

An abstract painting in a cubist style. On the left, a thick brown vertical line represents a tree trunk. The background is a textured blue. In the center, there's a stylized house or structure with various colored sections: orange, purple, green, and red. To the right, a large yellow-green area contains a dark brown circle. The overall style is expressive and colorful.

NATURE IN FOCUS

BULLETIN OF THE EUROPEAN
INFORMATION CENTRE
FOR NATURE CONSERVATION

NATURE IN FOCUS

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EDITORIAL



STEN RENBORG

Head of the Directorate of Environment and Local Authorities, Council of Europe.

This issue of 'Nature in Focus' is devoted to the role of youth in nature conservation.

The articles presented here as well as the news features confirm that millions of young people in Europe and in other parts of the world derive excitement and joy from the sights, sounds and scents of the countryside and the myriad fascinating happenings in nature. More significant, they show that great numbers of young people are also keenly aware of present day threats to the environment and of their own responsibilities in this regard. Indeed, there is evidence that they are starting to organise themselves with a view to more effectively shouldering this responsibility through positive group action.

It is encouraging to note that European Conservation Year has acted as a catalyst in this respect, but it is equally noteworthy that the youth organisations have, in their turn, greatly contributed to the success of the 'Year'. Although the articles in this issue are authoritative statements of the policies of the organisations concerned, we do not claim that they give a complete picture of the attitudes of the young to the conservation problem. Thus a recent public opinion poll made by the Department of Nature and Countryside Preservation of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs, Recreation and Social Affairs in Holland tends to show that the percentage of young people (16-24 years) who worry 'much' or 'very much' about environmental pollution is lower than among older people, whereas the percentage of young who worry 'little' or 'not at all' about it is higher. It is also well known that in some countries the conservation issue has been used in politically oriented youth demonstrations.

The situation is no doubt in reality more complex than it would appear from the contents of this issue. Careful thought

must therefore be given to finding the best means of enlisting the active support for nature conservation of many more millions of young Europeans, and of integrating their participation into the changing institutional fabric of the democratic system. It is a simple truth that the young have an even greater stake than older people in the shaping of a better environment and in improving the quality of life. In consequence it is important for us all and vital for them that their voice be heard on these issues and that they take an active part in the work that has to be done. Their internationalism and idealism — here taken as the opposite of materialism — can be a tremendous positive force in developing the value-oriented, humanistic attitudes which must permeate our Societies if they are to survive.

The Council of Europe is convinced that the young generation should be encouraged to form its opinion, to speak up and to participate constructively in environment matters and it will do its best to assist the youth organisations in this challenging task.

It is urgent that people today, and especially the young, should be made aware of the need to maintain the quality of our environment. A more considered attitude, a new kind of ethics, should be created towards the conservation of natural resources and natural values—the two constituents of our surroundings.

Natural resources are those assets which we cannot do without and which we must conserve by rational management: the air we breathe, the water we drink, the soil we cultivate, the forests we exploit, and the space at our disposal.

Natural values consist of those things that beautify our surroundings — the biological heritage of wildlife, the attractiveness and character of our countryside — and the opportunities they offer for recreation and leisure. We speak of conserving natural resources, but of safeguarding natural values. Ecology, as a natural science and as a human science, can and must help achieve these objectives.

ECOLOGY

a natural science and a human science

Professor A Noirfalise,

State Faculty of Agricultural
Science, Gembloux, Belgium;
Head of the Belgian delegation
to the European Committee
for the Conservation of Nature
and Natural Resources

1 Ecology: a natural science

What is ecology?

Ecology (from *oikos* = habitat) a term invented in 1869 by the German biologist Haeckel, is the science dealing with mutual relationships between organisms and the surroundings in which they live.

This definition contains three ideas. Firstly, it is concerned with living organisms. Secondly, it studies the relationships between organisms and their surroundings, relations which are created in three ways: by the influence upon it of the physical environment in

which the organism lives; by the organism modifying its environment as a result of its activities; by contacts and social intercourse with other organisms in the same environment. These three ways are described by the terms action, reaction and coaction respectively.

Thirdly, all the phenomena observed by ecology take place against a background known as the environment or surroundings (*Umwelt* in German) which includes both a topographical sense (the place or biotope in question) and a functional sense, that is, all the habitat factors prevailing in that spot. These habitat factors are classified as: energy factors (radiation and heat) trophic factors (water and food resources) mechanical factors (such as rain, wind and snow) and toxic factors where such exist.

Specific ecology

Because ecology concerns individuals and their species, it is as diverse in character as the range of organisms themselves. There is a world of difference between the ecology of a seaweed and that of a tree, between the ecology of a bird and that of an elephant, between the ecology of an ape and that of man. Regarded from this point of view, ecology is termed autecology or specific ecology, that is, the ecology of a species.

Autecology includes a number of facets. In the first place we may consider an organism's distribution, that is, the types of habitat it occupies. Then it is possible to analyse how the organism behaves in its habitat — how does it fit in, what does it do in its habitat, how does it develop there and, in the case of an animal, how does it search for food, what are its habits, customs and reactions? This is termed ethology or behavioural ecology.

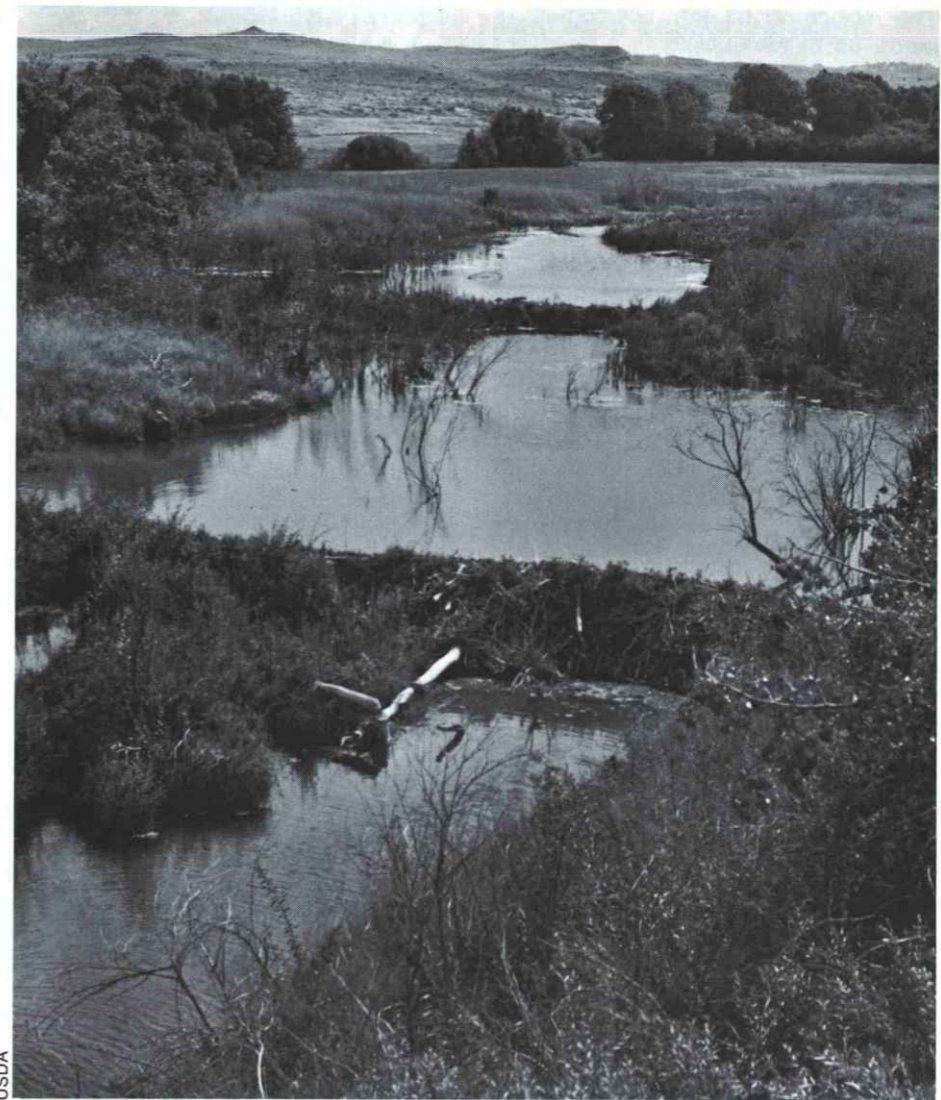
A good example is the study of the behaviour of the beaver (*Castor fiber*) in building its dams and lodges in relation to its environment.

The basic concept of autecology is that of adaptation, which is an organism's hereditary ability to live and perpetuate itself in certain types of habitat and environment. This aptitude obviously has its limitations which are known as limits of tolerance.

The specific limits of tolerance vary greatly with different organisms; but we may say that they increase with the degree of biological evolution. Seaweed, for example, is much more susceptible to water pollution than one of the higher aquatic plants. Mammals have developed self-regulating protective mechanisms which are more effective than those of fish and reptiles and this has enabled them to live mainly on land. Man himself, who has added to these capabilities an unequalled power of invention, has extended his tolerances to the utmost and conquered the whole world.

