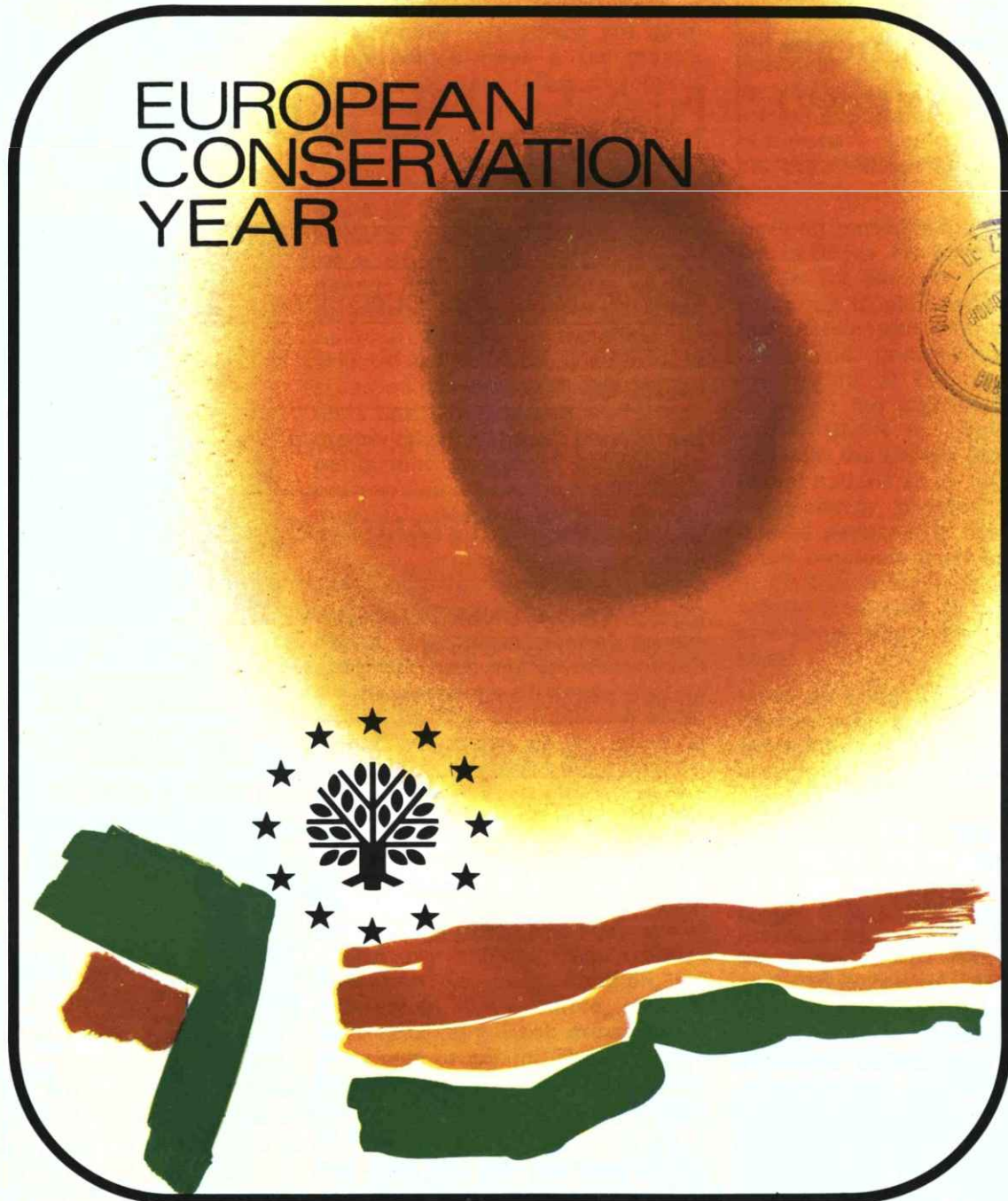


SUMMER 1970

NATURE IN FOCUS



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FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

CCOUNCIL OF EUROPE

NATURE IN FOCUS

SUMMER 70

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EDITORIAL

LOUIS LEPRINCE-RINGUET
of the French Academy and the Academy of Sciences,
Chairman of the European Conservation Conference

The European Conference on Nature Conservation, of which I had the great honour to be the Chairman, has left me with certain indelible impressions.

What struck me first was the breadth of the Conference. Not so much as regards the number of participants — for there are gatherings which have a far greater attendance — but rather as regards general level and diversity. All the delegations were high-level and many were headed by Ministers who stayed until the Declaration made at the very end of the Conference. These delegations included a whole range of well-known people from various walks of life: scientists, ministry officials, international experts; specialists on forestry, on arid zones, on coastal areas, on rivers, on pollution; ecologists and biologists as well as industrialists, architects, members of parliament and local government representatives. Such diversity is most valuable. For the first time in Europe all the problems inherent in a general policy for planning and enhancing the environment were discussed before an Assembly composed of people whose job it is to deal with such matters. From such a wide exchange of views, wisdom must flow. The excesses, the occasional prejudices to be found in over-exclusive groups are considerably softened, even effaced by the active presence of other groups which do not share their bias.

That is indeed what happened at Strasbourg. The debates were both serious and frank. Everyone spoke on his own subject. Each country described its own situation, so different in, for example, Ireland, Norway or Italy. Each group spoke of its own problems. The audience listened attentively as the statements fell into place like the pieces of a huge mosaic.

The acid test was the final sitting at which Mr Boote summed up with remarkable ability the draft Declaration, so carefully drawn up following the three days of conference. We were somewhat apprehensive that the reading of this draft might unleash a flood of interventions from all sides, either expressing disagreement with cer-

tain paragraphs considered unacceptable, or insisting that certain passages had been too lightly treated and should be further developed. This did not happen. The sitting took place in an atmosphere of remarkable dignity. Naturally there were some minor objections, some requests for editorial amendments, but these were always made in a European spirit. This spirit of diversity in unity — of such fundamental importance for the success of Europe — could be felt throughout the final sitting of the Conference.

My long participation in the activities of CERN, the European Organisation for Nuclear Research, enables me to state with confidence that active and effective cooperation and understanding among the nations of Europe enables us to reach the highest level in the world. CERN is wholly competitive with the United States and the Soviet nations as far as research in high energy physics and fundamental particles is concerned. All great problems must be dealt with at European level, and this is essential if we wish to come to grips with them effectively on their true scale.

Used as I am to the outstanding results achieved at CERN I consider that I set my sights particularly high in Strasbourg. Nor was I disappointed.

All the elements were present for the resounding success of those meetings: the quality and the variety of delegations and groupings, the serious attitude to the work, the frankness of the discussions, and also the very active attendance of the press, the radio and television. Public opinion must be alerted to ensure that the experts' proposals are followed by government decisions — some of them involving heavy expenditure. Pressure of public opinion is needed to ensure that these matters are taken seriously. And all these elements were present in Strasbourg, under the watchful eye of the Council of Europe, which will do everything in its power to ensure a productive continuation to this outstanding Conference.

Louis LEPRINCE-RINGUET

INTERNATIONAL INTEREST

**330 participants, from
27 countries
17 member states of the
Council of Europe:**

Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, France, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom.

10 non-member states:

Finland, Portugal, Spain, Lichtenstein, Israel, Canada, USA, Czechoslovakia, Roumania, Yugoslavia.



**9 intergovernmental organisations
45 non-governmental international organisations**

WIDE PUBLICITY

**163 journalists, representing
132 organs of the press, radio
and television in
19 countries
31 radio and television representatives, made
91 radio reports
26 television reports**

FOUR DAYS OF DEBATE

4 themes

urbanisation industry agriculture and forestry leisure

34 reports

All member states of the Council of Europe, plus Finland, Yugoslavia, 5 intergovernmental and 8 non-governmental international organisations submitted reports on these four themes (some 900 pages in all).

4 thematic reports

All the individual reports having been distributed in advance the conference was able to discuss the general reports which had been prepared from them and so arrive at a unanimous declaration at the end of four days of stimulating debate.

The full report of the conference, which is to be published in English and French, will thus contain a wealth of detailed information on each theme from many countries and different points of view, and, for the first time, an overall European picture of the main aspects of modern man's impact on his environment.

The tone of the conference, which was maintained throughout, can be seen from the following quotations from the opening speeches.

'...since the early Sixties the Council of Europe has taken a lead in the field of international co-operation on environmental problems. A whole chapter of our intergovernmental programme of work is devoted to man and his physical and biological environment and natural resources. European Conservation Year, which I am happy to say has had such a favourable response in Member Countries and elsewhere, and the present Conference, testify to this and represent the culmination of our past efforts. I wish to stress, however, that both the Year and the Conference are seen by us in the Council of Europe not as the end of our labours but as the beginning of a purposeful and far-reaching concerted action at European level to face up to the threats to our environment in our modern society.'

LUJO TONCIC-SORINJ, Secretary General of the Council of Europe

'During the preparations for this Conference, the Committee of Ministers has noted with the greatest satisfaction the warmth and enthusiasm with which this European event has been welcomed in all circles.

'Your presence here, Your Royal Highnesses and members of the Board of Patrons for European Conservation Year, bears eloquent witness to your personal and enlightened interest and to the anxiety of our European governments to see that determined and concerted action is taken to solve the urgent problems facing our countries and to secure to our peoples and to future generations a way of life, worthy of the highest aspirations of our civilisation.'

'The Committee of Ministers has full confidence in your ability to bring this task to a successful conclusion, and they will study with the greatest attention the guiding lines you lay down for the dynamic and creative policy that our peoples expect from us. In carrying that policy into effect every European will find fresh reason for playing his part in building a happier and more united Europe.'

**OLIVIER REVERDIN
President of the Consultative Assembly of the Council of Europe**

'...let us create in Europe a 'prise de conscience' about this wonderful heritage — our common environment. If we can do this, then indeed Europe again leads the world towards a new cultural dimension for man. I believe we can and will succeed, that is why I have personally proposed the first World Conservation Year for 1975.'

'ECY extends our vision of the future. We must build on its achievements so that our concerted action will give new force and tangible reality to European unity. Awareness, passion and an urgent determination to act wisely are required of every one of us. This is today's challenge to every true European.'

**RE BOOTE,
Chairman of the European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources**

'... this Conference is unique of its kind: it is a world first performance; for the first time in the history of the world all our nations have joined together to co-operate in organising our future environment. Indeed, all of us, and not merely the specialists, are concerned by this great problem: we can all exercise an influence for good or for evil on our surroundings through our industry, our buildings, our gardening and the siting of our factories and indeed our houses in town and country. We can respect or contaminate the water of our rivers, embellish or destroy our countryside. Each of us must develop a sixth sense which tells us of the immediate or more remote influence of each of our actions in its effect on our environment.'

**LOUIS LEPRINCE-RINGUET,
Member of the Académie Française and the Académie des Sciences, President of the European Conservation Conference**



Lujo Toncic-Sorinj



Olivier Reverdin



Robert E Boote



Louis Leprince-Ringuet

'The French government for its part has realised the urgency of the problem, thanks to the initiative of the President of the Republic, Mr Georges Pompidou.

'An inter-ministerial working party on the environment has been set up by the Prime Minister to propose concrete measures for immediate application in 1970.'

'... the President has given me the task of setting up, at the Ministry of Agriculture, a Nature Conservation Directorate with considerable funds at its disposal.

'It can be seen, therefore, that for dealing with these problems, which will dominate the next decade, a new administrative and governmental organisation is brought into being. That is a first step. Of course it is not enough. We must also revise our fundamental premises and our ideas on the subject.'

'From an aristocratic conception of nature, beloved of certain scholars, recluses, or huntsmen, we must move on to a democratic conception in the full meaning of the word — that is to say one which permits full development and enrichment for the whole population.'

JACQUES DUHAMEL,
French Minister of Agriculture

'Let us be honest enough to get to the bottom of the matter and ask ourselves what has made the problem so acute during the last twenty-five years.

