (studying Dogon architecture) all came together in a feast of dance and talk and interaction – and made sense for the first time. Regrettably Tim was not there but there was a congenial group of IUCN colleagues to share it with.

NM: And the funniest?

McD: One was the look on Patrick Dugan's face when we announced later that same evening – down on the banks of the Niger again – that our answer to Dogon dancing was Dugan dancing and that he would now put on a solo display. The resulting Highland fling entranced the audience even if it did not quite fit the drum beat.

NM: And the most memorable?

McD: Sitting around a campfire at night on the edge of a National Park in southern Zimbabwe talking through with India Musokotwane and others the

implications of the day's discussions for the Union's doctrine of “sustainable use”. We had been talking to villagers who had switched in a year or two from being poachers to being guardians of the Park's wildlife – because they had been given a stake in the enterprise. That was a special time because it was the last evening I had with beloved India before he died later that year.

NM: The most dangerous moment?

McD: Thumping into the rear of a preceding Ministerial car, crashing down a roadside bank and careering across a ploughed field for fifty metres in an (ultimately successful) attempt to honour an appointment with the President of Malawi. The driver of my car asked if I was hurt. I had hit the roof twice but was fine. “Thank the Lord”, he said. I did. With fervour.

NM: Most chastening?

McD: Learning that the intricate pattern of shallow water channels being exposed and used for the first time in two thousand years or so near Lake Titicaca in Bolivia had not been irrigation channels at all but were a sort of

thermal regulator to enable some of the region's sixty species of potato to be grown in frost-free conditions close to twelve thousand feet (4000m) up. What progress have we made in two millennia?

NM: Most thought-provoking?

McD: Realizing after a ninety kilometre drive through the countryside to a model Chinese city with wide, rubbish-free streets and clean water that I had not seen a single bird since leaving Shanghai's pigeons behind.

NM: Most rewarding moments?

McD: Having the gift of access to people who have real expertise in the natural sciences and communicate their enthusiasms – people like Wendy Strahm who can interpret a small upland meadow in the Jura so that it is seen as a haven for a host of exciting plant species, an ecosystem of its own. Or Simon Stuart

who can tell you that the strange looking brown bird with a crest which has just flown by is a rare sighting of a hoopoe.

NM: Who among the IUCN people you have met while here has most impressed you?

McD: That's a difficult choice to make. India Musokotwane in southern Africa understood instinctively that a programme based on working with and through the members was the way to go – and he was a charismatic personality in the best sense of the word. He had a droll sense of humour and an utterly disarming way of conveying some hard truths to an audience. Then there is George Rabb, the former Chair of the SSC. For me he is the epitome of the best of our volunteers – well informed, wise, passionate about the work, generous with his own time, wry and articulate and committed. And a warm and nice person with it.

NM: Who among the people you met on your IUCN travels most inspired you?

McD: Nelson Mandela for one. Here was a man creating a new country from the ruins of the old yet he found time to talk to India and me about his well-formed views on community involvement in conservation and the need to raise conservation awareness among the black communities in South Africa. He is so forgiving: he took us out onto the terrace of the Presidential residence to point out the Voortrekker Monument.

I was also very impressed by the Presidents I met in so-called Francophone West Africa – they were highly articulate, well-briefed and had some stimulating views on when not to build big dams, for example. People like President Diouf of Senegal understood only too well that the preservation of wetland ecosystems is often more important to his people – let alone to biodiversity – than intervening in these



In his audience with a team from IUCN, Senegalese President Abdou Diouf confirmed the Government's political support for the work of IUCN and his understanding of the importance of preserving traditional methods of wetland management. IUCN

systems by building showy dams. Some had learned this by bitter experience.

I was always impressed too by State Councillor Song Jian who used to chair the China Council for International Co-operation on Environment and Development. I admired the way he listened to the opinions of the foreign experts, assessed and used what was relevant and valuable for China and sent us away feeling that we had made a contribution. He was a good operator – and a person it was easy to relate to.

NM: Who impressed you among those you met in the field?

McD: Well of course the community leader in the mangrove community in Costa Rica I referred to earlier. His name is Urías Porras. The fact is that outside agencies like the Union cannot achieve much on the development side unless there is good local leadership. Urías Porras was one of those leaders – confident, willing to learn, willing to take a risk, trusted by his people.