Biocenotics

Haeckel's successors soon realised that an organism's ecological tolerances are not sufficient to explain its behaviour and distribution fully and that we need to consider the influence of other species making up its environment. As early as 1877 Möbius suggested the term biocenosis to denote all the different kinds of organisms living in the same environment and the branch of science dealing with biocenoses is called biocenotics or biosociology, a yet more complex study.



Beaver behaviour affects ecology. Three beavers introduced into this stream built dams which in 5 years raised the water table giving bigger hay crops.

The intimate study of social mechanisms, even in the case of plants, is nevertheless still at the embryonic stage. This is because the most elementary biocenoses, reduced to ten species, for example, are already so complex that they defy any analysis of their causes by the usual methods of observation. Progress here is dependent on data processing and electronic calculations, which are making biosociology more and more of a mathematical discipline.

Ecosystems

Having defined the concept of biocenoses, we see that they are closely dependent on the physical environment in which they exist, and of which they form an indissoluble entity. This

all-inclusiveness finds expression in the notion of an ecological system or ecosystem defined by Tansley in 1923. Environment does not merely govern the composition of biocenoses through the selective activity it exercises on the biological stock itself but acts also as its mainstay and, even more so, as its breeding ground. In this approach is rooted the new ecology known as functional ecology or ecology of the biosphere, the biosphere being that part of the earth and its atmosphere in which biological processes take place. Every system may thus be defined as a complex whole, making a functional unit, with its own structure. There are consequently two major attributes to be considered, namely, structure and method of functioning, one might say the anatomy and physiology of the system.

The structure of the ecosystem is made up of four parts.

Firstly there is the abiotic constituent represented by the environment's energy and trophic resources: the solar energy received, the heat supplied by the climate, the available water, and finally, the mineral ingredients necessary to life, nutritive salts, carbon dioxide and oxygen in the air. Secondly there is the elaborative constituent, represented by plants which effect the organic synthesis using mineral resources and solar energy.

Thirdly there is the consumer constituent, represented by plant-eating animals — so called primary consumers — and flesh-eaters known as secondary or tertiary consumers according to the position they occupy in the food chain.

Fourthly there is the reductive constituent, represented by micro-organisms in the soil which together bring about the decomposition and mineralisation of the system's organic waste, the elements of which are returned to the abiotic environment.

In such a system of chain functioning it is clear that everything is determined at the outset by the physical environment's biogenetic capacity or the fertility of the ground, as the agriculturalists say. This is manifested by the capacity of plantlife to produce organic matter, or the system's primary productive capacity. Obviously the secondary productivity of an ecosystem depends upon its primary productivity.

It is the amount of plant matter produced that determines the growth rate of vegetarian animals. But here, too, account must be taken of a limiting factor, namely the food-needs and habits of those animals. These habits may be so selective that ecosystems in which the primary productivity is high, such as forests, cannot support large numbers of herbivora other than those that feed on woody matter, such as rodents or certain deer, whereas grass-based ecosystems where the production is lower may support much larger herds of ruminants.

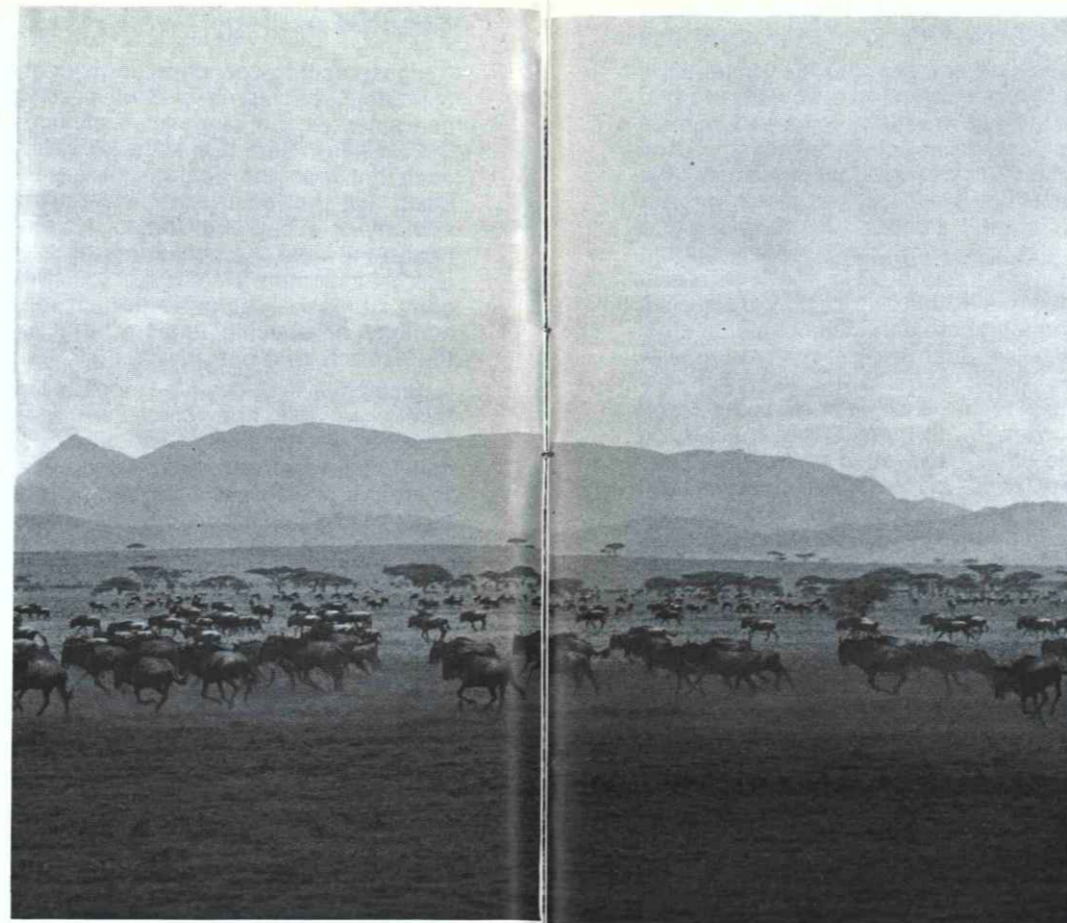
This shows plainly that an exhaustive study of ecosystems and natural food chains cannot be confined solely to quantitative aspects but must also include qualitative aspects, that is, the autecological properties and behaviour of the species present in the system. Present-day ecology tends rather to forget this and for that reason its contribution to the management of natural resources and wildlife is temporarily in danger of being disappointing.

Natural equilibria

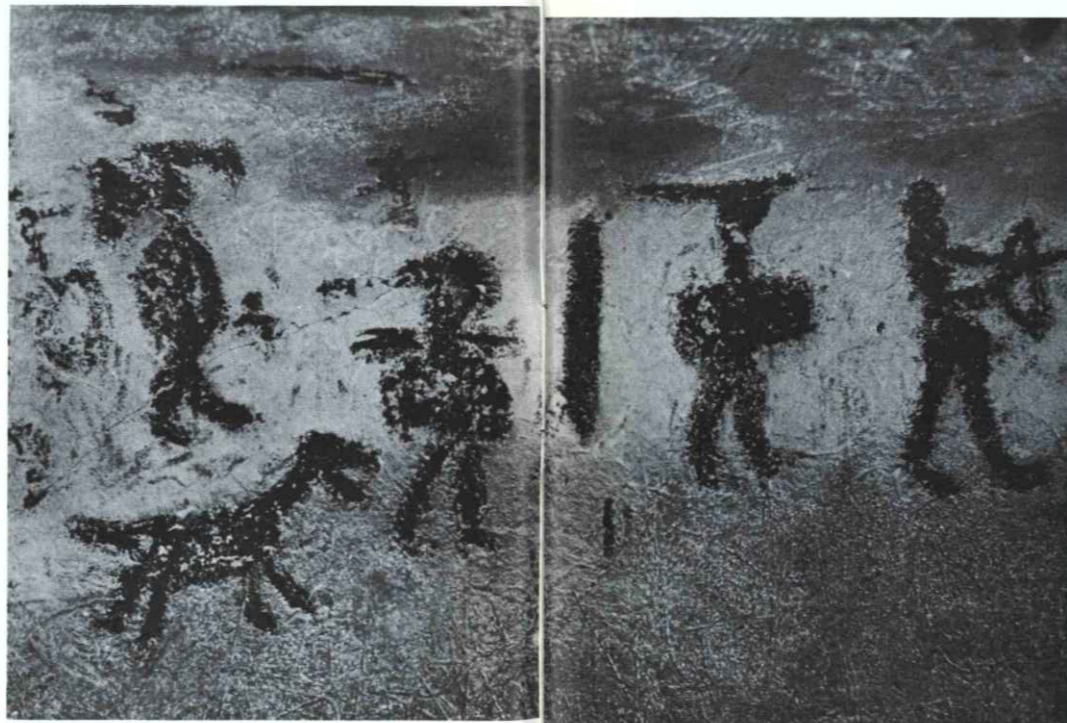
The idea of a natural equilibrium follows from that of the ecosystem. A natural equilibrium is an ecosystem operating in a closed cycle, contributing nothing to and receiving nothing from outside. In such a system the natural abiotic environment gives rise to a certain potential of primary productivity which, in turn, provides nourishment for a pyramid of herbivora and carnivora, the numbers of which become less and less as the food chain is ascended. In other words, primary productivity is far greater than the consumption of herbivora and their predators. A natural ecosystem is therefore kept in balance because it is under-utilised, much of its production serving to maintain a large 'parasite' population of reducing elements, the expansion of which is, moreover, constantly adjusted to the amount of organic residues in the system. The result is that, on the whole, natural ecosystems are not very efficient or productive; on the other hand, however, they are stable so long as they are not destroyed by external influences.