'It is certainly the growth in population, but above all it is the technological upheaval which makes man hope for more material good fortune and therefore induces him to produce and consume still more. Man, gradually freed from hunger, cold and disease, surrounds himself with objects whose prisoner he becomes. The most serious thing for the community is not so much the constraints imposed by these new and often superfluous needs ...It is that, under our present system, each private producer manufactures what he thinks he can sell — and he hopes to be able to sell more and more of it — without considering the social cost of his activities, for that is tra-



Jacques Duhamel



HRH The Prince of Liège



HRH The Duke of Edinburgh



HRH The Prince of The Netherlands

ditionally the task of the public authorities... Mankind makes a god of economic growth and thinks only of speeding it up without, however, being willing to pay the price. Men seem to believe that if technology upsets nature, technology can also repair the damage or, if need be, can protect them from the results of this dangerous disorder...'

'I sincerely believe that the best of enterprises, such as your own, will remain a dead letter if we do not tackle the problem at its roots. There are some needs that are essential; some targets of progress are reasonable; but it is no longer healthy to accept this race to destruction in the name of so-called progress which is really anarchy. Man must learn to curb his appetites and to divide the spoils if the species is to survive. Self-discipline, a return to reason is the mental revolution that the industrial world must accept, and which I believe will condition everything else.'

HRH THE PRINCE OF LIÈGE

'The problem which confronts this Conference, which confronts Europe and indeed the whole world, is to decide what restrictions are necessary to protect our natural environment from our own exploitation. It is totally useless for a lot of well meaning people to wring their hands in conference and to point out the dangers of pollution or destruction of the countryside. If no-one is willing or capable of taking any action, it will be a waste of time and effort to establish even the most brilliant advisory body if there is no way of putting its advice into effect.

'This great Conference itself will mean nothing at all — in spite of the wisdom of its distinguished members — if it does not lead to practical conservation measures in every European country. All its discussions and resolutions will quickly disappear into the polluted atmosphere, if this meeting doesn't produce more closely organised international co-operation between responsible and effective government departments. All the impassioned speeches will be so

much effluent under the bridge unless it is followed by drastic political action. Time is fast running out and it remains to be seen whether those in political authority can shoulder their responsibilities in time and act quickly enough to relieve a situation which grows more serious every day.'

**HRH THE PRINCE PHILIP,
DUKE OF EDINBURGH**

'To the representatives of governments attending the Conference I would say this: consider European Conservation Year seriously, consider whether your government is doing enough about pollution, enough about high quality environment for young people, enough about national parks and nature reserves, enough about the trade in wild animals threatened with extinction, enough about educating your people to a proper understanding of the prerequisites for the survival of all life on earth and the desperate vulnerability of the biosphere. And if at the end you feel your government is not doing enough, exhort it to do more — much more!'

'... may the European Conservation Year fire the imagination of the people of Europe and spread outwards to enlighten the whole world.'

**HRH THE PRINCE OF THE
NETHERLANDS**

the MANAGEMENT of the natural environment OF EUROPE

The President of the European Conservation Conference in his editorial in this issue has praised the participants in the Conference for the thoughtful and serious work they accomplished with the help of the 4 general Rapporteurs. The Committee of Ministers, at its last meeting on 15 April 1970, similarly vaunted the Conference for its good work and for the quality of the Declaration it adopted. Anyone who follows TV, listens to the radio or reads papers and magazines will have noticed that European Conservation Year and the European Conservation Conference have led to a great surge of publicity about environmental questions.

All this is most satisfactory so we may conclude that one of the aims has been achieved: the general public as well as responsible political and other circles are aware and concerned with the conservation of the environment as they have never been before.

The Conference must mainly be judged, however, on the Declaration it unanimously adopted.

This 'Declaration on the management of the natural environment of Europe' addresses itself to the public at large, to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and other international organisations, to governments, to local government authorities and to the individual citizen. Governments are urged to define clear Ministerial responsibility for matters of environmental conservation and to formulate and state publicly a precise and coherent policy in this field. The Committee of Ministers is asked to convene as a matter of urgency a European Conference of Ministers responsible for environmental conservation.

Both these important points are being followed up. Several member states have already replied to the Secretariat's request for information on their environmental policy and national plans for following up the Conference Declaration. The Ministers of Foreign Affairs, at their first meeting after the European Conservation Conference, agreed to start preparations for the Ministerial Conference.

ENVIRONMENTAL MINISTERS TO MEET

There are five main tasks assigned to the Ministerial Conference in the Declaration. Firstly the Ministers are asked to review and promote the coordination of the respective programmes of the intergovernmental organisations in Europe. Secondly, the Ministerial Conference would request the international organisations concerned to take steps to secure internationally agreed standards for European industry, such as the manufacture of pesticides, vehicle exhaust systems and aircraft engines, so that their unwanted effects may be reduced and in time eliminated. In appropriate cases, formal conventions should be initiated to facilitate the implementation of such standards on a harmonised European basis.

The third need is for the harmonisation of national legislation relating to the environment; and fourthly, the Ministerial Conference is urged to examine the proposal for a European authority with the task of guiding and supervising the management of the natural environment of Europe, and consider the possibility of European countries which are not members of the Council of Europe being invited to participate in the work of such a body.

GUIDELINES FOR RESOURCE PLANNING

The Declaration then spells out the principle elements of a forward looking European policy for the environment. First of all it defines the principles which should inform all attempts to enhance and make rational use of the natural environment, the most important being the adoption of a scientific approach founded on ecology. The environment would thus be dealt with as a whole, taking into account the multitude of living things which are dependant on each other.

It goes on to indicate the main guidelines for a plan of action to be put through internationally and nationally, and also by local authorities. These guidelines are set out in 24 recommendations laying

particular stress on: the importance of pollution control; the development of marginal zones, with an eye to the new leisured society; the role of agriculture and mountain sylviculture; the role of scientific research and the formation of multidisciplinary teams to be responsible for environmental planning and management.

The Declaration also appeals specifically to industry, in the following terms:

'Continuous co-operation is essential between both sides of industry, public authorities and conservationists... Both sides of industry should recognise that the rational use of natural resources is in their long-term interest. Techniques must be developed and implemented to dispose of waste as well as to enable waste products to be re-used or emitted in a form or quantity which can be absorbed by the environment without long-term damage.'

As well as indicating guidelines for the various authorities and industry, the Declaration underlines the responsibility of the individual as follows:

'These issues can be resolved only if individuals, aware of what is at stake, feel personal responsibility for their environment'.

AN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME FOR EUROPE

The European Committee at its June meeting began the preparation of a medium-term programme of work to put into effect as many of the proposals in the Declaration as possible and to prepare for those which required long-term solutions. Four main lines of action are required: First, the disposal of refuse of modern society; that is, how to deal with the problems of air pollution, water pollution and waste disposal. Second, the rational use and management of the natural environment. This must include global space planning, that is, taking the town and the countryside together; and countryside planning. This would include agriculture, recreation, conservation of habitats and scenic treasures; with special attention to the possibilities for multipurpose land use. The third

main sphere of action should be in the field of education, training and research; the fourth in the organisation and administration of environmental conservation.

The aim which the Council of Europe has now set itself is thus nothing less than to formulate and help implement a comprehensive medium-term environment programme at European level.

If this is achieved; if Ministers responsible for the environment meet in Conference next year or the year after; if the public and parliaments react to the message of European Conservation Year; then its launching ceremony, the European Conservation Conference at Strasbourg in February will have been a success, not only in terms of the noise it made in the news media, but also in terms of more long-lasting value.

STEN RENBORG, Secretary of the European Conservation Conference

PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE ON THE ENVIRONMENT

ROBERT I STANDISH

On the third day of the European Conservation Conference, documentation clerks passed back and fourth among the delegates delivering thick blue documents. These were 27-page texts of a message from the President of the United States which had been transmitted to the US Congress on the preceding day. It dealt with a comprehensive programme to control environmental pollution.

One may wonder why this weighty paper from a nation thousands of miles away was handed out to Europeans at a Council of Europe conference. Quite simply, the reason lay in the fact that the message concerned problems similar in nature and complexity to the European problems being considered at the time by the assembled delegates, many of whom took the message back to their respective countries for further study.



Old style industry. 'Air is our most vital resource, and its pollution is our most serious environmental problem.' Certain clean air zones were set up under the 1967 Act but without effective government standards, firms that spend on pollution control may find themselves at a disadvantage as against their less conscientious competitors. President Nixon proposes the establishment of nation-wide air quality standards and within one year, abatement plans to meet those standards, and fines of up to 10 000 dollars a day.

Problems of modern man in industrial societies are not greatly different whether in the United States or in Europe. In the context of the Strasbourg meeting the President's message, therefore, was timely and relevant. In the context of European Conservation Year it deserves careful consideration. In such critical times no one can sensibly ignore the lessons of experience in the search for ways to improve the physical aspects of living.

The President's introduction might well have been addressed by any leader of any industrial nation:

'... we in this century have too casually and too long abused our natural environment. The time has come when we can wait no longer to repair the damage already done, and to establish new criteria to guide us in the future.

'The fight against pollution, however, is not a search for villains. For the most part, the damage done to our environment has not been the work of evil men, nor has it been the inevitable by-product either of advancing technology or of growing population. It results not so much from choices made as from choices neglected, not from malign intention, but from failure to take into account the full consequences of our actions.

'Quite inadvertently, by ignoring environmental costs we have given an economic advantage to the careless polluter over his more conscientious rival. While adopting laws prohibiting injury to persons or property, we have freely allowed injury to our shared surroundings...' '... we came only late to a recognition of how precious and how valuable our resources of land, water and air really are.

'The tasks that need doing require money, resolve and ingenuity — and they are too big to be done by government alone. They call for fundamentally new philosophies of land, air and water use, for stricter regulation, for expanded government action, for greater citizen involvement, and for new programs to ensure that government, industry and individuals all are called on to do their share of the job and to pay their share of the cost.'

People who have visited the USA and know it well retain several



A mountain of motorcars. Few of America's eyesores are so unsightly as its millions of junk automobiles which create an almost insurmountable disposal problem. In the USA a new baby arrives every 12 seconds but a new car every 5 seconds; and many of the cars are cannibalised and then abandoned in the street or countryside.

powerful impressions: the vastness of the place, its vigour, the penetration of industrial enterprises into the whole fabric of the land, the enormous outpouring of goods (and of wastes) and the use of resources on a scale to make some visitors wince.

Because the many aspects of environmental quality are closely interwoven, the President wisely outlined a comprehensive, 37-point programme, embracing 23 major legislative proposals and 14 new measures being taken by administrative action or executive order in five major categories. These were: water pollution control, air pollution control, solid waste management, parklands and public recreation, and organizing for action.

Following are some of the more important aspects discussed in the message.

Water pollution

Water pollution has three major sources: municipal, industrial and agricultural wastes. Of the three, the most difficult to control are those from agricultural sources: animal wastes, eroded soil, fertilizers and pesticides. This will require time and a variety of actions to change agricultural practices, develop better methods of handling concentrations of animal wastes, better soil conservation methods, new kinds of fertilizers and pesticides, and a more widespread use of natural pest control techniques. Some actions have already been taken, such as the recent order to begin phasing out use of DDT and other 'hard' pesticides. But much remains to be done. The President has asked his new Council on Environmental Quality to 'press forward in this area'.

To attack the problem of municipal wastes, the President proposed new federal support to communities to help them build waste treatment facilities and various reforms to make sure that this effort is effective. Key parts in the proposal involve comprehensive river basin plans, and construction of large regional treatment facilities.

Wastes from industrial sources are also to be brought under tighter control, and to do this the President proposed a 7-point programme which included precise effluent requirements on all municipal and industrial waste sources. Concurrently, means to enlarge and strengthen enforcement would be instituted.

Air pollution

This is regarded as the most serious environmental problem, against which existing technology for control is less advanced than that for controlling water pollution. Most air pollution is produced by the burning of fuels, and about half comes from motor vehicles.