Two people I remember well represent that isolated but courageous group of environmentalists who struggled for the cause against the odds in eastern Europe in Soviet times. One was our own Jan Ceroovsky in what is now the Czech Republic (see page 31).

Another is Janis Viksne, who is a sort of Latvian Peter Scott. For forty years Janis worked away with a small band of colleagues, developing on Lake Engure by themselves a set of practices and principles relating to migratory bird and wetland management which paralleled in many ways what was going on in Slimbridge under more propitious circumstances. Lake Engure was in a security zone close to the shores of the Baltic so the human pressures on it were minimal for many years – a curious but not uncommon twist where conflict sometimes seems to work in nature's favour. (Think of the cranes and other species flourishing in the DMZ between the two Koreas.) Professor Viksne sent me his book *The bird lake – Engure* – it's worth reading.

NM: What do you think will be your legacy?



David McDowell, Ricardo Bayon (gesturing) and Regional Representative for Meso-America Enrique Lahmann talk to leaders of the mangrove community in Costa Rica. IUCN

McD: That question reminds me a bit of Chou En Lai's often quoted answer to a question about the significance of the French Revolution in world history: "It is too soon to tell," he is said to have replied. Ask me five years down the track when we know what has survived. Or ask others.

And anyway I do not see legacies in terms of the contributions of individuals. A whole bunch of good people were in this with me. For good conservation reasons we drove the regionalization process remorselessly against some heavy resistance. It is now irreversible and that is a good thing, because we now have a truly global team working on how to give effect to the mission.

I like to think that we also helped modernize the Secretariat and began the process of sensitizing it to gender and other social perspectives which had been lacking, though there is still a long way to go on these fronts. Personally I take some credit for helping bring through a whole new breed of bright young field managers like Yemi Katerere, Enrique Lahmann, Juanita Castaño, Ambika Adhikari and Ibrahim Thiaw – and some new and creative thinkers like Ricardo Bayón, Javed Ahmad and Rachel Kyte. The future lies with them and their peers. I leave feeling assured of that.

NM: What do you think lies ahead for the Secretariat and for the Union as a whole?

McD: Well, every new phase like regionalization and decentralization brings with it new problems which call for new solutions.

We have to guard against the growth of parochialism in the regions – or worse, against fragmentation. The role of the centre in the Union has now changed – it needs to adapt and be enriched. The temptation to reassert central controls has to be resisted at the same time as we develop new ways of working collaboratively across what can now be called a global Union.

I am optimistic about the future: we say it ritualistically but I also believe strongly that the Union with its GONGO structure (government and non-government members), its teams of volunteers, its new openings to communities, the private sector and the multilateral bodies like the World Bank, and its increasingly global spread is the wave of the future for international organizations.

Those people who began it all fifty years ago in Fontainebleau were an inspired lot. I take my hat off to them.

Participating in the Union's future

By Yolanda Kakabadse

When IUCN was created, the whole perception of what membership wanted was completely different from today. In the beginning, being an IUCN member was important for providing credibility to individual organizations.

On the other hand, IUCN itself needed to maintain a list of strong, powerful, important members from around the world. Now, at the end of the century, this has changed. Members want to be active, to participate, to play a part in the construction of IUCN's future, and the Union needs this active role.

Therefore, I see the future of IUCN as a decentralized body where those

members who want to have a say in defining our priorities will be called on to contribute their time and effort to the Union.

Developments in technology are a basic factor in the change that has taken place. Fifty years ago – even twenty – we did not have the technology to give members in a split-second all the information they need for active participation.

Today electronic communications make you want to be part of the decision-making, part of the activity, part of the global discussion. That implies a completely different structure for the



Newly-elected President Yolanda Kakabadse addresses the Montreal Congress. IUCN

Union. It implies having a more sophisticated set-up at the regional and headquarters level to deal with this new situation, and to "cultivate" that knowledge and information to help IUCN respond appropriately to those global issues.

It is also important, however, that we should not lose our capacity to be at the forefront of new creative thinking for the next century. It implies devoting resources, time and capacity toward building on past experiences, using our present knowledge and increasing our ability to foresee the most important development issues.