There are, of course, natural equilibria of all kinds according to the conditions offered by the habitat. For example, on soils which are shallow and not well developed we find so called initial ecosystems of low productivity, on deep and mature soils we have terminal or climatic ecosystems with the highest primary productivity and therefore the most stable equilibrium.

▲
'...by turning African landscapes into savannahs man has promoted the considerable development of a most remarkable wild fauna.' This grass-based ecosystem has a much lower productivity than the original forest but can support much larger herds of ruminants (in this case gnus *Connochaetes taurinus*).



Bert Leidmann-Bavaria



Barnaby's

2 Ecology: a human science

Ecology is concerned with man firstly as one living species among others; and secondly as an agent responsible for transforming and planning the biosphere. These are two basic aspects of human autecology.

Man as a living species

Man is an animal with a similar capacity for adaptation, similar limits of tolerance and the same efficient self-regulating mechanisms as other mammals. But to these he adds all the resources of his inventive genius and all the cunning dictated by his knowledge. This has enabled him to conquer the entire world, something that no organism before him has been able to do. Man is thus a being unique in nature and incommensurable with the other species by very reason of the creative intelligence of which he has a monopoly.

The human species also appears to be endowed with a significant potential for genetic adaptability and so can overcome life's challenges.

We are perhaps justified, therefore, in assuming that the challenges of modern civilisation — which, we are told, could be fatal — are working a change in the genetic make-up of the populations by making them more adaptable to new living conditions. It is the dramatic law of evolution that this selection should entail a tremendous amount of waste: it is this prospect which man is anxious to avoid by regaining control over his environment.

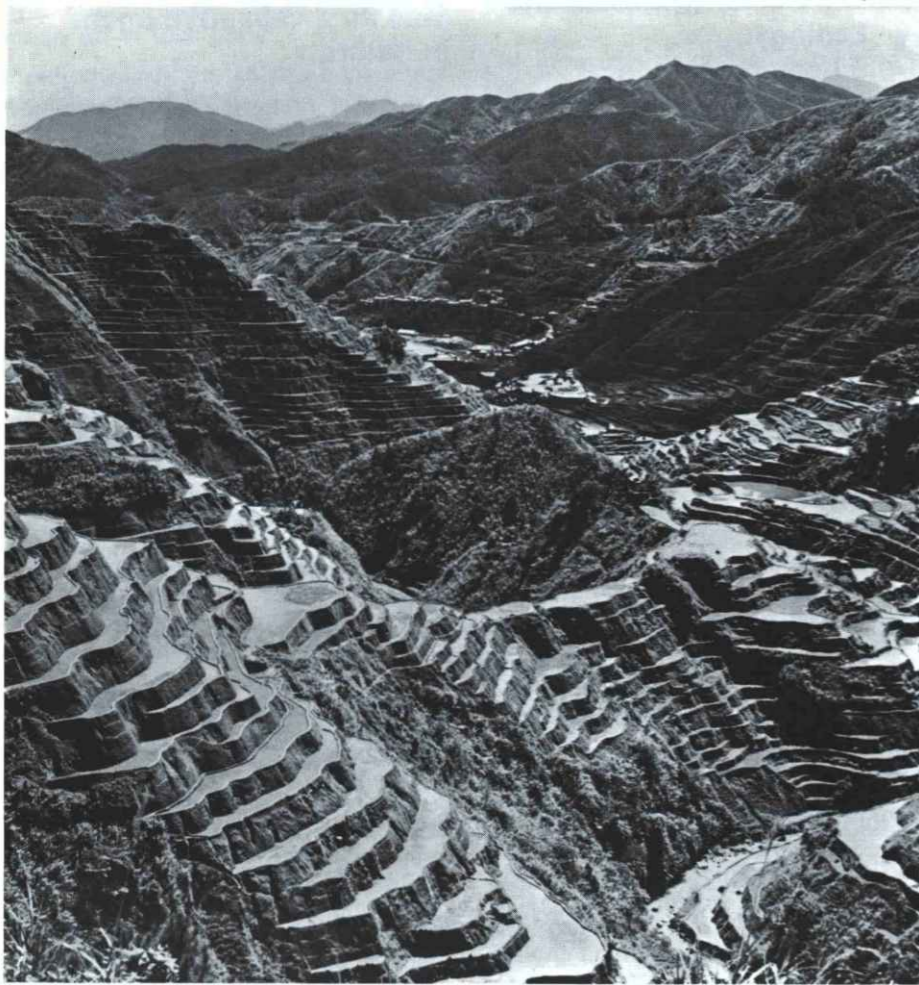
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'...mankind would doubtless still be composed of small nomadic groups... living precariously on what they were able to collect or hunt,' if he had not succeeded in domesticating certain plants and animals. The prehistoric hunter in this cave painting from northern Bulgaria has already domesticated a dog.

Man as a causative agent in nature

If there is really a chapter of major importance in the ecology of man it is that concerned with the influence he has on the natural environment and, consequently, on his own surroundings. The changes he has introduced have had, and are still having, a considerable effect on other animals and plants, and even on his own species and its way of life. In this respect, man may be said to be the most active and most radical causative agent in the biosphere, so much so that the face of the earth everywhere bears his imprint and the consequences of his acts far exceed anything we can see or feel at first sight. I propose to deal with some aspects of those acts.

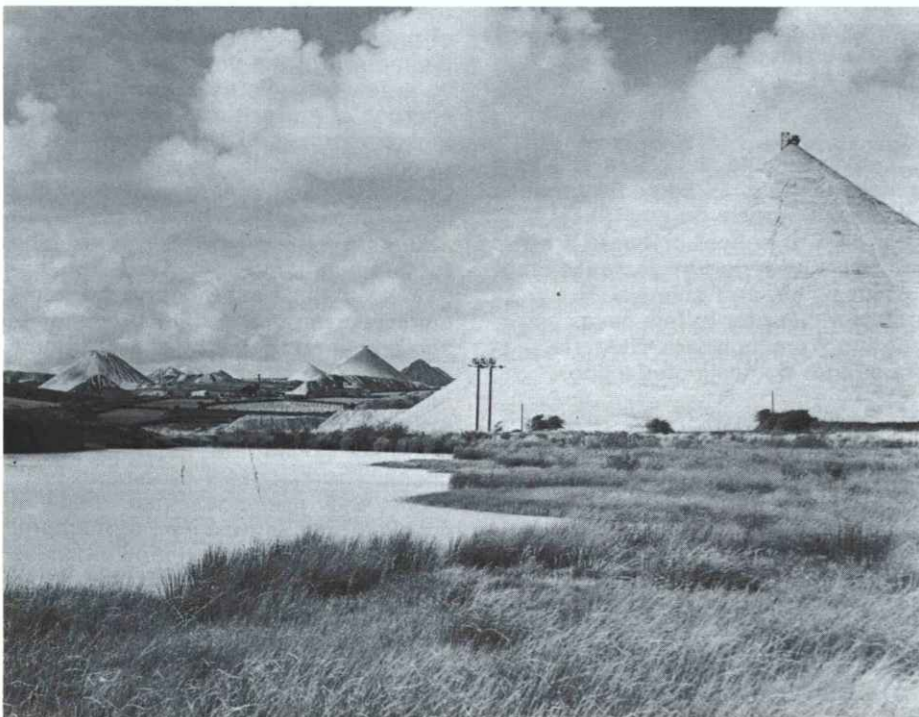
The domestication of natural ecosystems

Man is primarily a carnivore whose digestive system can tolerate only plant matter that is rich in energy and of low cellulose content. If he had not succeeded in domesticating nature, his chance as a species would have been poor and mankind would doubtless still be composed of small nomadic groups, as in paleolithic times, living precariously on what they were able to collect or hunt. This would restrict him to those biotopes most rich in easily procurable proteins, that is, to the rivers or coasts. The neolithic revolution radically changed those prospects. It was nothing other than the domestication of a small number of plants and animals, discovered and picked out in the natural environment of a few key districts known as the sources of agriculture and stock-rearing. It resulted in the emergence of villages and crafts, the creation of the first cities and the formation of the first political empires by societies freed at last from the restraints of searching for food and hunting. Since the beginning of this century agriculture has made such strides that the productivity and biogenetic capacity of ecosystems can be regulated and considerably improved by manures, irrigation or drainage, the tilling and second dressing of land to keep weeds in check. The discovery of mineral fertilizers and pesticides has made it possible to rationalise agricultural ecosystems to the full and stabilise them by replacing exactly the same amount of substance as is taken out. Efforts have also been made to improve the elaborative performances of plants by genetic selection of their qualities and their resistance to disease.