Federal regulations already exist on emissions of carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons, and these will be made more stringent. Nitrogen oxides will be brought under control by 1973, and particulate emissions by 1975. The President proposed new laws on testing production automobiles for compliance, and to govern fuel composition and additives.

For the long range — in anticipation of the time when the sheer number of vehicles will overwhelm the technological capability to maintain control over the total pollutant output — the President will inaugurate a programme of government and private research with the goal of producing an unconventionally powered, virtually pollution-free vehicle in 5 years.

Pollution from stationary sources is a major problem and efforts toward control under present laws have been inadequate. To overcome some of the principal shortcomings, the President proposed that the Federal Government should establish nationwide air quality



Baled motorcars. Blocks of metal that were once cars being stacked ready for delivery to a steel works for re-use. When a car is retired from use it goes first to a wrecker, who strips it of its valuable parts, and then to a scrap processor who crushes it, bales it, and sells it to a steel mill. The price paid by a wrecker is often less than the cost of transport and for a severely damaged or cannibalized car he may even charge towing costs. Thus the final owner's economic incentive to deliver his car for processing is slight, non-existent or even negative. The rate of abandonment is increasing. In New York City, 2500 cars were towed away as abandoned on the streets in 1960; in 1964 the figure was 25 000; in 1969, more than 50 000.

standards (more stringent standards could be set by the individual states) together with legal machinery for management and enforcement.

Solid wastes

These discarded left-overs of what he called 'our advanced consumer society' are increasing in volume. They litter the landscape and strain the facilities of municipal governments to cope with them. The solution recommended by the President was broad and twofold: to reduce the volume of wastes and the difficulty of their disposal, and to encourage re-use and re-cycling. Solid wastes are intimately related to resource consumption. The President recognised their finite limits, noting that more than half of the total of common minerals extracted from the earth since time began has been extracted since 1910. Hence the techniques of re-processing, re-cycling and re-using materials need to be refined and expanded. The President called for extension of the present Solid Waste Disposal Act, which expires this year, and he has already directed that greater effort be given to finding techniques for re-cycling, and for the development of degradable packaging materials that will not further pollute the environment.

He had a special word about retired automobiles, which are a blight in America because there is little economic incentive for disposing of them to scrap mills. Disposal cost should be included in the sales price, he suggested, or some other incentive found to encourage the proper handling of outworn cars.

Parks and public recreation

The President had much to say on this topic, since more than 750 million acres in the USA are owned by the Federal Government. In broad terms he is wisely seeking ways to provide more land for public recreation. This need is growing enormously and will continue to grow in future.

All of this is regarded as only a beginning, but even so it is the most comprehensive programme on purely environmental matters ever proposed by a US President at one time. If it succeeds over Congressional hurdles and in spite of the tangled webs of vested interests, the inertia of status quo, fragmented and overlapping jurisdictions, and the deeply-rooted commitment to the old 'frontier' philosophy of persons and businesses, to do rather much as they please in the use and exploitation of the land, the whole of America will benefit greatly. In the President's words no less is sought than 'the rescue of our natural habitat as a place both habitable and hospitable to man'.

CONSERVATION IN *eastern* EUROPE



Jacana Francis Peter

HAYO H HOEKSTRA,
Head of the European Information Centre for Nature Conservation

I jerked upright in my sleeping bag, awoken by the growling of my dog. A half moon stood low over the mountains which rolled endlessly away into the darkblue night. On seeing and hearing nothing, I eventually went back to sleep.

Next morning, I found the tracks of a large bear as it had circled my tent at a distance of some thirty yards.

Rising large over the frosty forests and meadows, the October sun quickly spread warmth and the air was filled with the sad call of migrating birds: cranes and geese, thrushes and crows, in stately or ragged formations. From all around came that most noble and ferocious of all woodsongs, the mating call of the red deer. How rich is nature!

The Romanian Carpathians, October 1969.



F. Bel - G. Vienne/Jacana

above: Playful punch-up. Brown bears *Ursus arctos* once ranged from Britain to Japan, and as far south as the Mediterranean and the Himalayas. By the 11th century the last had been killed in Britain and today, in Europe, the survivors are largely confined to inaccessible forests in the Pyrenees, Swiss Alps, Carpathians, Balkans, Norway, Sweden and Finland. They are more numerous in parts of the Soviet Union but even there numbers have dropped.

facing: Soviet success. Saiga, saved from extinction. Its puffy nose probably warms the cold dry air it breathes on the steppe.

European Conservation Year 1970 — the concerted effort of the Council of Europe to lead the way out of the threat of a poisoned, impoverished environment.

Although ECY has already proved to be a greater success than had been hoped for, and although at its international inauguration, the European Conservation Conference of last February, ten non-member countries and a host of international organisations took part, the direct activities as coordinated by the Council of Europe cover only the seventeen member countries, and in some way a few observer countries cooperating in nature conservation.

It is perhaps the right time, in view of the supranational effort towards a common good — the natural environment — to view the state of affairs concerning this problem in the countries of eastern Europe. Because if there is one matter in which all human beings should have the same interest, it is the natural environment, the natural resources to be shared by all and managed by all.

This is not the moment to probe into the achievements and gaps, legislation and administration of nature conservation in the eastern European countries. In passing we may want to visit these fascinating

countries where nature is often still so rich and varied.

Although very little comparison can be made between the countries of eastern Europe — Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia — their administrative and political structures differ basically from those of the countries in western Europe. No, or hardly any, private property exists, and the state, on behalf of the people, decides on all questions concerning the environment and its natural resources. This often means that measures can be more

easily adopted than in western democracies; it may imply, as it frequently did in the past, that conservation is determined by economic factors. Studies forming the basis of conservation, like ecology and ornithology, sometimes counted as non-productive work, and were thus less well paid. This, however, is changing, and all the countries listed above now have, or are forming, enlightened conservation policies which differ little from those of the countries of western Europe, and often even surpass them in purpose, zest and efficiency. One should however not forget that some countries in eastern Europe did have quite a tradition in these matters.

Not only are Europe's natural resources and natural environment (and the world's for that matter) a common good so their management should be in mutual cooperation and deliberation, but also the wealth of experience, good and bad, pleads for such cooperation. Eastern Europe is modernising its agriculture and almost all other aspects of life. New towns spring up, new roads are being built to cope with a booming tourist industry, and the pace of their construction may lead to some of the irreparable mistakes already made in western Europe. Exchange of information and specialists and international cooperation may prevent this. It would surely be one of its major successes if this collaboration were to spring from ECY 1970.

Eastern Europe is still relatively unknown to the west although the ever-increasing number of tourists is changing the picture. Whereas in some countries a few years ago national and traditional costumes could often be seen, even in the towns, this is now disappearing. The natural life of eastern Europe is being opened up for tourists. Many hunters come for the rich trophies that stag and boar, chamois and bear provide. The main distinction from most west European countries is that nature here remains less spoiled, more rich, vast and wild; the negative influences of industry, over-population and mechanisation are still less visible. Eastern Europe's ad-

vantage is that it may learn from the mistakes made by countries which have lost their virgin forests, big game and clear streams. Of course, there is no black and white situation. Polar bears in Canada's arctic north have been found to contain a high percentage of DDT and it is almost certain that the Soviet Union's north is equally contaminated. The Danube is no longer blue, either in Vienna or in its large Romanian delta. Pollution, by rainfall from the upper atmosphere, is worldwide. Western Europe too has its beauty spots in the Hardanger Vedda, the Coto Doñana, and Hohe Tauern and countless other reserves and parks, just as eastern Europe has its 'black spots'. Nevertheless, those who have been fortunate enough to have travelled widely in these magnificent countries cherish memories of the Polish lakes teeming with fish, of the endless birch forests and marshes of the Soviet Union, the wonders of the Carpathians, and the last remaining puszta. Nature there is still so much wilder.

THE SOVIET UNION'S VAST RESOURCES

Modern nature conservation began, the Russians insist, immediately after the Great Revolution. Lenin himself stressed in a series of decrees the need for wise management of Soviet forests and other resources. In all other socialist republics of eastern Europe, one finds the same claim: with the new socialist and communist administrations success for conservation was secured. This attitude is losing its rigidity, also in other sectors of life, thus making it possible to correct mistakes, once having acknowledged them.

The Soviet government seems to be keenly aware of a need for environmental concern and applied actions. This shows in the building or rebuilding of towns and cities, notably Moscow: greenbelts, parks, broad boulevards, clean streets, no smoking in the famous underground of Moscow, and a great many posters on all kinds of environmental problems such as the lighting of fires in woods and forests, the poaching of game and

fish, and the pollution of streams. A recent article in 'Izvestia' announced stringent laws for the protection of water, wetlands, fish and wildfowl. This project even calls for ecological studies prior to the installation of new industries; another project is to call the month of June the 'month of quiet'. This would imply no noisy parties, no wood-cutting, no tours: all in order to protect young wildlife. If executed and duly implemented, such examples will greatly help to conserve natural resources and to create an awareness of the need for conservation. Considering the sometimes awesome love that the Slav peoples have for nature (think of all those nesting boxes in the gardens of Russian embassies!) this will surely not fail to reach its mark.

The Russians have a large staff of specialists, and new cadres are being formed on a wider basis of interest than mere economics, although it should be added that this is still the predominant factor in conservation activities — next to a strict protection of species which the Russians consider endangered, such as tiger, polar bear and snow leopard. Their results with the once almost extinct saiga antelope is world-famous. On the other hand, a plea for the vigorous destruction of wolves was heard last year during a congress of game biologists in Moscow, which does not exactly represent the modern enlightened view toward these carnivores.

In the Soviet Union there does not yet seem to be a nation-wide concern for the environment, although in one of his major speeches Brezhnev did call attention to the need for environmental management. But there have not yet been top-level directives. And yet there is awareness and goodwill and there are eminent specialists. Once the need for an overall conservation policy has been acknowledged, it will not be difficult for Soviet citizens to preserve their nature, its beauty and resources. An east European conservation conference of which there has been talk may be a great leap forward, in the Soviet Union as well as in the other countries.



above: Ancient oaks stand beside young saplings in the virgin forest of Kampinos, a fine wildlife refuge close to Warsaw.

below: A baby elk Alces alces stands shakily in the forest, its hair still wet from birth.



POLISH VIRGIN FORESTS CRADLE OF EUROPEAN BISON

Nature conservation in Poland is the responsibility of the Minister of Forests and Forest Industry, as it is in Bulgaria. In the Soviet Union it falls within the competence of the Ministry of Agriculture. In Hungary there is a special council directly responsible to the Committee of Ministers. In Romania it is a question for the Academy of Sciences, while in Yugoslavia it is a matter for the various republics, now 'supervised' by a supra-national council. In Czechoslovakia there is the State Nature Conservancy of the Ministry of Culture.

Like Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, Poland is well-known to hunters from western Europe. This 'hunting industry' is to be acclaimed, provided that a strict and biologically justified system is followed, and that the relatively important revenues flow, to a certain degree, back to biological studies and game management.

Polish universities offer courses in nature conservation, ecology and phenology and a one year course for academically qualified engineers in nature conservation is being set up.