One immediate problem to tackle is that of trade and finance related to sustainable development, conservation and biodiversity. This should probably be one of the priorities of our agenda in this coming decade. Its relevance to conservation vs. mismanagement of natural resources shows it should be high on the agenda.

We need to come up with proposals for the financial world and conservationists to act on.

Yolanda Kakabadse was Director of Fundación Natura in Ecuador from 1979 to 1990. At the Montreal Congress (1996) she was elected IUCN President, and has recently been appointed Ecuador's Minister of Environment.

QUOTABLE

Exceptional people

My first contact with IUCN was in 1975 when I was sent by UNEP to collect information in Morges. I was overwhelmed by the convivial atmosphere, the strong sense of dedicated professionalism and the library crammed with books, every one of which I wanted to read.

Today the Union remains an remarkable organization with an extraordinary history, which has had and still continues to benefit from the dedication of exceptional people. I know of no other organization in our field that possesses anything close to IUCN's potential, and its mission becomes more relevant with every day that passes. In spite of some internal problems, the Union remains robust, well-respected, and occupies an important niche.

Mark Halle

Making strides

Since I joined IUCN in 1986 as head of the Species Programme, there have been dramatic changes. The first contrast between today and 12 years ago is that much of the technical centre of activity for the institution is now in the regions. When I came to Gland, most of the technical competence, programmes and activities were focused at headquarters. The regional and country office system as we know it now was just being born.

The second contrast is that today there is far more awareness of the human element in our conservation activities. In 1986 IUCN in many fields was dominated by the biological and ecological sciences. It was only a slight exaggeration to say that human beings tended to be cast in the role of the problem rather than the solution. Today there is a major difference in the way the Union operates. Today across the Union everyone – including those with a technical background or pure scientists – recognises the important part that people play in the solution to environmental problems.

Steve Edwards

Who's who and index

Tariq Banuri, Research Advisor at the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), Pakistan, has been Chair of CEESP since 1996. (20)
Michel Batisse is Senior Environmental Adviser at UNESCO, a recipient of the John C. Phillips Memorial Medal, and a member of WCPA. (10,13)
Charles Jean Bernard was the first President of IUCN. (3)

Delmar Blasco is Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention Bureau. (38)

Joanna Boddens-Hosang was IUCN Information Officer (1991-1996) and is now head of communications at The Tropenbos Foundation (the Netherlands). (6)

Françoise Burhenne-Guilmin is head of the IUCN Environmental Law Centre in Bonn. (21)

Juanita Castañón is Regional Representative at the IUCN Regional Office for South America (IUCN-SUR). (34)

Jan Cеровsky, a Member of Honour of IUCN, was Vice-President from 1990 to 1994. (13,31)

Antonio M. Claparols is President of the Ecological Society of the Philippines and an IUCN Regional Councillor for South and East Asia. (37)

Mike Cockerell came to IUCN as Director of the CDC, and was most recently Assistant DG (Management) until his departure at the end of 1995. (26,27,37)

Angela Cropper was the first Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, before which she was IUCN's Head of Governance. (51)

Steve Edwards headed the Species Survival Programme (1986-1990) and today heads the Sustainable Use Initiative. (54)

Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt is Professor of Zoology at the University of Munich, head of the Film Archives for Human Ethology at the Max Planck Society in Andechs, Germany, and Director of the Ludwig-Boltzmann Institute for Urban Ethology in Vienna. (11)

Jane Fenton works for ICBP/BirdLife International. (17,18,43)

Richard Fitter was a member of SSC from 1963, and Chair of its Steering Committee. (5)

Alain Gille, IUCN's contact with France Nature Environnement (FNE), was UNESCO Liaison Officer with IUCN (1949-65). (12)

David R. Given is Chair of the IUCN/SSC Plant Conservation Subcommittee. (19)

Pierre Goeldlin, IUCN Member of Honour, is a former Councillor and Acting Director General. (3)

George Greene is Assistant Director General of IUCN. (42)

Jay D. Hair, President Emeritus of the National Wildlife Federation (US), was President of IUCN (1994-1996). (47,48)