Terraced rice fields in Indonesia show how man can fit into his environment.

China clay tips in Britain, thrown up regardless of the landscape.



Liberation from ecological pressures

Everyone can see that the exploitation of nature by man has artificially created new areas in which plants and animals can establish themselves. In such areas, farmland for instance, the selective pressure which natural and biocenotic factors exercised on the biological stock was suddenly altered or eliminated. This wrought vast changes in the distribution of species. Some that are genetically too inflexible to be adaptable have survived only in biological sanctuaries left relatively intact, but are retrogressing concurrently with them. Other species, on the other hand, such as 'weeds', have multiplied in the cleared areas and this proliferation has often been accompanied by adaptive genetic innovations. Man has therefore restarted the micro-evolution of such species by freeing them from their traditional ecological restraints. We also know that the encouragement of certain birds and rodents in agricultural ecosystems has led to an increase in the number of their predators and that by turning African landscapes into savannahs man has promoted the considerable development of a most remarkable wild fauna. Chain alterations are so numerous that balances in nature itself have almost everywhere become semi-natural balances, stamped with the seal of human action.

Changes in human environment

The great increase in the human species and the material progress it has achieved clearly lead to pollution of all kinds from agriculture, industry and urbanisation. This phenomenon presents our age with a major problem, that of safeguarding the quality and biogenetic potential of our environment. It is possible to control it in a sound and reasonable manner but only by exercising social discipline and political will and, perhaps even more so, by inculcating new ethical principles into men's minds.

To educate the public, to instil into men's consciences a sense of ecological responsibility, such is the obligation that has become incumbent upon mankind if we are to enter the era of post-industrial civilisation unscathed. This, too, is a vital aspect of human ecology.



youth and the environment in europe

Our picture shows the architect's impression of the new European Youth Centre now being built in Strasbourg. This exciting venture is being provided with the best equipment partly from private and public donations.

Even before the European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources was created, the Council for Cultural Cooperation (CCC) was seeking ways of interesting young people in nature conservation problems. Through the Committee for out-of-school Education, which submits proposals on the cultural policy of the Council of Europe to the Committee of Ministers, the CCC has taken various steps to encourage the presentation of science to young people and to develop out-of-school scientific activities.

Its first aim was to coordinate the dispersed activities of the various European movements and organisations intended for young people eager to improve their knowledge of the world and of science. The interest of many such groups centres on the natural sciences and man's responsibility towards his natural environment; one of their favourite forms of action is on-the-spot observation.

A conference in Liege in 1960 was followed by a conference at the UNESCO Youth Institute at Gauting (Munich). Very soon afterwards an organisation was set up known as the International Coordinating Committee for the Presentation of Science and the Development of out-of-school Scientific activities*. Its action was at first restricted to Europe but is now worldwide.

The Council of Europe gives moral and financial support to this Committee. Its assistance consists in particular of travel scholarships to help the 'Europeanisation' of the scientific youth camps organised in member states, many of which take as their theme the protection of the natural environment. The Council of Europe has also taken direct action by organising courses in Europe for training youth leaders in nature conservation. One such course took place in Luxembourg in 1966 and

* General Secretary: Francis Wattier, 2 Place St. Lazare, 1030 - Brussels

the most recent was held in Cambridge in July 1970. There was also an experimental camp for on-the-spot scientific observation, organised in the Eifel, Germany, in 1967.

These are all occasional activities which should be repeated regularly and on an increasing scale in every member state so that tangible results may be obtained. Several countries, in particular Luxembourg, have taken positive action in this direction.

On the European level, the creation in the near future of a European Youth Centre will open up new prospects. The main purpose of this centre will be to offer leaders of youth movements courses of additional training designed, from a European standpoint, to initiate them in the socio-educational methods of youth organisation. In 1963, an experimental European centre began its activities in makeshift premises. In 1971, this centre will have its own building and specialised personnel and will become a permanent institution. It will be an educational establishment and will organise training courses throughout the year for young people from the countries signatory to the European Cultural Convention.

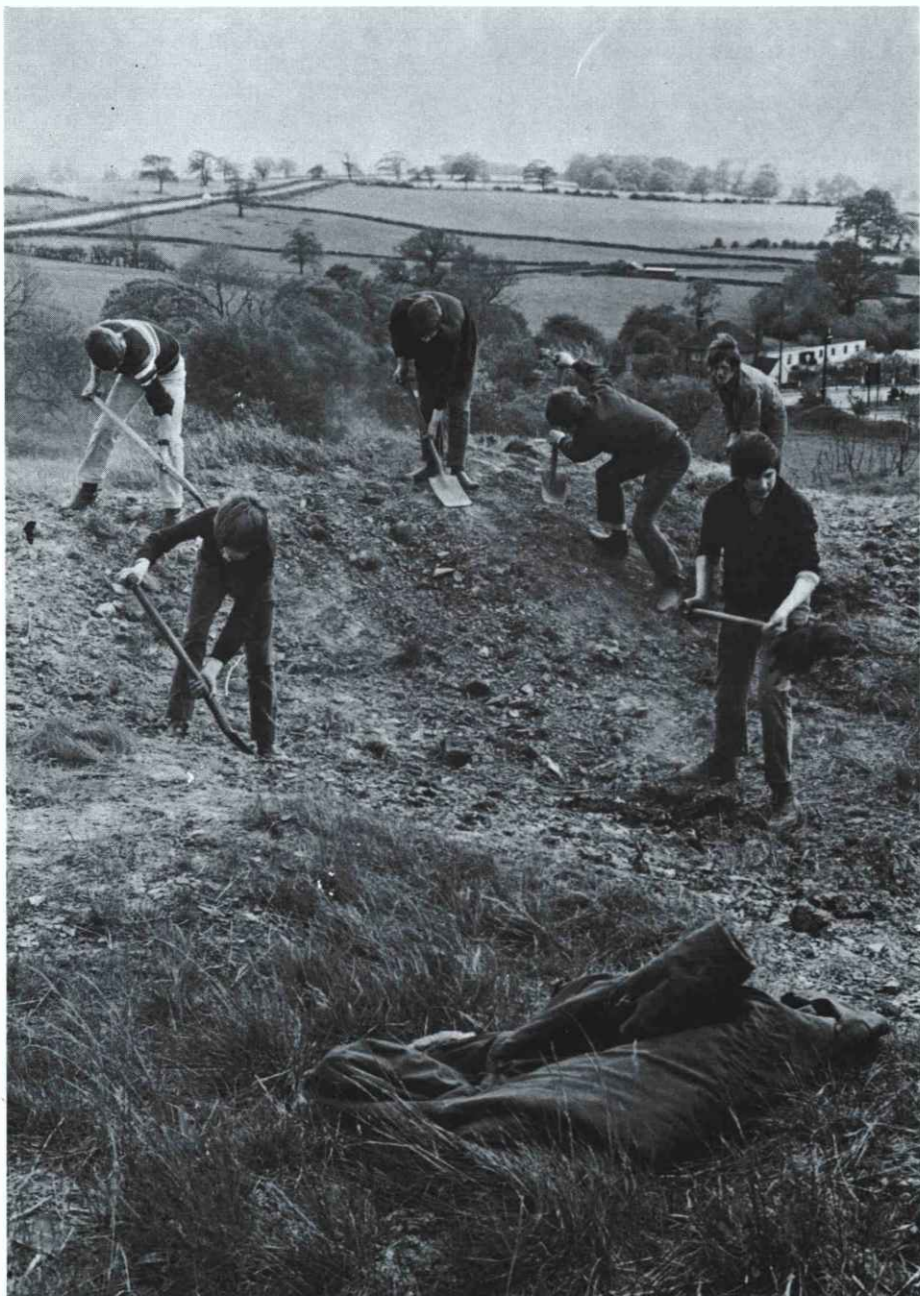
The programmes for these courses will be proposed mainly by the representatives of non-governmental youth organisations interested in the activities of the Council of Europe. They will cover quite a wide range of subjects and it is probable that the Centre will organise courses of information or training, at the request of specialised youth organisations, on problems concerned with the natural and socio-cultural environment. Young people interested in the conservation of nature and natural resources can now look forward to having at their disposal this additional forum in which to make their voices heard.

J RATY, Council of Europe



ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES BY YOUTH

George HM BECHET, Freiburg,
Projects Officer



Young people help turn an old coal tip into a wooded walk with a picnic site.