Poland's nature is both rugged and friendly, although in winter it is most forbidding. Highlights are the Polish part of the Tatra National Park — where a very good bilateral cooperation with Czechoslovakia has been established — the lake district of Masuria and the Bialowieza forest on the Soviet border. This forest is famous because of a new herd of the European bison which was established here after wartime losses of the remaining wild animals. Poland is rich in game and exports quite large numbers of hare, pheasant and partridge as well as some big game to western countries for restocking. This, by the way, is practised by other east European countries.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S FAMOUS TATRAS

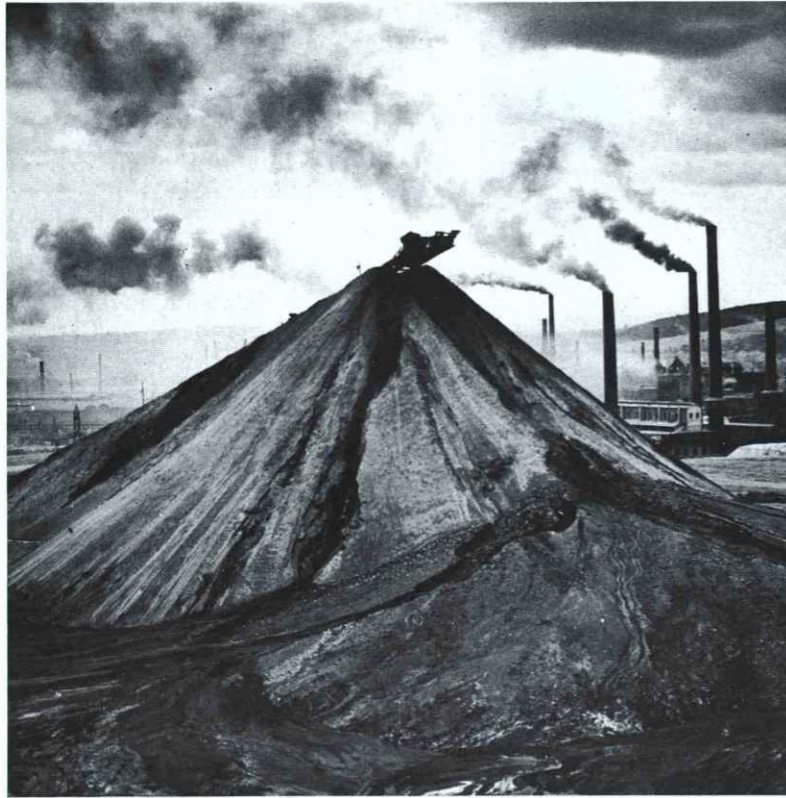
Czechoslovakia is highly industrialised and has quite a large pollution problem which is evident in

Dr A Wasilewski

Dr A Wasilewski

HELL ON EARTH

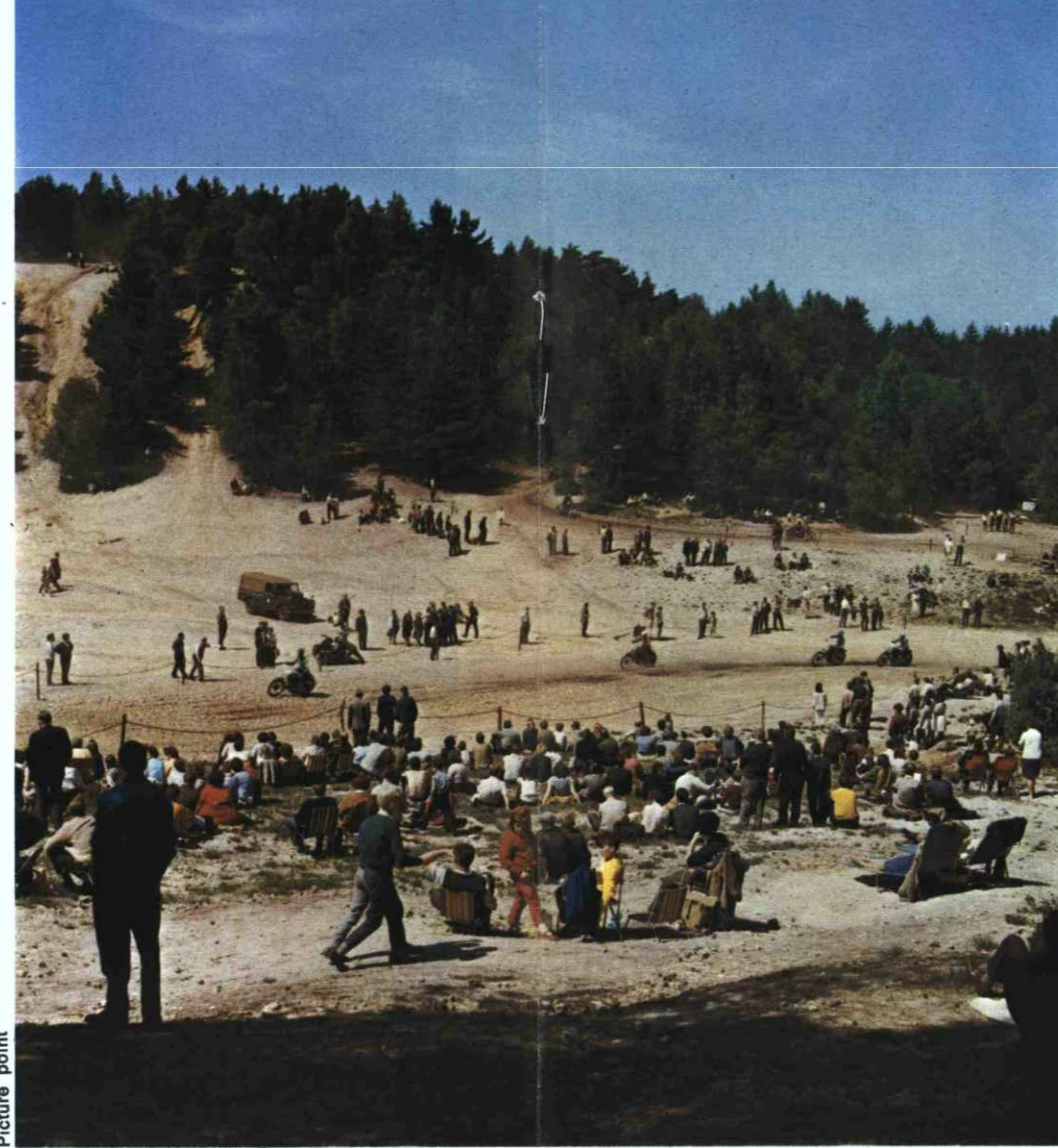
An ugly industrial environment drives people into the countryside to seek their leisure (1). The fleets of motorcars they use to get there make the journey unpleasant and frankly poisonous (4). When they arrive they destroy the land (2) and leave their litter behind them (3).



1

1
Smoke and chimney fumes pollute the air, mingle with the clouds and descend again many miles away, perhaps to pollute the environment of another nation. When there is a desperate shortage of land for leisure, acres are laid waste and left derelict. Water runs off these spoil heaps to poison waterways which once were alive with fish. Air pollution is a problem which can be successfully tackled (see p 23). Derelict land can be restored (see p 24). Water pollution is a more difficult problem but stricter standards could often be applied (see p 21).

2
Wearing away a mountain.
Constant trampling by thousands of feet and the coursing of hundreds of tyres has completely destroyed the turf on this hillside. City man seeks his leisure in the countryside yet seems unable to avoid destroying that which attracts him. Without its protective turf the soil is quickly worn and washed away; the trees will be next to go and the speed aces will have lost the 'obstacles' which make their track worthwhile. Problems of this kind are now the subject of ecological research. Spoil heaps, like that illustrated, could easily be replanted and landscaped to provide ideal motorcycle scramble tracks conveniently close to centres of population (see p 24).



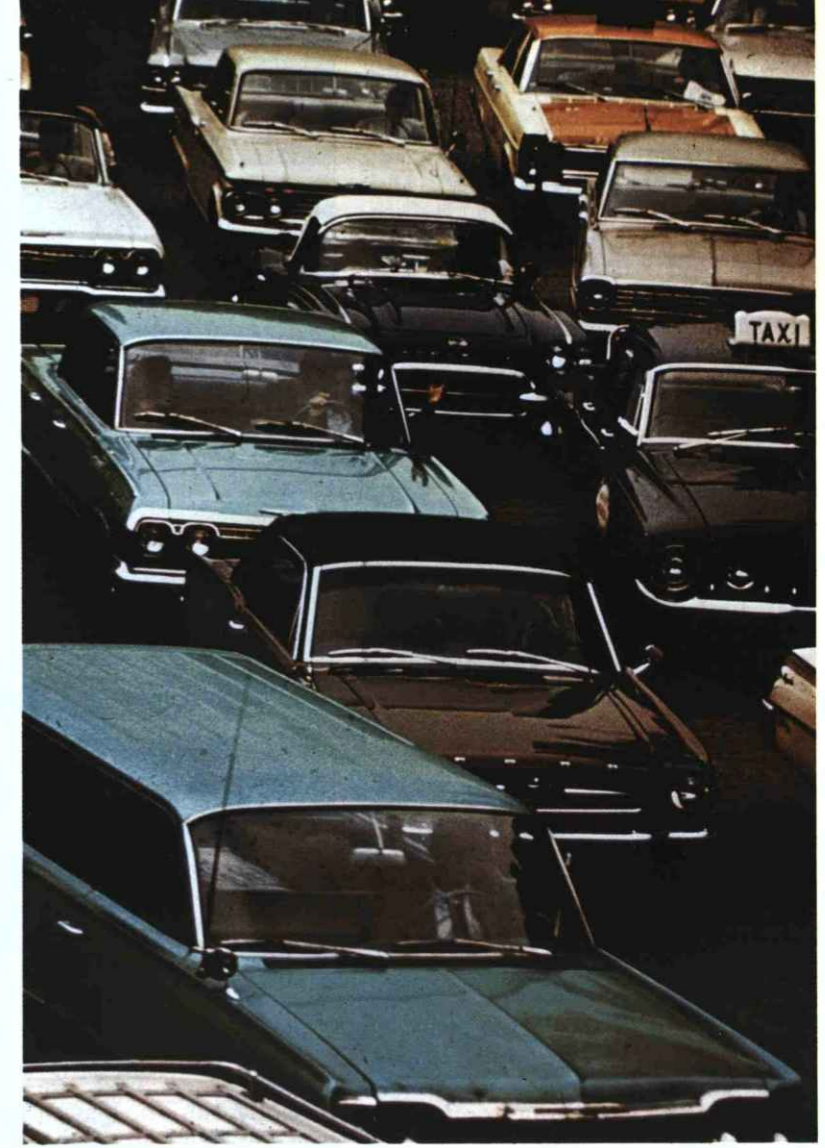
Picture point

2

3



TIOFOTO



4

3
600 kg of solid waste per person per year. That is the size of the waste disposal problem which at present is largely 'solved' by dumping in the countryside. With proper planning much waste could be reused but litter is a question of individual behaviour. After every weekend and holiday tons of litter have to be collected from around beauty spots. We must acquire a sense of personal responsibility if we are to solve this problem and the many others which are threatening our environment.

4
The flight from the town.
Every day thousands of motorists flee from the city, back to their suburban homes. Every weekend thousands more seek the peace of nature; each one as he drives pouring poisonous gases into the air. Every new car means an old one abandoned — a problem to be disposed of — and when the trippers return to their homes once more their litter is left behind. But President Nixon has proposed the target of a pollution free vehicle in 5 years and the cost of disposal of a motorcar could be included in its purchase price (see p 9).

some of the often heavily polluted and foaming streams. But both Czechs and Slovaks take a great interest in nature and its conservation and spend much effort and money on such problems. Nature conservation is very scientifically based, and some universities and institutes offer possibilities for studying one or more of its aspects. There are many large and small reserves, and hunting and forestry yield excellent results.

Czechoslovakia sent two participants to the European Conservation Conference, which is a sign of this country's vital concern for its environment, and implies also that they are aware that this is a pan-European problem. Romania and Yugoslavia were also represented and other countries sent messages of good will.

An outstanding success is the Tatra National Park, which celebrated its twentieth anniversary last autumn. The Czechoslovaks have here established a park where nature is virtually left to itself; where great carnivores and other mammals are allowed to live according to a scientific hunting plan; where in a huge natural laboratory scientists may study and at the same time large numbers of tourists may come. So far this has not upset the natural balance, but in a frank speech made during the celebrations, fear for the future was expressed as to how to organise tourism, and assistance from any specialists was asked for. As with the Poles and Russians, and for that matter all other nationalities, the Czechoslovaks are cooperating in many international organisations and projects such as the International Wildfowl Research Bureau and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources with their MAR Project. There are many wetland reserves, many projects for the ringing of wildfowl, many studies and wildfowl counts.