Scott Hajost is Executive Director of IUCN-US in Washington, DC. (37)

Mark Halle worked for IUCN from 1980 to 1988, most recently as Director of Global Policy and Partnerships. (54)

Parvez Hassan was Chair of the Commission on Environmental Law (1990-96) and oversaw the recent revision of the Statutes. (25)

Gabriela Hernandez Herrera is a journalist and communications adviser on environmental issues based in Costa Rica. (32,33)

Frits Hesselink has been Chair of CEC since 1994. (20)

Vernon Heywood was a member of the IUCN-WWF Plant Advisory Group; Chief Scientist, Plant Conservation; and founder Director of the IUCN Botanic Gardens Conservation Secretariat, later BGCI. (34)

Sir Martin Holdgate was Director General of IUCN from 1988 to 1994. (38,44)

Peter Hulm is a journalist and contributing editor to *World Conservation*. (41,46)

Dan Janzen is a Technical Advisor to the Area de Conservación Guanacaste, and a Professor of Biology at the University of Pennsylvania. (42)

Aban Marker Kabraji has been Country Representative for IUCN Pakistan since 1988. (30)

Yolanda Kakabadse is President of IUCN and Ecuador's Minister of Environment. (55)

Rachel Kyte is the Union's representative to the European Union in Brussels. (49)

Robert Paul Lamb, one-time editor of the *IUCN Bulletin*, founded the Television Trust for the Environment (TVE). (18)

P. H. C. "Bing" Lucas is an IUCN Member of Honour and former Chair of WCPA (1990-94). (14,15,29)

Rob Malpas was head of the Union's Eastern Africa Regional Office (EARO) for 13 years. (26)

Ed Maltby is Chair of the Commission in Ecosystem Management. (20)

David McDowell is Director General of IUCN. (50)

Tony Mence was Executive Officer of SSC (1964-73). (16)

Khawar Mumtaz was a Regional Councillor and IUCN Vice-President (1994-96). (43)

Bihini Won wa Musiti is a Programme Officer with IUCN's Central Africa Programme. (35)

Frank Nicholls, Deputy Director General of IUCN from 1970 to 1976, is Managing Director of Trans Knowledge Associates, the Australian computer consultancy he founded in 1978. (12,13,22,33)

Max Nicholson was a founding father of IUCN and received the first John C. Phillips Memorial Medal. (4)

Dr Gunavant M. Oza is General Secretary of the International Society of Naturalists (INSONA), based in India. (42)

Adrian Phillips has been Chair of WCPA since 1994. (14)

George Rabb is President of the Chicago Zoological Society and Director of the Brookfield Zoo. He was Chair of SSC, 1990-96. (18)

Rod Salm is Coordinator of the Marine and Coastal Programme at the IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office. (27)

Miriam Rothschild, an expert on fleas and a Fellow of the Royal Society, was a delegate at the 1948 Fontainebleau Conference. (7)

Peter H. Sand was Secretary-General of CITES (1978 to 1981). (23)

Richard Sandbrook is an IUCN Regional Councillor for Europe, and Director of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) in London. (45)

M. A. Partha Sarathy is Chair-Emeritus of IUCN's Commission on Education and Communication. (39)

Jeffrey A. Sayer was Head of the IUCN Forest Conservation Programme (1985-92); since then he has been Director General of the Center for

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International Forestry Research (CIFOR) in Jakarta, Indonesia. (35)

Samar Singh, Secretary General of WWF-India was an IUCN Regional Councillor for East Asia (1981-86). (43)

Achim Steiner is Secretary General of the World Commission on Dams located in Cape Town, South Africa. (47)

Jim Thorsell has worked at IUCN Headquarters for the last 15 years on World Heritage and WCPA, most recently as Senior Adviser, Natural Heritage. (41)

Philippe Tous is Technical Assistant with the Union's Rio Grande de Buba project in Guinea Bissau. (36)

Eldad Tukahirwa has been IUCN Regional Director for Eastern Africa (Nairobi, Kenya) since 1996, prior to which he was Head of the Union's country office in Uganda. (34)

Roger Wheeler recently retired as Director of The Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, an IUCN member since 1988. He is currently Deputy Chair of Scottish Natural Heritage. (34)