Today many people are aware of environmental pollution and the rapid changes most habitats are undergoing and they honestly want to do something about it. They often resign, however, at the very beginning as they don't know how and where to start. Information about environmental problems is useful only if, at the same time, we provide working possibilities for the follow-up.

This is one of the aims of the International Youth Federation for Environmental Studies and Conservation (IYF) which was founded in Salzburg, Austria, in 1956 by some West-European youth organisations for nature studies and conservation and which is under the sponsorship of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Today IYF consists of 29 self-governing youth organisations from West-Europe, Czechoslovakia, Turkey and Canada, thus representing about 40 000 young people from all over the world. Furthermore many individual members have joined the IYF Register.

The main aims of IYF are to spread the message of environmental conservation among youth throughout the world and to coordinate on an international level the studies and activities of its national member organisations.

In the activities of IYF, and of every youth organisation dealing with conservation, most importance should be given to information services. In fact one of the greatest dangers is the unawareness of the public and often even of people concerned with nature in some respect. That is why we strongly stress the importance of internal information, which together with courses, conferences and camps, enables the members to rely on exact information in their work. In fact the emotional aspect of conservation, although its importance should not be neglected, is no longer sufficient.

The regular magazines of IYF, the 'European Bulletin' and the 'North American Bulletin', appear bimonthly and give news about conservation in general and about the federation itself. The Yearbooks, containing addresses, proceedings and reports, are of great value for internal use, but less interesting for people outside the federation. The magazine 'Taraxacum' is produced twice a year (money permitting!). 'Taraxacum' is usually dedicated to a specific item, for example the 'Lüneburger Heide Report', 'Conservation in Turkey', the '1965 Spitzbergen Expedition'. IYF also produces an irregular series of reports, such as the 'Finland Report' (1958).

An international studies center

Providing adequate information for youth organisations, possibly for schools too, will be one of the tasks of the IYF London 'International Studies Center' which, with the help of Unesco, began its activities last autumn. The Center will also deal with the preparation of papers for courses and conferences such as the 1971 conference in Ottawa, Canada, on the theme 'Youth and Environment', for which 150 delegates from all over the world are expected. This conference will be a preparation for the UN conference in Stockholm 1972. We hope that it will be a further step to integrate today's challenge into the activities of IYF and its member organisations.

Environmental conservation projects provide basic information and training and practical work for the members, who mostly deal with these subjects in their studies too. They thereby get the chance to work on unusual and even unorthodox themes as a youth organisation is, of course, more flexible than a University syllabus.

Conferences (for example Youth and the Wildlife Crisis, Oxford 1967; International Youth Forum, Luneburg 1970) and courses (for example the yearly 'Lüneburger Heide Course') provide good opportunities for information and discussion. The international camps, including specific working camps, have a program of practical conservation work and exchange of ideas and experiences. Expeditions, such as the Spitzbergen Expedition in 1965, are of great interest for the studies of the participants and at the same time give valuable background information about the area.

Working group on education and information

In 1970 a European Countryside Opinion Poll was begun, with which we hope to reveal information concerning the extent to which young people actively use the countryside, their concern for the countryside and conservation problems and their knowledge and awareness of conservation action.

A 'Red Area Book' will list areas in Europe already threatened or liable to be threatened in the future. Thorough background information will, hopefully, give us a chance for action every time one of them is the subject of an industrial or urban development plan.

Working group on environmental action

This group was founded in 1970 so the Federation could play a more active role in environmental action. It is meant to coordinate national actions on an international level, and to support the member organisations in their activities. The Working Group will give publicity to the actions of member organisations on burning national environmental issues, and will promote the awareness of population growth and economic growth, two of the chief causes of the disturbance of the biological balance. The main point on the program for 1971, however, will be the organisation of a European environmental action week at the same time as next year's 'Earth Day' in America.

Working group on ecology

A bird phenology investigation studies the spring arrival of five species of birds in Europe. An 'oiled bird survey', which has already run for a number of years, counts each year along the North Sea coasts of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark and the United Kingdom, at a fixed date, all oiled birds.



G Vienne - WWF

Of course, our program cannot be comprehensive but we hope to achieve an increasing interest and involvement of young people in environmental conservation, as we have to live and work in this heavily threatened world.

Scouting and Conservation

This article is based on the report of the Boy Scouts World Bureau to the European Conservation Conference on the Management of the Environment in Tomorrow's Europe organised by the Council of Europe at Strasbourg 9-12 February 1970.

In his last message to the Scouts of the world, the late Lord Baden-Powell founder of the Boy Scout Movement, rightly pointed out that **nature study will show you how full of beautiful and wonderful things God has made the world for you to enjoy... Try to leave this world a little better than you found it...**

Thus, in the words of Jack Cox: 'Scouts have always been associated with outdoor activities. Their capacity for doing useful work is unlimited, and is an important factor where conservation is necessary. For conservation costs manpower, and yet it is normally in the poorest communities that the land is most seriously eroded; where flood and drought have done their work; where working the soil and growing food and tree crops no longer pays; and where help is most necessary'. Scouting in addition to being a recognised serious educational movement is also a recreational activity for youth; for this reason it is particularly suited for this type of work in the conservation field.

The Boy Scouts World Bureau has for long recognised that youth must be made aware of the urgency of conservation as a world problem in which they can help to find a solution; encouragement under expert advice can then be given by responsible adult leaders.

To begin with, all scouts learn some simple things as part of their first and second class tests. This includes the avoidance of damage to trees and streams, how to set campsites in suitable places and leave them clean, how to deal with fires, and generally speaking, a great deal of nature study and countryside know how.

Almost every country in the Scout Movement, which now numbers 15 million members from more than 150 countries and territories, is doing something of greater or lesser importance in the field of conservation.

A conservation good turn

For example, the Boy Scouts' Headquarters in Canada and the United States — the two states in which boy scouts have been foremost in the work of conservation — have developed a system, known variously as



David Harwood

Nature study: part of the basic training of cub scouts, is encouraged by the award of merit badges.

merit badges or conservation badges, which offers an admirable way of stimulating the scout's interest in conservation and making him proud of the individual role he can play. Moreover, the boy scouts in these two states have occasionally carried out what is known as a 'conservation good turn', a project planned on an impressive national scale and involving a vast amount of work for all members. It has involved enlisting the co-operation of the press, radio and television, conservation organisations and other organs. The project has done an impressive amount of work in the countries concerned, both directly, by reason of the actual physical conservation work the scouts have themselves carried out, and indirectly, through the extensive publicity for conservation that has accompanied this.

Similarly the scouts of India have carried out their own 'conservation good turn' in the form of 'services to the villages'; Greek scouts have helped in afforestation campaigns; in the Philippines and elsewhere scouts have

carried out ditching and ditch-cleaning to improve local drainage.

As a result of this, from the moment the European Nature Conservation Year was announced, scouts felt involved and began to think about the various aspects presented by this complex problem. The mere mention of scouting immediately brings to mind life in the open and sometimes, even though a little jokingly, the scout is seen as a 'woodsman', a boy playing 'indians', a so-called trapper who has somehow managed to survive in our civilised, mechanised world. People who reason thus can hardly be included among those informed on the methods that Baden-Powell left us. Because if the founder of the scout movement insisted on outdoor life, it was not without reason! Where can today's young city dweller learn the patience of a farmer? How will he be able to persevere enough to grow a plant? Who will show him how patient he must be until the first fruit ripens? How can we get him to move from the stage of simple observation to actually

studying animal habits: foxes, birds, otters, deer and so many others that are still easily found in our European countries?

To escape from concrete and asphalt

Brought up in an environment of concrete and asphalt, the young today become rapidly too used to artificial things: synthetic marble and concrete walls covered with fake stone blocks. Natural slopes, stream beds, ...all are interfered with and enslaved without pity. Respect for nature's creation is not even considered. It is to preserve these important values that scouts are giving all their support to nature conservation, as well as helping to restore the original beauty of a region. One can find them at work planting trees on an eroded hillside in Greece or in the Tessin, ridding Alpine pastures of stone brought down by avalanches, clearing streams which had been used as rubbish dumps, cutting paths for rambles and digging irrigation ditches. They feed deer in wintertime, build shelters for animals, or bird-tables, and do many other types of work within their reach.

Their leaders are worried, however, about the rapid growth of towns and the spread of villas, cabins and chalets of all types, which clutter the countryside. In a few country regions (we are thinking of areas near large capital cities and developed countries) space, freely accessible to every one is rapidly diminishing. So in all European countries scouts have begun to buy plots of land which they make available to troops for camping and real enjoyment of open air life. They are, on a more ambitious level, also trying to awaken the interest of the young in the simplicity of nature. It is here we feel that the current craze for skin-diving, cave-exploring and rambling originates. It is also in this context of closeness to nature that the 'Raid' originated. The young man goes off alone for twenty-four hours walking fields and woods, choosing his own path, observing, thinking and placing himself in the original character-forming environment.