HUNGARY'S PUSZTA SAVED

The most characteristic aspect of Hungary's natural landscape is the



Charles A. Vaucher

Coming in to land. White pelican
Pelecanus onocrotalus in the Danube Delta.

puszta. It is also, or was until recently, its most neglected and most threatened aspect. Although the efficient Conservation Board created many nature reserves in forests and in marshlands, and hunting of big game is carefully regulated, until recently the puszta was rather recklessly developed for agriculture. Suddenly alive to the threat that its original character might be irretrievably lost, the Hungarian government decreed that a large part of the puszta be set aside as a natural reserve. Another famous reserve is Kisbalaton, the marshland at the southwest tip of the huge Lake of Balaton. Beautiful colonies of marshland birds breed here, as they do also in Velencei Tó, a lake nearer to Budapest, where conservation and tourism have made a happy marriage.

Hungary has one of the most efficient hunting organisations and the trophies of roe deer, red deer

and fallow deer are coveted by many hunters, especially from Germany, France and Austria. The forests along the Danube and other former estates have been expertly managed.

BEARS, STURGEON AND PELICANS

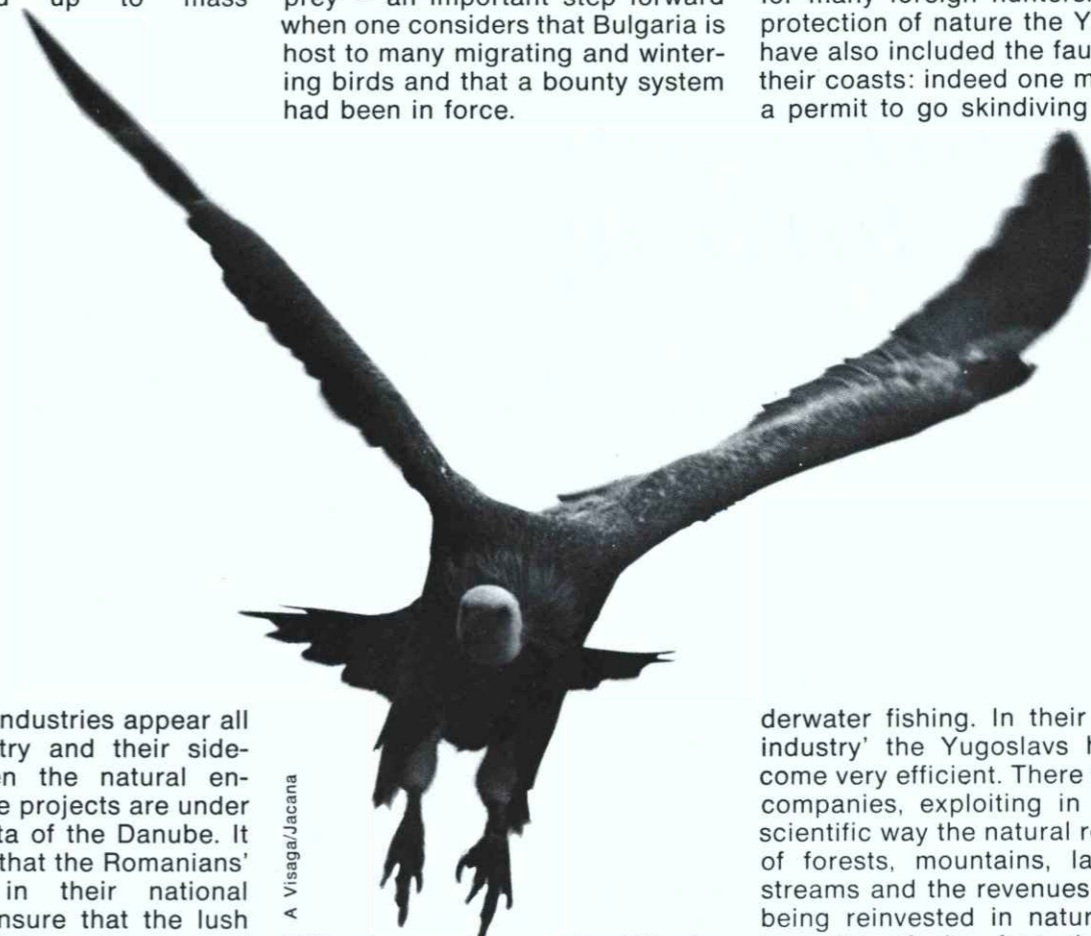
From the peaks of its Carpathians to the immense delta of the Danube, Romania is one of the richest countries as regards nature. In the mountains live all the animals of the original fauna, with the exception of the European bison which has been re-established in a few reserves, and of some of the larger birds of prey which were destroyed in the campaign against wolves when they fed on poisoned carcasses: no longer does one see vultures, and only too rarely, eagles. Nature conservation is, however, being reorganised. A host of reserves have been created, from the famous wild Retezat and

Bucegi mountains to caves and large parts of the Delta and the Dobruja.

Romania's problems are manifold: the country is developing at a swift rate and most of it is being opened up to mass

and Rodopi mountains are large parks where bears, wolves, eagles and vultures still exist and are protected by law.

Some years ago Bulgaria set an example by protecting all birds of prey — an important step forward when one considers that Bulgaria is host to many migrating and wintering birds and that a bounty system had been in force.



A. Visaga/Jacana

tourism. Huge industries appear all over the country and their side-effects threaten the natural environment; large projects are under way in the Delta of the Danube. It is to be hoped that the Romanians' fierce pride in their national heritage will ensure that the lush woods, mountains, lakes and marshes remain unspoiled by the transformation of a largely agricultural country to a heavily industrialised one.

VULTURES IN THE BALKANS

The almost dead waters of the Struma and other rivers testify to Bulgaria's industrial development and one wonders how this country, with its great export of fruit, vegetables and meat, will guarantee the supply of enough clean water to grow these products. Bulgarians too love nature, and lately they have gone to quite some lengths to preserve what is left. It is encouraging to think that the beautiful Vitosha Park encompassing a whole mountain high above Sofia, is a symbol of Bulgaria's nature conservation. In the Pirin

Still, when one stands atop Vitosha, breathing the clean mountain air and seeing the rich fauna at play, one also notices the pall of smoke all along the Balkan mountains, smoke which comes from the new heavy industries, and one is aware that here too modern times are making problems that need solving.

FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA TO THE ALPS

The constituent republics of the Yugoslav Federation are responsible for questions concerning nature conservation, a situation which is not favourable to coordination and cooperation on a national and international level. But recently a pan-Yugoslav board has been created which advises on a national level and maintains international contacts.

Yugoslavia is vast, and its climate ranges from the Mediterranean to the central European types. It still has bears, pelicans, and colonies of aquatic birds as well as expertly managed big game — an attraction for many foreign hunters. In their protection of nature the Yugoslavs have also included the fauna along their coasts: indeed one must have a permit to go skindiving and un-

derwater fishing. In their 'hunting industry' the Yugoslavs have become very efficient. There are large companies, exploiting in a highly scientific way the natural resources of forests, mountains, lakes and streams and the revenues are also being reinvested in nature.

In spite of the fact that inter-republic cooperation is only beginning, the Yugoslavs are keenly aware of the richness of their country, and of the dangers that modernisation brings with it. The hunting and forestry company Jelen of Belgrade, recently showed a short, beautifully made film contrasting virgin nature with the inexorable encroachment of human civilisation.

All east Europeans have a passionate love for the countryside. Many are aware of their rich, natural heritage, although in view of other pressing problems the administration may not in all cases be geared to efficient environmental management. But there is no doubt that from the hills of Bohemia to the Urals and beyond, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, a rich environment is in good hands.

EUROPEAN CONSERVATION YEAR

culmination ...or starting point?

Undoubtedly, 1970 will see the climax of considerable efforts. All over Europe, thousands of conservationists are preparing — and have been for a year or two — the action they intend to take in this famous 'Year 1970'. Some are teachers, others workmen; some are taking charge of an entire national programme, while others are preparing a chatty little talk or the decoration of a shop window. But all are giving of their best for they know they are working for a great cause, I am tempted to say in this connection, for the great cause.

But when all the different events arranged for 1970 have come to an end, these various promoters of European Conservation Year will quite naturally be tempted, after so much efforts, to resume their normal activities with the well-justified feeling of having worked hard and having seen their work crowned with success.

Now, this is where I want to say something to all these eager people, and to all those in charge of activities, and beg them not to stop there. After our recent great success, thanks to which people's mind are now more open to our ideas, we must strike while the iron is hot. Our task, a real vocation for some of us, is too important for us to relax. We have to go on informing, guiding and instructing our associates, our pupils, our readers on this crucial problem of protecting our natural environment.

You may ask why we are so set on extending this Year. The answer is simple. We have only to look around us and compare the

unbelievable evergrowing power that science and technology are placing in man's hands with the continual and inexorable deterioration in his environment. And yet, the European of 1970 could put a stop to this deterioration, albeit, certainly, at the cost of great financial sacrifice. But he does not do so, or, if he does act, he acts much too cautiously, almost symbolically in some cases. So where do we go from there?

The causes of this critical situation are many and complicated. Among them, the part played by man's inmost nature is not the least important, because it is composed of two contradictory elements. The first goes back to his origins and is the selfish, possessive side of his character. It is this which prompts that pursuit of gain, in all its forms, which so often reminds one of the most powerful driving-forces of human behaviour. The second is more recent and is that awakening to a sense of his responsibilities which is becoming more common among mankind. Thanks to this sentiment man no longer thinks of himself alone; he feels more and more bound up with his fellow men. He has become part of the 'social phenomenon' as Teilhard de Chardin puts it.

Many factors contribute to this new attitude of man towards his fellows and descendants, and thus also towards his natural environment. Among the most important of these, of course, is the growing deterioration in the quality of that environment.

The air he breathes contains an ever-increasing amount of waste products of every kind and of carcinogenic substances; water is less and less pure and fit to drink; the pesticides contained in food-stuffs are continually increasing in amount and variety; sleep becomes less and less refreshing. And yet man has a growing need of calm and of contact with nature in the real sense. Is this not proof positive that his mode of life is getting farther and farther away from what it ought to be, biologically speaking, by becoming more artificial as opposed to natural? And yet

the human species seems to be more vigorous than ever. It is a fact that man adapts himself in a remarkable way to rapid changes in his ecological niche, although his physical and physiological characteristics have changed very little over thousands of years. But is there no limit to this capacity to adjust?

It is hardly surprising that individual characteristics are often to be found in an accentuated form in communities and in society. On the one hand, the idea of profit, of dividends or of re-election far too often takes first place; relegating the really major problems to the back-ground; and on the other, these same communities take an increasingly active part in the campaign for protecting the environment, often even investing large sums in projects which, twenty or thirty years ago, they would not even have touched. Thus, hardly anyone remains unaware of the seriousness of the situation and all strata of society are progressively acquiring a collective conscience. Does this mean that the future is assured? By no means, for although man admits that urgent steps must now be taken to put a stop to the deterioration in our environment, he is not yet ready to pay the price.

COOPERATIVE CONSERVATION

Thus, it is vital to prolong the first major effort to inform the public on a European scale. This widespread action, designed to make the European peoples aware of the modern dynamic aspects of the conservation of nature and its resources, must be carried on with conviction and enthusiasm way beyond 1970. We must be realistic: governments will not take the necessary steps to combat effectively the deterioration in our environment until public opinion as a whole is convinced that such measures are necessary, or, to put it another way, until it accepts the large financial sacrifices which that involves. Ecologists and other specialists in problems of the natural environment, whether concerned with its

deterioration or its improvement, have been expressing their alarm for a long time, but without much success. For instance, far-sighted and serious-minded people have been trying for some time to curb the almost delirious enthusiasm of the first users of DDT. It must now be admitted that these 'pessimists' were right, and that the improper and reckless use of such toxic substances has led to a growing amount of poisoning, direct or indirect, lasting or incidental. Although we have no idea of the long-term effects of such products on the health of man, we do know that certain birds of prey are becoming extinct because relatively large quantities of pesticide have accumulated in their bodies, particularly in the fatty tissues, liver and reproductive cells. At the moment, only two milligrams of DDT per kilogram have been found in the body fat of Europeans, against twelve in North Americans. In America, moreover, mother's milk may contain up to 5 times the permissible amount of DDT in milk for sale. What will the position be in twenty years' time? We must inform the public, but care is needed. It would be more than regrettable if we left the road of objectivity for that of fanaticism. To overdramatise the situation harms the cause of nature conservation, that is to say, the cause of man himself; to pin too much faith on man's wisdom is just as dangerous, as I have tried to show. It is, moreover, necessary to demonstrate that nature conservation is no longer in systematic opposition to progress. Nature conservation, as practised by our grandfathers, is as dead as the dodo. The narrow bounds in which their preoccupations were confined have burst wide open. Today, conservationists are opposed neither to technology nor to the development of comfort and tourism, for example; quite the contrary. Discussions with industrialists, town-planners, engineers and political authorities are becoming more and more frequent and often lead to positive results. But opinions differ on certain fundamental problems. The ecologists believe that modern society is developing in a direction which is

dangerous to its survival, dazzled as it is by technological progress. Even if many miracles are technically possible, what government has enough money simultaneously to regenerate its polluted lakes, to restore its lost or damaged biotopes, to take energetic action to purify the air its taxpayers breathe? There is no miraculous solution and it is only by patient and long-term effort that our aims will be achieved. As time is short, we must intensify our various activities in two directions.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FOR ALL

First we must provide information for society as a whole. Here the procedure employed must be directly geared to the people concerned; schoolchildren, teachers and factory workers require different forms of approach. Mass media will play a decisive part, as will the ideas of the originators of nature conservation. The basic necessity is to provide lasting education and information without appearing to do so. In other words, activities must be devised which are different in substance and concept, but always concerned with some problem of environment. The individual on the receiving end must be fed regularly with ideas and if possible assimilate them. These ideas may be based on current news items, such as the discharge of liquid manure into a river, the emptying of an oil-tank which pollutes the groundwater, children poisoned by diesel fumes from lorries.

In other cases, the presence of some well-known person at the opening of a nature exhibition may provide the pretext for announcing some important information.

What seems to me particularly useful is the organisation, once or twice a year, of spectacular demonstrations requiring the participation of several different groups, thus bringing together a great number of people and authorities and warranting the substantial support of press, radio and television.

Parallel with this distribution of information, closer contact must be achieved with the authorities, local, regional or national. It will be particularly important to contact or to intensify contact with those responsible for regional planning, again whether local or national. Those responsible for land use have a particularly decisive part to play in improving the quality of the environment. But they are not the only ones: agricultural engineers, foresters, motorway builders, architects, state-employed chemists responsible for analysing air and water are also directly concerned with the problems of the natural environment. It is essential, too, to inform members of parliament, to instigate improvements in existing laws and to suggest the establishment of new decrees. All such initiatives must have a solid foundation as part of a long-term plan. They must be most carefully prepared with the help of specialists (ecologists, biologists, town planners, lawyers, etc.) not only because the problems of man's environment are becoming more and more important and acute, but also because the facts are changing with the times. The natural balance is not static, but dynamic. As man is always changing his environment more radically, it is hardly surprising that the problems in question grow ever more numerous and more complex. What can be done? How can we act? The possibilities are many and I should like here to put forward a few suggestions.

EUROPEAN CONSERVATION YEAR AS A BEGINNING

Most of the European countries have drawn up excellent programmes of national activities, which provide a rich source of ideas. It would be most helpful if, at the end of ECY, each national organising committee examined the results obtained: on the one hand, those which proved successful, on the other, those which were less so, or which failed. The balance-sheet, together with pertinent observations, could be transmitted to other national committees — for instance, via the European Information Cen-

tre for Nature Conservation of the Council of Europe. Each country could thus profit from the experience of others. One might envisage the possibility that the organising committees should not be dissolved at the end of 1970, but should be maintained in another form and should meet periodically with a view to undertaking joint action at international level. This might be the adoption, on a European scale, of a particularly interesting and attractive national project. Similarly, European achievements might be adapted for use at national or regional level, the experiences of 1970 being kept always in mind.



The possibilities for action are therefore many and various. Each of us in his own sphere and with the means at his disposal, must ensure that the problems of the protection and rational use of our natural environment are better known, better understood and better solved. Only when every citizen is aware of the realities of nature conservation can we afford to be optimistic. As the Council of Europe has suggested that Europeans devote 1970 to nature conservation, it has firmly decide to provide an example, so that the Year will be not

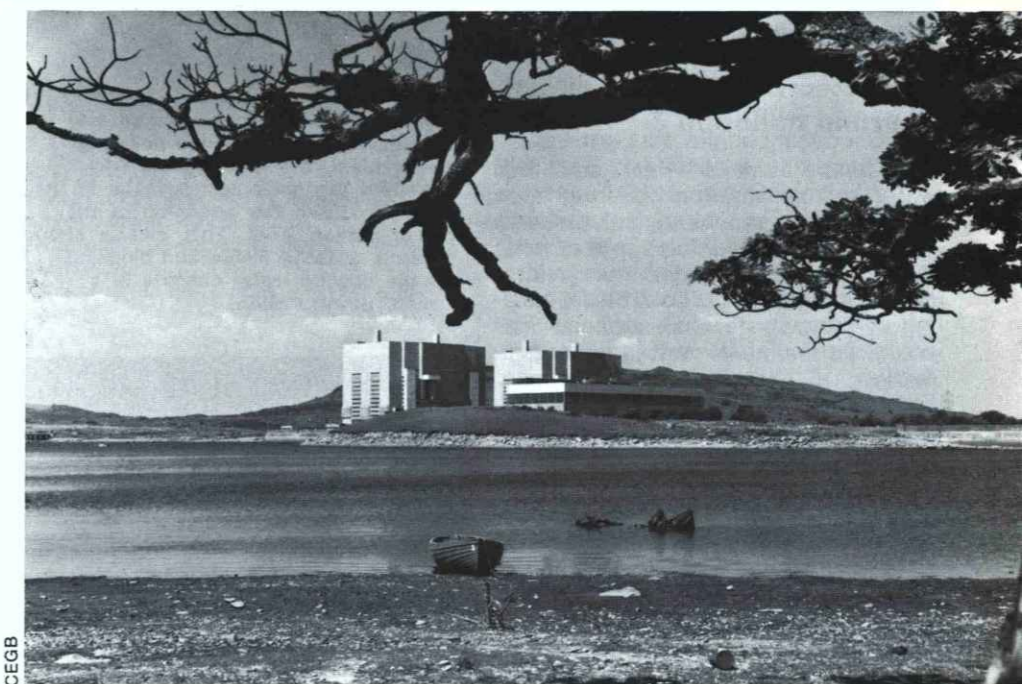
only a culmination but also a starting point — the starting point of a policy of ever more intense and effective information.

JEAN-PIERRE RIBAUT
Head of the Environment and Natural Resources Division, Council of Europe

One example of an ECY activity which, having taken to the road, will no doubt continue for years to come. Some 40 000 people visited this travelling exhibition during its first three months touring Dublin and the Midlands and West of Ireland. Launching the exhibition, the Minister for Lands, Sean Flanagan, said: 'we take our campaign to the streets with the positive aim of reminding our people of their birthright.'

...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS...NEWS... FROM STRASBOURG

Atomic power station on the shore of Trawsfynydd lake in Wales. This was the first nuclear power station to be built inland and the first to use a lake for obtaining cooling water. Special care was taken to 'blend' the buildings into their surroundings in the Snowdonia National Park. The electricity generating authority has restocked the lake with trout which thrive in the warmed waters.



'WATER, WATER, EVERYWHERE NOR ANY DROP TO DRINK'

'Concerted action in the Council of Europe on the pollution of freshwater is justified and even indispensable.' This was the conclusion of the Committee of Ministers when they considered the recommendation of the Consultative Assembly for a European Convention on the protection of freshwater against pollution. Despite the legal problems involved in drawing up such an instrument the Committee of Ministers stressed that the work should be completed as speedily as possible.

In most parts of Europe there is plenty of water in lakes or rivers, or underground basins. The siting of reservoirs may sometimes present difficulties, but, in general, quantity is no problem. But all over Europe it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain the purity of water for drinking or for industry. Quality is a serious problem. The Council of Europe began its propaganda for clean water in 1968 with a European Water Charter which exhorts governments and individuals to observe certain basic standards of water management (see Nature in Focus - Winter 1968).

A number of interesting and detailed studies (some of which are summarised below) are being made by the secretariat of the Nature Division or by various members of the European Committee's Ad hoc Study Group on Water Conservation.

What is water pollution?

It is interesting that several countries have not included an exact definition of water pollution in their legislation.

This raises the question of whether this omission is deliberate and, if so, should such a definition be included in national legislation? Some countries whose action in the field of water pollution is very advanced have preferred merely to indicate their concept of water pollution rather than legislate for precise standards. This may amount to a sort of 'indirect definition'. According to ER Malakoff (Water Pollution Control: National Legislation and Policy; a comparative study; FAO 1968) the definition of water pollution ought to be sufficiently complete to cover every form of contamination or deterioration of the physical, chemical or biological properties of water which has or may be considered to have any harmful effect on it. It should, moreover, not be limited to the present

state of pollution but should cover the possibility or risk of a serious change in the quality of the water. Again, as is recognised in the legislation of several countries, the definition should also include the various uses of water: human requirements, those of industry and agriculture, sport and free-time activities; without neglecting the protection of aquatic flora and fauna. The advantage of this method is to provide a classification of steps to be taken for the control of water pollution. A fairly accurate picture of the practice followed by the member states in defining water pollution may be seen in a first study prepared by the Secretariat. Copies of this study may be had from the Secretariat of the Council of Europe.

Quality standards for effluents

Another current work in this field is a comparative study of legislation relating to quality standards for effluents. This legislation has been assembled and summarised in tabular form for each country.

A complex but very useful table has been produced which summarises all the standards for seven different countries, together with a number of proposals made by international commissions for the protection of fresh waters.

It is clear from this work, which is being continued during the course of this year, that not only do standards differ throughout Europe, but the criteria on which standards are based also differ and common criteria and standards will be very difficult to establish.

Thermal pollution

The temperature of river and lake water has an important bearing upon the chemical and biological qualities of the water. This influence may even extend to groundwater and microclimates. The effects of artificial heating of groundwater and surface water are of particular interest in water protection.

Rivers and lakes are warmed artificially when water of a temperature higher than that of their source is discharged into them. A steam power station producing electric power emits into the surrounding water or air waste energy in the form of heat. This is two or three times greater than the electric power produced.

At present flowing water provides the most effective cooling system, but this requires the withdrawal of large quantities of water from a river or lake. These waters are warmed as they pass through the condensers of the power station and are then discharged into the river or lake where they mix with the other waters.

The problem of the artificial heating of water is all the more important as often the atmosphere cools the heated water only very slowly. Indeed, the fall in temperature along a river follows an asymptotic curve, that is the heated water cools rapidly at the outset, but there is a stretch of several kilometres before conditions return to normal, both in summer and winter. So if several steam power stations are along the same river, the water will get hotter and hotter as it goes downstream.

In many countries, water power for the production of electric power is already

or will soon be, fully harnessed and thermal and, in particular, nuclear energy will have to be used. So thermal pollution is on the increase.