It is in this way (and not by juvenile sentimentalism) that the scout law which says 'a scout is good to animals' must be understood. **A scout likes and respects nature, he tries to preserve it in its original form and this can be done without going against the interests of the community precisely because the scout, due to the closeness of his contact with nature, has a feeling of brotherhood and a respect for basic values.**

Guiding is not just Knots

Philippa F RAYMOND-COX,
London, World Association of Girl
Guides and Girl Scouts



Conservation good turn: girl scouts clear the litter-infested banks of a river; a typical example of an amenity/conservation initiative.

The World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, a nongovernmental organisation for girls and women with a membership of over 6 million in 87 countries, has agreed to concentrate during the next three years on the development of action projects. Nature conservation is specifically mentioned.

While 1970 was European Conservation Year it is not only in Europe that Guide Associations are working on conservation projects. All over the world they are encouraging youngsters to get to know their own countryside, take part in tree planting exercises, clear beaches and woods, introduce agriculture and gardening as part of the Guide training programme, organise anti-litter campaigns, and wield a useful broom in city clean-ups.

Not untypical but perhaps one of the biggest efforts made so far was by a Girl Scout Troop in New Jersey, USA. There the girls decided to clean a seven-mile stretch of the Hackensack River. For weeks they planned, writing

articles to local newspapers, enlisting expert advice and public support so that in the end about 1000 volunteers, mostly young, turned out to help.

Struggling in the thick, black mud they cleared old bicycles, leaking boots and the thousand and one other pieces of rubbish that people seem to think should be thrown into rivers.

Years ago it had been proposed that part of the Hackensack River should become a recreation area — but who wanted any recreation in or near the evil-smelling polluted waters that ran between the litter-infested banks? Now public opinion is beginning to react to this Girl Scout initiative, and work is starting to clean up other stretches of the river.

Another example of Girl Guide and Boy Scout action was in New Zealand where the conservation pledge is: **I give my pledge as a New Zealander to save and to defend from waste the natural resources of my country - its soil and minerals, its forests, waters and wildlife.** There, in 1969, the Guides

and Scouts set up a National Committee for the purpose of educating young and old in the need for action.

Intensive study was made of plant museums, new housing areas, motorway constructions, the development of wet land to encourage water fowl, pollution of air and water. Individuals were urged to plant trees, to make wind breaks for sensitive plants, to observe and name birds, to label trees and shrubs in the parks.

A special Conservation Week was held in August and great efforts were made to clear neglected roadsides, beaches and waterways. In one district Rotarians and Guides combined forces and planted trees in a special area of 350 acres which has been set aside as a children's forest.

So successful was this campaign that the Guides and Scouts plan this year to keep it going and to invite other youth organisations to join them in a united youth effort.

These are only a few of the many examples of conservation by youngsters in the Guide Movement. In 1972 the World Association's own training centre in Mexico will organise a Conference on 'Conservation and Preservation of Human Resources and National Environment'.



YOUNG CONSERVATION VOLUNTEERS

**RD JENNINGS, London
Field Director, British Trust
for Conservation Volunteers**

Why does anyone volunteer their services? It would be foolish to pretend that all volunteers are public-spirited and that they feel a need to make their contribution to society, for it is a society for which many have little time and some believe to be led by people who are ignorant and often incompetent.

In the world of the ecologist these failings frequently show themselves by the increasing calamities to the environment. Despondency about our environmental future tends moreover to weigh more heavily on the consciences of those who are least in a position to do anything about it.

And yet it is this urgency to do something worthwhile and to learn about 'life' which brings forward volunteers to join such organisations as the Conservation Corps (see Nature in Focus summer 1970 p 27) and to offer their services on projects which will give them a sense of achievement in addition to an excuse to get away from the materialistic surroundings of urban life.

Esprit de corps

Volunteers normally join the Conservation Corps between the ages of 17 and 21. They come from all sections of society, but brought together and faced with a task, they form a dedicated team, an efficient and enthusiastic taskforce regardless of prevailing conditions.

They offer the Corps a wide range of specialist knowledge. These include, for example, students of surveying, civil engineering, forestry, botany, zoology and geology. Their expertise is often invaluable both in project and on the site.

Despite conditions which at times are exceptionally severe volunteers pride themselves on being able to complete a task before the end of the camp. Sometimes volunteers have worked in

heavy snowfall, in gales, waist deep in mud or in continuous rain.

There are now some 2000 regular volunteers and they are still being recruited at the rate of over 100 per month and these form only a small portion of the total volunteers available. There are at least 100 different groups, such as youth clubs, schools, scouts, and colleges, which are in direct contact with the Corps and some have sent contingents on tasks over many years. The keenest members in these groups often enrol as individuals. During the last 12 years the Corps has run more than a thousand tasks on over 200 different sites, working nearly 60 000 man-days. In 1970 alone the Corps was engaged in more than 9000 man-days of practical work; an increase of nearly 65% on the previous year. The variety of work is vast: anything from bridge building to scrub cutting; from forestry to research. The Corps has worked on all of the major and many of the more specialised British wildlife habitats; sites ranging from sand-dunes to heather moors, and from ponds to chalk grassland.

Another aspect of the Corps' work is to help control erosion caused by excessive public pressure. This is often done by building nature trails both to guide people around important areas and to educate them in the value of the countryside. The Corps also helps private landowners by planting shelter belts and copses in areas where hedgerows have been removed to make way for the larger machinery of modern farming.

Recently the Corps has widened its scope to include amenity, restoration and preservation tasks, providing these are compatible with the nature conservation interests of the surrounding countryside. Such work includes clearing village ponds and commons, maintaining footpaths, building dams and creating educational and amenity areas.

Conservation know-how

Education plays a major part in the Conservation Corps' activities both on and off the work site. Lectures and informal discussions about nature conservation and local points of historic interest and other related topics are a feature of the Corps' life and the value of this work in helping to create an enthusiastic conservation-minded society cannot be overstated. An introductory talk on the ecological interest of the site and its relation to local or national interests not only contributes to the interest of the work in hand but also emphasises the purpose behind the task, thereby acting as an incentive to physical effort. Through such talks and discussions the regular conserver develops a deep knowledge of the how, why and wherefore of nature conservation. On the longer residential tasks there are often illustrated evening lectures.

Education is not, however, restricted to natural history and allied subjects. Volunteers learn to handle traditional rural implements, and to tackle such crafts as hedgelaying, ditching, fencing, felling, coppicing, peat-digging and scything.

In 1968 the Conservation Corps ran its first educational course for volunteers and this year it is hoped to run the first of many leadership courses. These courses will probably become an advanced part of a Certificate of Proficiency in Practical Conservation which it is hoped to launch in conjunction with other youth and conservation organisations. Such a Certificate will help raise the standard of leadership

Bridge-building, in this case for a nature trail, is but one of the many skills learned by these young conservation volunteers.



TOMORROW'S COUNTRYSIDE

**RF GREGOR, Secretary General
European committee for young
farmers' and 4H clubs**

The Countryside of tomorrow is of great significance to all young people but the use to which this priceless heritage is put is vital to rural youth.

The pressures arising from vast urban populations are already apparent in most of the highly industrialised societies of Western Europe, particularly in those parts of the countryside near centres of heavy industrialisation.

The crisis in these areas has arrived and will not long be delayed even in the remoter rural areas or in those regions which can perhaps best be described as wilderness retreats.

Whatever the immediate situation, there is the potential for a devastating explosion either soon, or in the foreseeable future, unless people get together in an attempt to reconcile their needs and interests. It is the opinion of the European Committee for Young Farmers' and 4H Clubs and the rural youth organisations which it represents, that young people must be in the vanguard of such discussions, building the bridges over the ever widening gulfs which lie between rural and urban beliefs and concerns.

Unquestionably the older elements of society, on the farm on the one hand and in the city on the other, have become entrenched in their attitude to more universal land use. Entrenched on the one hand because of bitter experience, entrenched on the other because of ignorance and disregard and misunderstanding.

Who better than the young people of rural Europe to initiate their contemporaries from the cities and the urban areas to the joys of the countryside.

Who better than the youth of rural Europe to initiate their parents and elders into an understanding that if our civilisation is to survive then our less fortunate city cousins must be given a real feeling for, and sympathy with the countryside and what it stands for.

AUSTRIA

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FED REP OF GERMANY • YUGOSLAVIA



IRELAND

ICELAND

LIECHTENSTEIN

LUXEMBOURG

NORWAY

ITALY • SWEDEN • TURKEY • USSR

But even a countryman can be blind and the European Committee and its member organisations see a very positive role for themselves in improving the knowledge which their members have of the countryside, its flora and fauna. It is also proposed to capitalise on this by training our members to become the entrepreneurs of the countryside, acting as guides, rangers and wardens, indeed as the custodians of our heritage.