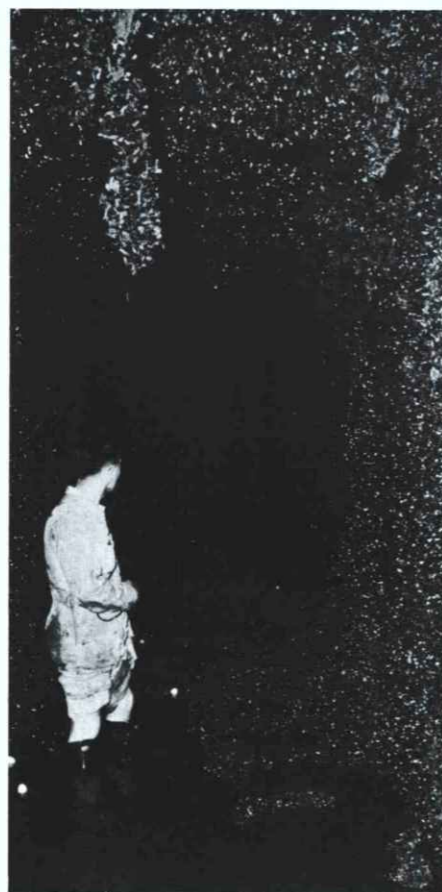
Waterways

A rise of several degrees in the temperature of river sections with a mixed fish population (grayling, trout, white freshwater fish) leads to an excessive proliferation of white freshwater fish and to the migration of the others.

The temperature of the discharged water should not exceed 30°C. If local conditions are particularly favourable, however, a temperature of 35°C might be admissible.

The cooling waters discharged into the same river system must not cause a rise in temperature of more than 3°C at any point. If local conditions are

The effects of thermal pollution may sometimes rebound on the polluting power plant, the warming not only upsetting the ecological balance of the water, but also the operation of the power station itself. This picture shows mussels growing inside and blocking up the cooling water culverts of a coastal power station.



particularly favourable, a maximum rise of 5°C might be admissible at certain seasons.

The temperature of waterways after complete mingling of heat discharge, should not exceed 25°C at any point.

Lakes

Any change made to factors in the ecology of a lake leads to appreciable biological reaction. Temperature is a key factor here, by virtue of its influence on the stratification and circulation of the water. Vertical circulation, in particular, may provide the upper water layer, in which organisms proliferate, with nutritious substances.

Artificial heating of the upper water layer increases the growth of plankton, which means that the quantity of putrescible substances is increased. Cooling water should preferably be taken from the deep part of the lake; the heated water should be restored to the middle water layer.

The discharge of heated water into lakes will have direct and indirect effects on the fish. The greatest danger for the fishing industry is that the cold water salmonidae may be replaced by fish of inferior quality.

If the cooling water is withdrawn from and discharged into the same lake, the temperature of the water so discharged must not have risen by more than 3°C.

Groundwater

Direct heat discharge into groundwater is only admissible in relatively small quantities. As thorough mingling as possible should be obtained, both horizontally and vertically.

Both direct heat discharge and infiltration of heated river water must not raise above 15°C, the temperature of groundwater which is used or planned for use as drinking water.

The problem of thermal pollution is relatively new for most countries. This fact should reinforce the idea that in the initial period of construction of large thermal power stations, especially nuclear power stations, a certain amount of caution should be exercised, since several phenomena are irreversible in the field of water conservation.

Extract from a study made for the Ad hoc Study Group on Water Conservation by R. PEDROLI, ing. dipl., Dr. ès sc. techn., Deputy Director of the Federal Water Protection Department, Berne, Switzerland, on the basis of a report of a Swiss Committee of experts.

PLANNING MINISTERS TO MEET

Ministers responsible for regional planning are to meet in Bonn from 9 to 11 September, at the invitation of the Federal Republic of Germany, in a conference organised by the Council of Europe. The first subject for discussion will be the present state and prospects of regional planning in Europe. It is intended to draw up a balance-sheet of regional planning in the various European countries and to analyse the main options now open and the long-term aims of national regional planning policies.

The second subject will be urbanisation and large concentrations in Europe. This should permit an exchange of ideas and experience, concerning the policies applied in various countries in order to put an end to the process of concentration when it reaches a point beyond which environmental conditions become intolerable.

The problems caused by the uneven distribution of populations across frontiers between high and low density countries will be studied as will the problems of restructuring in areas of high urban concentration and single-industry areas.

The analysis of these problems should lead to a recognition of the need for European governments to take in hand the process of urbanisation not only on a national but also a European level.

The third subject for discussion will be the development of rural and peripheral fringes in Europe: the diversification of industry; the development of tourism, infrastructure and sociocultural equipment.

MINISTERS ASK FOR TIGHTER SO₂ CONTROL

Pollution with sulphur dioxide, a poisonous gas which forms a corrosive acid when dissolved in rain water, is getting worse. There is a total increase of emissions of sulphur dioxide into the air of a large part of Europe. Informed of this, the Committee of Ministers at their March meeting recommended that member governments of the Council of Europe take measures to reduce the sulphur compounds emitted in gases from fuel combustion, and to extend these measures to the reduction of other sources of sulphur compounds. They also recommended governments to sustain research and development in the field of desulphurisation of fuels and flue gases.

AIR POLLUTION AND WILDLIFE

The insidious nature of air pollution is clearly brought out in the recently published 'Proceedings of the first European congress on the influence of air pollution on plants and animals'. Throughout the 400 pages of this useful book the theme is constantly reiterated that air pollution has many more effects on both wild and domesticated animals and plants than are apparent at first sight. Exhaust gases, for example, are not just harmful in themselves. They may react, under the influence of sunlight, with nitrogen oxides in the air to produce photochemical pollutants which may injure plant leaves. Even when the amount of pollutants is not enough to cause visible injury they can reduce plant

A slow death. Foreground: a stand of Norway spruce, already killed. Midground: a damaged but still surviving plantation. Background: the culprit, a brick factory chimney.



growth; and losses due to photochemical air pollution are significant in agriculture.

Another subtle interaction is between fluorides and fertilizers. Plants treated with fertilizer containing potassium in the form of chloride suffer severely and contain nine times as much fluorine in their leaves as plants treated with potassium sulphate.

Fluorine accumulated in plants can poison domestic and wild animals but many other industrial emissions also have harmful effects, for example, metal dust, molybdenum, beryllium, manganese, magnesium, lead, copper, zinc, sulphur, selenium, arsenic. Many of these products may either poison an animal directly, when it inhales them, or slowly, as they accumulate in water, soil, plants and the animal itself.

Many cars use petrol containing tetraethyl lead and the lead accumulates in plants near highways, reaching proportions as high as 35-50 ppm; far above the safe minimum proposed by the food inspection department of the European Economic Community.

Much work has been done on the effects of air pollution on forest trees and symptoms do not always correspond with growth reduction and yield losses. Significant growth reduction may occur before any clear symptoms can be seen, especially in conifers.

Another valuable part of this book is the papers which show how plants can be useful in indicating and ameliorating air pollution. For example, in large cities and in the vicinity of factories lichens and mosses are almost completely absent; they reappear gradually as one moves away from these pollution centres. Epiphytes are good indicator species and can be used to determine the long-range effect of pollution in a region. In the Netherlands, endive, lucerne, clover, buckwheat and barley are used to detect sulphur dioxide, and gladioli and frezias for hydrofluoric acid. Advantages are: low cost, immediate and easy use, clear definition of the contaminated area.

This brief survey is only a partial indication of the useful information contained in the 34 papers in this book. It is particularly useful as the papers, printed in German, French or English, all have an abstract plus summaries in the other two languages. The papers are divided into ten sections, each with a summary of the discussions, under the following titles:

Inventory of damage due to industrial and urban air pollution and research done in relation to this pollution

Experimental research

The effects of air pollution on plants

The effects of air pollution on vascular plants

The effects of air pollution on non-vascular plants

The effects of air pollution on animals

Measuring air pollution in vascular plants

Measuring air pollution in non-vascular plants

Resistance of plants to air pollution

Shelterbelts for air purification.

The conference, attended by 102 people from 16 countries, was organised by the Council of Europe and the Netherlands Government at Wageningen from April 22 to 27, 1968 and the proceedings are published by the Centre for Agricultural Publishing and Documentation, Wageningen at a cost of 44.2 florins.

ECOLOGY PROFESSORS MEET IN STRASBOURG

On the occasion of the European Nature Conservation Conference and profiting from the presence in the House of Europe of university professors and assistants from many countries, a small and informal meeting of experts was convened by the Secretariat of the Committee for Higher Education and Research on Wednesday 11 February 1970. The objects of the meeting were to ascertain first, what are the needs and problems with regard to the teaching of ecology and related matters at university level and, secondly, in what way the Council of Europe could assist their efforts.

This initiative is to be followed up by a meeting of ecologists from different European countries at the University of Tours in October. They will discuss the content of the two most urgently required ecology teaching programmes: major programmes for training environmental biologists, regional planners, landscape architects and other experts; and supplementary programmes, for the benefit of other professional groups involved in town and country planning, nature conservation, leisure and tourism.

ECY

NATURE RESERVES

New wildfowl reserves in Holland

One of the most ambitious points on the Dutch ECY 1970 programme is the safeguarding of the future of the large wintering populations of geese in the Netherlands. As well as the creation of large reserves all over the Netherlands, the programme foresees long-term studies, propaganda among wildfowling and farmers, changes of legislation and a film of 'wild geese in a densely populated country'. Much attention is to be given to perhaps the most picturesque of the Dutch avifauna: the meadow birds such as the black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*, lapwing *Vanellus* and redshank *Tringa totanus*. Special reserves are to be created for these birds with special management to maintain their habitat.

The birds of prey, diurnal and nocturnal, are also high on the list of priorities, especially after a mass extermination of these birds several years ago, as a result of pesticides and insecticides.

Spain: creation of the Doñana National Park

An important section of the world-famous marshlands on the right bank of the Guadalquivir River in Andalucía, southern Spain, has been established as the Doñana National Park by decree of the Spanish government. The river runs through the cities of Cordoba and Seville to spread into a vast marshy delta, the nesting and feeding ground of many species of birds, including the imperial eagle *Aquila leliaca*. In recent years, the marshlands or 'marismas' have been heavily threatened by drainage and rice cultivation and by real estate development for tourism. The World Wildlife Fund, in an

attempt to save a part of this important wildfowl staging post between Western Europe and Africa, purchased 65 sq km of land, part of an area known as the Coto Doñana, in collaboration with the Spanish government. In 1969, a further area of 32 sq km was purchased nearby, the Marismas de Guadamar. Both have been managed by the Spanish government.

The new national park embraces the two reserves and extends the total area to 350 sq km. The government has pledged itself to maintain the lands in the same or similar condition as they now exist so that 'present and future generations may use them as a teaching source and as a testimony to man's love and reverence for nature'. The creation of the national park forms Spain's contribution to European Conservation Year 1970 and proves her awareness of the worldwide movement towards nature conservation and of the exceptional aesthetic and biological importance of the southwestern marismas on the Guadalquivir River.

IUCN Bulletin, March 1970

LAND MANAGEMENT

Britain to reclaim all offensive derelict land

Britain is to embark on a 10-year plan for the reclamation of all her offensive derelict land, as a major contribution to European Conservation Year.

Announcing this at a recent conference on the problems of derelict land, held in the English Midlands, Anthony Crosland, Secretary of State for Local Government and Regional Planning, who also has a special responsibility for Britain's environment, spoke of the formation of a Central Group for Derelict Land Reclamation. He said it would be 'a repository of knowledge and experience, and a central source of practical advice'.

The British Government has given approval for the spending of £3 million to reclaim derelict land in England during the financial year 1969/70. He stated that he would like to see this spending at least doubled over the next three years,



Eric Hosking



above: Portrait from a wilderness. Little egret *Egretta garzetta* photographed by Eric Hosking while on one of a series of expeditions to the Coto Doñana which helped lead to the setting up of the National Park. This beautiful bird is only one of the many species which now will be protected in this unique reserve on the 'hinge' between Africa and Europe.

left: Removing a blight. Work in progress as a coal tip is cleared in South Wales. Landscaping and planting with trees can transform a piece of nineteenth-century industrial dereliction into an attractive amenity, suitable as a local nature reserve or recreational park, meeting twentieth century needs.

and that the Government would make grants available for the work to be done. 'We must raise our sights and set ourselves a 10-year target', he added.

WILDLIFE

Bonus for tree preservation

To mark ECY the Crown Estate Commissioners, who look after 155 000 acres of farm land in England and 80 000 in Scotland, are to pay a bonus to their tenant farmers for trees preserved by them. This is to ensure that on these estates at least there will be no further decrease in tree cover. The payment will be made for trees left standing when hedges are trimmed and for new trees planted elsewhere on the farm. When they give permission for a hedge to be removed for better working of a farm the Commissioners will in future make it a condition that the farmer shall plant elsewhere on the farm twice the number of trees lost.

In most parts of England, where the land is intensively farmed, hedgerows which divide the fields and landholdings are an important reservoir for wildlife and mature trees. This simple administrative initiative by the Crown Estate Commissioners can make a great contribution to conservation in England.

Habitat, May 1970, Council for Nature, Zoological Gardens, Regent's Park, London NW1

POLITICS

IRELAND - EXTRA CASH FOR CONSERVATION

'This is European Conservation Year and we in Ireland are reviewing the growing problems presented by urbanisation and by rapid technological change and development', said Mr Charles Haughey, Minister of Finance, during his Budget Speech on 22 April.

'Society at all levels must play its part and the Government must give direction and leadership to this collective effort. We have a large number of institutions who have contributed much to different

aspects of nature conservation. The campaign sponsored by the Irish National Committee for Conservation Year has already done much to increase public awareness of the need to ensure that our environment retains its quality and that all our natural resources are wisely used.

'To give practical assistance to this valuable national endeavour I am making a special allocation of £100,000 to be administered by the Minister for Lands as the Minister primarily responsible for conservation. In the main this extra sum will be devoted to meeting the immediate organisational costs of the development of a comprehensive national programme for conservation. As improved facilities for environmental studies are also needed, part of it will be spent on building a new Field Study Centre at Gartan Lough in Co. Donegal. This new Centre will be available for environmental field studies by parties of teachers' university and secondary school students, and professional groups concerned with aspects of the environment; it will also provide a base for research activity.'

SHORT NOTES

POLLUTION

Computers in pollution control

Rotterdam, Holland's second biggest city and the world's busiest port with a vast complex of petrochemical industry has completed the first phase of the world's most sophisticated, fully automated, air pollution warning system, which monitors sulphur dioxide in the atmosphere. Data are being transmitted to a computer, which sounds an alarm whenever the SO₂ level rises above 0.5 parts per million and an electronic map pinpoints the offending plant. If weather conditions indicate a pollution buildup in the area the computer operator calls the offender and requests a cutback in waste emissions.

Time, 11 May 1970

Anti-pollution costs

The British Steel Corporation is to increase spending on plant to clean up the countryside around its works. The State-owned industry, which is currently allocating some £5.5 million a year for this purpose, is likely to raise this expenditure by about 50 percent during the next five years.

Explaining the Corporation's efforts in the campaign to safeguard the environment, Mr Fred Cartwright, a deputy chairman, said that these came under three main headings; cleaner air; cleaner rivers; and clearing up derelict land. Biggest spending is on atmospheric pollution, equipment for this costing £4 million a year in the last five years. Such equipment is now built into all new BSC plant and is costing £1.2 million a year to run.

Water treatment plant is costing £1.5 million a year, with the yearly running costs at £750,000.

YOUTH

Working for wildlife

During the past ten years thousands of young people have been digging ditches, trimming hedges, cutting trees, sweating and working in their spare time for wildlife in Britain.

As the conservation movement gained impetus after the Second World War and the land acquired for reserves increased, it was realised that the management problems were also increasing. It became obvious that it was no longer enough to declare an area a nature reserve and put a protective fence around it. Natural succession and other factors, often with great rapidity, began to eliminate specific interests within the originally declared area.

In 1959 the Council for Nature, a national council of private organisations interested in nature conservation, formed a Conservation Corps from the noticeably very willing resources of young volunteer man power which were prepared to undertake practical field work.

The Corps organises work parties at weekends and holidays. It is in contact with many thousands of volunteers and has put into the field groups varying in number from one volunteer to two hundred depending upon the quantity and type of work to be done.

Since its inception, the Conservation Corps has run more than 1 000 tasks on 208 different sites resulting in a total of over 51 000 man-days worked. The variety of work undertaken is vast — everything from bridge building to scrub cutting, from forestry to research. The Corps has worked on examples of all the major and many of the minor British wildlife habitats — from sand dunes to heather moors, from ponds to chalk grassland.

Since its founding the Corps has learned, developed and refined the techniques of nature conservation and is well fitted to advise on nature reserve management. The organisation has expanded and is continuing to expand the size and scope of its activities both in the field and on the educational front.



Conservation Corps opening up glades and clearing ponds for the Kent Trust for Conservation, at Parsonage Wood, Kent. There is among youth an immense fund of voluntary effort for conservation if the cash can be found to organise it.

Many volunteers work for the Corps regularly and are expert conservationists in their own right, and during 1970 the Corps will introduce a Certificate of Proficiency.

Now a British Trust for Conservation Volunteers has been set up to expand the work of the Conservation Corps. Its symbol is based on the leaf of the horse chestnut tree *Aesculus hippocastanum*. This tree, though not native to Britain is recognised by all. Its leaf symbolises through its 400 years association with Britain the 'green and pleasant land' and a countryside invigorating for man. In addition, its introduced and native, British and European, distribution presents a target for the international co-operation and exchange between voluntary organisations in the future.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNGEN IN DEUTSCH

DIE BOTSCHAFT PRÄSIDENT NIXONS ZUR UMWELTFRAGE

... wir haben unsere Umwelt in diesem Jahrhundert zulange vernachlässigt und missachtet. Es ist an der Zeit und wir können nicht länger warten, die bisherigen Schäden zu beheben und neue, in die Zukunft weisende Leitlinien zu setzen.' Dieses Zitat wird im Zusammenhang mit dem Europäischen Naturschutzjahr und der Strassburger Konferenz angeführt. Es folgen die wesentlichen Punkte der Botschaft. Der Kampf gegen die drei Hauptquellen der Wasserverunreinigung in Gestalt von städtischen, landwirtschaftlichen und industriellen Abfällen wird beschrieben. Um der weiteren Luftverunreinigung vorbeugen zu können, kündigt die Botschaft die Verschärfung von Kontroll- u. Überwachungsmaßnahmen an. Verschiedene Emissionen sollen danach bis 1973 andere bis 1975 gänzlich unter Kontrolle gebracht werden. U.a. ist an ein nahezu abgasfreies Auto bereits in fünf Jahren gedacht. Darüber hinaus werden das ganze Land betreffende Kriterien für Luftreinigungsmaßnahmen erstellt und eine entsprechende Gesetzes- und Exekutivmaschinerie genannt.

Um das Müll- und Abfallproblem bewältigen zu können, empfiehlt die Botschaft eine drastische Verminderung der Zahl der Ablageplätze, eine weitgehende Wiederverwendung und Nutzbarmachung der Zivilisationsabfälle. Die Verschrottungskosten sollten z.B. bereits im Anschaffungspreis des PKWs enthalten sein.

Daneben bemüht sich die US-Regierung um die Sicherstellung grosser und ausreichender Flächen für die Erholung der Öffentlichkeit.

Die Verwirklichung dieses Programmes trotz aller Hindernisse, so wird abschliessend festgestellt, würde dem gesamten amerikanischen Volk und dem Kontinent zugute kommen.

NATURSCHUTZ IN OSTEUROPA

Der gegenwärtige Stand des Naturschutzes in folgenden osteuropäischen Ländern wird umrissen: Albanien, Bulgarien, CSSR, DDR, Ungarn, Polen, Rumänien, UdSSR und Jugoslawien. Die politischen Grundlagen des Naturschutzes werden kurz erklärt und der Druck von Industrie und Tourismus auf die bis vor kurzem noch relativ unberührten Gebiete Osteuropas aufgezeigt.

Ausführlich eingegangen ist auf die endlosen natürlichen Hilfsquellen der Sowjetunion, die Urwälder Polens als Wiege des europäischen Wisents, die erfolgreiche Errichtung des Tatragebirge-Nationalparks in der CSSR, Ungarns Schutzbestrebungen in der Weite der Pussta, die reichen Wildvorkommen in den Karpathen und auf dem Balkan und die Vielfalt an Klima und Topographie in Jugoslawien.

Mit Nachdruck wird darauf hingewiesen, dass die Menschen dieser Länder trotz

einer raschen industriellen Entwicklung die Probleme des Naturschutzes erkannt und sich an ihrer Lösung versuchen, wobei sie nicht zuletzt aus den Erfahrungen der bereits überentwickelten westeuropäischen Staaten, in denen Flora und Fauna bereits erhebliche Einbussen hinnehmen mussten, lernen.

DAS EUROPÄISCHE NATURSCHUTZ- JAHR: HÖHEPUNKT ODER BEGINN

Die Notwendigkeit einer über das Europäische Naturschutzjahr 1970 hinausreichenden aktiven Naturschutzarbeit wird hervorgehoben. Es wird deutlich herausgestellt, warum und in welcher Weise die Gesamtsituation so kritisch geworden ist, wie aber andererseits die Allgemeinheit nunmehr ein aktives Interesse entwickelt. Doch reicht allein diese Tatsache nicht aus. Dem Erkennen der Probleme im Europäischen Naturschutzjahr müssen Gespräche zwischen Naturschützern und Industriellen, Städteplanern und im politischen Bereich Verantwortung tragenden folgen. Eine fort-dauernde Unterrichtung und Information durch Experten muss zu jeder Zeit gewährleistet sein, da die gegenwärtige Situation ebenfalls raschen Veränderungen unterworfen ist. Es folgen einige Vorschläge zur praktischen Arbeit. Anregungen können dabei den jeweiligen nationalen Naturschutzprogrammen entnommen werden. Die eigens für das Naturschutzjahr gebildeten Ausschüsse sollten zu einer Dauereinrichtung werden. Vor allem aber sollte jeder einzelne zur persönlichen Verantwortung für den Naturschutz und die Erhaltung der Umwelt bereit sein.

PFLEGE UND GESTALTUNG DER NATÜRLICHEN UMWELT EUROPAS

Der durch die Europäische Naturschutzkonferenz erreichten, weitverbreiteten Publizität muss ein aktives, auf die einstimmig angenommene und verabschiedete Deklaration aufbauendes Handeln folgen. Die Deklaration wendet sich an den Minister-Ausschuss des Europarates, an andere internationale Organisationen, an die Regierungen, an kommunale und regionale Behörden sowie an jeden einzelnen Bürger.

Die Aussenminister haben inzwischen die Vorbereitung einer gemeinsamen Konferenz aller für Umweltfragen verantwortlichen Ressortminister beschlossen.

Die grundlegenden Elemente einer in die Zukunft gerichteten europäischen Umweltschutzpolitik und die sich daraus ergebenden Richtlinien für die praktische Arbeit auf internationaler, nationaler sowie örtlicher Ebene, wie sie von der Deklaration vorgesehen sind, werden beschrieben. Hinzugefügt sind die speziell an die Industrie sowie an die Allgemeinheit gerichteten Aufrufe.

Die vier wichtigsten, sich für den Europarat ergebenden Problembereiche sind: Die Verschmutzung von Luft, Wasser und Erde sowie die eng damit zusammenhängende

Müll- und Abfallbeseitigung, Erziehungs-, Ausbildungs- und Informationswesen und eine entsprechende Forschung u. schliesslich Organisations- und Verwaltungsfragen auf dem Gebiet des Naturschutzes.

Sten Renborg ist Generalsekretär der Europäischen Naturschutzkonferenz, die vom 9.-12. Februar in Strassburg stattfand.



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