European Conservation Year has acted as a focal point for discussions, conferences and indeed competitive activities for all of our organisations. Partnerships have been established with other agencies interested in the field and a whole new area of awareness has been created which will have long term implications both for our organisations and members and for the future of rural youth. It is the deliberate policy of the Committee to ensure that these matters are kept under close and continuing scrutiny during the coming decade, in order that rural youth are in a position to play their part both as the guardians of, and as the guides to the proper use of Europe's playground.



operation "NOAH'S ARK - SOS NATURE"

Marcel CLÉBANT Director of Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' and World Operation 'Message in the Sea'

In 1964, a simple seaside game organised two years previously by the weekly magazine 'Femmes d'Aujourd'hui' became international. 'Bottle in the sea' became the 'Message in the Sea' and an attack was launched on the all-powerful polluters of the seas. Six years later, World Operation 'Message in the Sea' had become the largest-scale anti-water pollution campaign in the world and the support of 37 countries had been enlisted. Impressive events (with which the Council of Europe associates itself wholeheartedly) are held every year. In the wake of 'Message in the Sea' another operation, organised in close cooperation with the Council of Europe, is also setting off to conquer the world. This is Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature'. It was first run as a pilot scheme in Belgium for several years and spread in 1970 to France and Luxembourg. Bases have been set up in Spain, Portugal, Tunisia, Turkey, Great Britain and Scandinavia. In the years to come, it is planned to extend 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' techniques, perfected over five years, to these countries and, of course, to others as well.

What are the principles behind this movement?

Its first concern is to translate theory into practice. Nature conservation should not merely be the preserve of a few enlightened people - it is a matter for the community and should activate a large section of society. If people are educated but not, however, made to take an active part, there is a risk that their knowledge of nature will soon merge, especially in children's minds, with the mass of information to which everyone is exposed as the world is highly variegated and abounds in information of every kind. The organisers of Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' therefore feel that though, of course, it is essential to inform people of these problems, this

is only a prelude to the second step: action.

To achieve these aims, the main target is youth. The Operation uses all forms of modern mass media to reach young people, including, of course, the magazine 'Femmes d'Aujourd'hui'. The arguments used to enlist young people can be summed up very briefly as follows: the world in which you will have to live will be what you decide to make it; you have certain rights over this future world, as it is yours; you have the right to make your voice heard now and you are morally obliged to take action.

This action is usually taken by awakening individual awareness, or through joint efforts. In principle, to contribute to Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' one must belong to a voluntary 'team' of any size, religion, philosophy or politics. It should be noted that the Operation plans to have a new type of participant - 'lone sailors' - and thus make it possible for individuals to become full members of this great movement.

The results of the 1969 - 70 campaign, launched to mark European Conservation Year, have exceeded all the organisers' expectations. The first stage was a drawing competition. (In the organisers' opinion, studying a subject to draw it, can be an effective means of awakening children's enthusiasm for nature conservation since for them, especially when they are very young, the dividing line between reality and imagination, if it exists at all, is very faint. If a child draws an animal he wants to save he will in fact save it in his own mind). This competition resulted in thirty thousand drawings being sent to the organisers. Three hundred were chosen and exhibited at UNESCO Headquarters, where they aroused the admiration of the Paris press.

Practical efforts have spread all over Europe, particularly, of course, in France, Belgium and Luxembourg,

which at present are the main bases for the campaign. Experience has shown that all the twenty suggestions made to the young persons involved are feasible. Activities vary from traditional work, such as clearing up forests, to purely political action, as when groups of young people have approached municipal or other authorities and demanded that severe measures be taken against persons polluting local resources, that is the rivers or the countryside.

A young Belgian team-leader, Régis Gysemberg, took up the campaign against bird-netting and, by giving up all his holidays and free time for a year, managed to collect 185 000 signatures to a petition which he submitted to Mr Charles Héger, the Minister for Agriculture. This work was not without its risks as this 15-year-old boy was so openly and seriously threatened by the bird-netters that for some time the Belgian police thought it necessary to give him protection on his way to school.

In France enormous teams were involved, such as the Association Française des Familles du Bas-Rhin, which assembled roughly 20 000 young people during the school holidays. Entire regions have formed sponsorship committees headed by the Prefect to give encouragement to young 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' teams. The Ministries of Education and Agriculture have given this operation very active support, especially the former, which undertook the distribution of documentation specially prepared for European Conservation Year and for Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature'.

At the same time, 'Femmes d'Aujourd'hui' continued to sponsor activities and set up the first SOS Nature centre, at Hosingen in Luxembourg. Wounded wild animals are treated and rehabilitated at this centre and its highly advanced operating facilities make it possible to care for many different kinds of animals.

In October 1970, the first SOS Nature training centre was started in the Floralies park at Vincennes in Paris. There are two buildings: an exhibition-information hall where young people can exhibit their work to promote nature conservation, and an SOS Nature workshop to which young people from the housing estates and the entire Paris area can come and make nesting-boxes, placards, posters, etc, under the attentive eye of a full-time leader who can give them advice. Once again, this is the first of its kind in the world and the organisers hope to set up similar centres all over Europe. This centre brings together several different interests: those of nature and



of youth, and, of course, the social interest which has not escaped the attention of the Paris municipal authorities who encouraged its foundation. Another achievement, though in a completely different field, is a 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' game which has been produced and distributed, thus making it possible to reach strata of society for whom, despite all efforts, nature remains relatively boring and academic.

The future of Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' is interwoven with its counterpart, World Operation 'Message in the Sea'. It is bound to follow the same pattern of growth, and its organisers are anxious to widen its contacts and to further the setting-up of 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature' movements all over the world with the help of the central organisation. There are two headquarters.

Anyone interested in the promotion and rebirth of nature should get in touch with Operation 'Noah's Ark - SOS Nature': 25, avenue de Matignon, Paris 8e (Tel 256 44 22) or 65, rue de Hennin, 1050 Brussels (Tel 47 69 29).

This article was first published in the Dutch EGY brochure 'Op hoop van leven' published by van n.v. Billiton - van der Rijn.

The author is 27 years old and is one of the five representatives on the Amsterdam City Council of the 'Amsterdam Kabouterstad', the revolutionary party of young people whose election campaign was based on revealing the failings of today's society.

THE CRUCIFIXION of saint francis of assisi



When travelling one day St Francis of Assisi saw a large flock of birds of all kinds along the roadside. He was so interested in the way they looked and the way they spoke that he very much desired to become a brother of these gay creatures of God. So he left his company and walked towards the birds and was astonished to see that they waited for him as if expecting him. St Francis was moved by the understanding attitude of the birds and he immediately began speaking to them. 'Oh birds, my brothers' he said 'you should praise the one who created you and love him always; the one who gave you feathers as protection, wings to fly and all your other needs. God put you in a higher place than other creatures with a home in the pure air and even if you neither sow nor harvest he protects you and guides you so you need not worry'. When they heard his voice, the birds became less shy. They came closer, looked at him, moved their wings and sang to show him how much they trusted him. St Francis saw how much they trusted him and walked among them. The birds showed no fear. He finally blessed them and told them to fly away, which only then they did.

St Francis must have been very much aware of the unity of creation, so much so that modern people are inclined to disbelieve his stories.

Modern people live far from everything that is not made out of plastic, steel, concrete or human flesh. Modern people are so much isolated within their cities that they are no longer moved when birds, animals and plants are being massacred.

I do not want to bore the reader with endless accounts of the disasters that we inflict upon nature daily. We know about this. But I will give just two examples because we should not leave unused an opportunity to attract attention to the gravity of the pollution and destruction of our environment. Of some 1300 higher plants of the original Dutch flora, 434 had disappeared or had almost disappeared by 1966. That is, about 33%. Today we may safely put this percentage at 54, this alarming increase being mainly due to the widespread use of pesticides.

In case this example is not clear enough I will give another which shows the connection between flora and fauna. Some 20 years ago the Wildfowl

Reserve Zwarte Meer had a rich vegetation which provided the main diet of dabbling ducks and swans. This vegetation was also important for the reproduction of a certain species of freshwater mussel which served as basic food for diving ducks. Because of the heavily polluted water this vegetation has been so reduced that perhaps only 20% of the birds of 1950 are now left. Our Christian civilisation apparently was not satisfied with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. It may sound very strange but there seems to be a continual need for sacrificial slaughter as everyone may testify who witnesses the gradual extinction of animal species. We are crucifying St Francis of Assisi. Although he is not completely dead he already has the nails through his hands and feet. It is late. It may be even too late, but we have to prevent St Francis, in the form of birds, fishes, mammals and other living things, being crucified completely. If this becomes reality we are stringing up ourselves.

Ecology is the science concerned with the relation between living organisms and their environment. Everyone should be concerned with ecology. It

looks as if it is going to be the essential science on the success of which depends the continuation of the human species. Neutralising pollution, prevention of poisoning, management of our natural environment, are the vital challenges with which, if met successfully, we and our fellow creatures could live happily.

How for Christ's sake can we ever construct a democratic society if at the same time the biological basis and justification of our own existence is being nullified by our own activities? Ecology is important, not only because its problems manage to overshadow all political and other differences but also because it can provide a lesson for a democratic society. Ecology teaches us the dangers of monoculture. If there is a great variety in a certain environment as regards flora and fauna then there is less chance for pests, erosion or other disturbances of the biological balance.

Monocultures have been created by man not only in agriculture but also in recent times in economic affairs. We are getting near a clear centralisation of certain activities in certain countries: for example, tin in Bolivia, steel

in Pittsburgh, Cleveland and Youngstown, oil in the Arab countries, industry in Europe and the USA and basic products in the rest of the world.

Because of the industrial revolution energy supplies have grown enormously but their diversity has decreased. Everything now turns around fossil fuels, that is, coal and oil; energy created by wind and steam are hardly used any more.

In this respect too, a complete monoculture reckons to come into being and, moreover, in the form of a very dirty and poisonous source of energy. But fortunately, modern technology offers more differentiated forms of energy: direct from the sun, the tides, wind turbines, even nuclear energy, although the dangers of radio-active wastes must first be averted.

Don't let us put all our cards in one source of energy. It may very well be that a good measure of progress within a society is its degree of differentiation.

The worst form of monoculture is the social conformism of most peoples of our western world to which they are more or less pressed through all sorts of influences such as obligations of work, press and broadcasting media or by their living conditions. Someone who is forced to live on the eighth floor of an apartment house on a large highway will have to show a stronger personality to develop his own individuality than someone who lives in a house in the middle of a town in a quarter full of gardens, picturesque buildings and historic interest.

In terms of our society the ecological message is that the greater the variety of individuals, the healthier will be the society. This variety is only possible if we create circumstances in which everyone of us can contribute to society something of himself. Such circumstances, must be created not only by a special group of politicians, civil servants, businessmen and military but by everyone, in a decentralised society. We, the modern plastic man, are crucifying St Francis of Assisi because we have lost contact with nature.

Back to nature! Impossible! And in any case we don't want that because modern science and technology provide too rich a treasure. But who can bring about harmony between nature and modern technology? Only one who accepts his responsibility as a man and understands the animals and plants, and is one with the Cosmos, whether this is man, plant or thing.



Extract from the brochure 'What should we do with our planet earth?' by Professor Mario Pavan, Director of the Institute of Agricultural Entomology, University of Pavia, Italy; head of the Italian Delegation to the European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.

Youth of the world, who in the near future will take over the reins of government and act as responsible citizens, this is an appeal above every creed, every social and political ideology, every nationality, origin and culture.

The world which you inherit and which you will pass down to your descendents, is worn by a period of unwise use. Men are increasing incredibly fast, their influence and incidence on nature are continually spreading and deepening, while the earth's surface has remained the same and the natural resources are gradually being swallowed up.

Young people of all continents, the past ages and particularly the last few centuries, have wrought the conditions whose consequences we are now having to bear; these are a tragic and irreparable in many sectors, at a critical point in others, and in the balance, if not irretrievably compromised, over vast areas throughout the whole world.

The soil, flora, fauna, waters and the atmosphere have been devastated and altered, so that a healthy, continuous and harmonious, cultural and civil development is impossible for our future generations. Science has shown the serious responsibility of those who have preceded us; today we realise that we, and above all the younger generation, have the responsibility of managing Nature, its resources and the world more rationally. Man's huge technical power which he can now, and even more so in the future, bring to bear on Nature, makes him arbiter of humanity's fate.

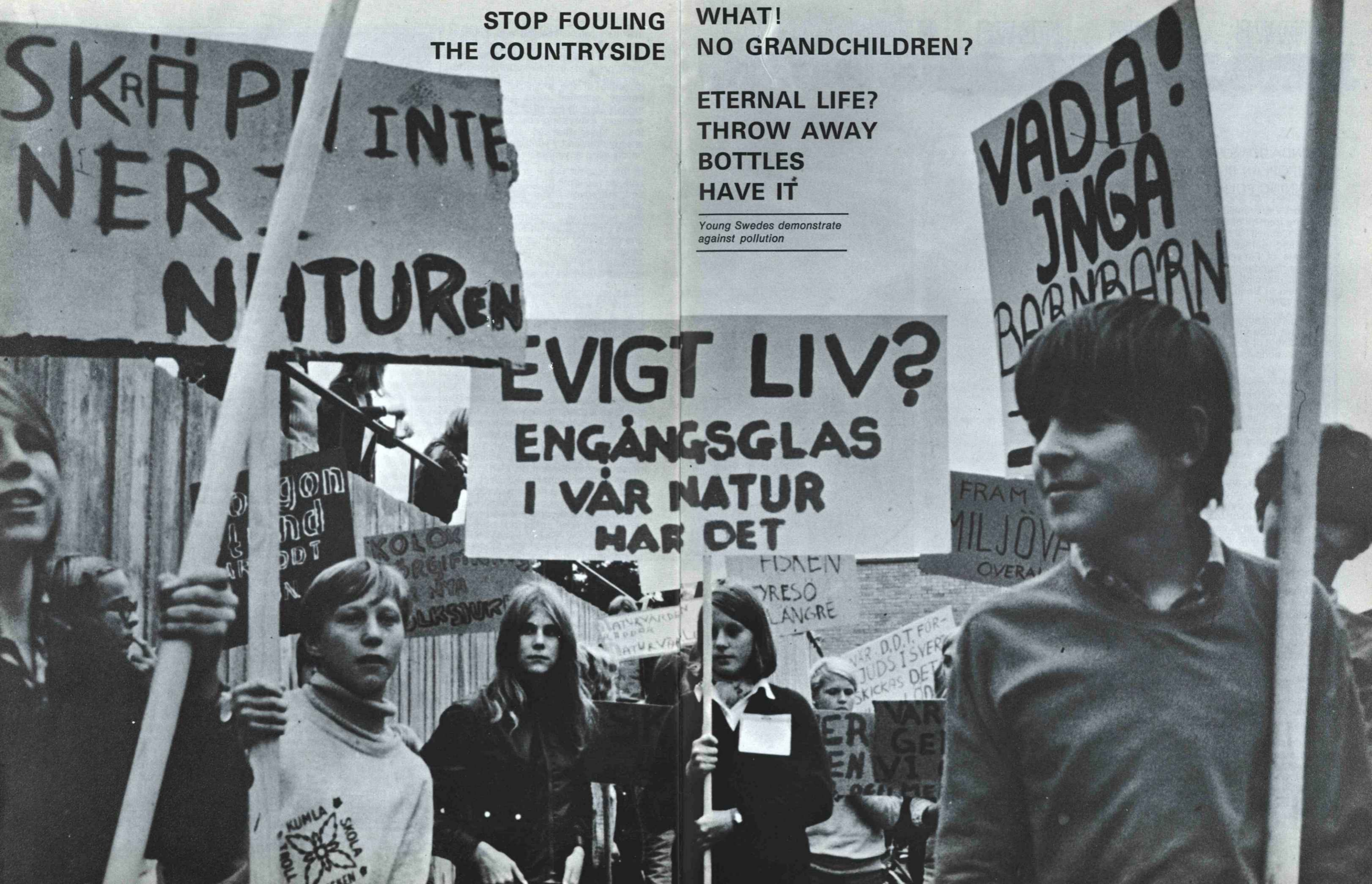
May the youth of today, who will govern the world tomorrow, accept their responsibility to set and guarantee, here on this Earth which is our destiny, the principles of a sound administration of Nature's resources. Today we clearly stand at the crossroads: it is up to young people throughout the world to choose and decide.

**STOP FOULING
THE COUNTRYSIDE**

**WHAT!
NO GRANDCHILDREN?**

**ETERNAL LIFE?
THROW AWAY
BOTTLES
HAVE IT**

*Young Swedes demonstrate
against pollution*





Swiss Tourist Office

**FOUNDATIONS FOR
 A EUROPEAN REGIONAL
 PLANNING POLICY**

Ministers responsible for regional planning from 16 of the member states of the Council of Europe and from Spain, and representatives of the governments of Finland and Yugoslavia, laid the foundations for a European regional planning policy at a conference held in Bonn, from 9 to 11 September 1970.

The Ministers agreed that governments must give high priority to the rational management of the environment and to effective conservation of natural resources.

Excessive concentrations liable to appear in certain urban areas or central trunk routes must be avoided and the Ministers stressed the need for a long term regional planning policy which would promote the internal balance and the quality of the environment of such regions.

The Conference agreed that in rural areas to which access was difficult and which at present offered no opportunities for industrialisation or for any other economic development, governments should be aware of the need to protect nature, failing which such areas may be reduced to a state of dereliction.

The Ministers also discussed problems of frontier regions and of peripheral regions.

They felt that special attention should be given to a number of outlying areas situated around the Mediterranean basin, along the Atlantic coast, in the Nordic countries and in areas on the border of Eastern Europe, a border which, however, should not represent an insurmountable barrier to regional planning in Europe.

The Ministers considered that governments should encourage the creation of effective regional structures which should enable the population to play a part in drawing up regional plans and putting them into effect through the lower tier of local authorities.

It was decided to hold a second conference, this time in France, within a reasonable period and with the assistance of the Council of Europe.

**TOWARDS A EUROPEAN
 WATER MANAGEMENT PLAN**

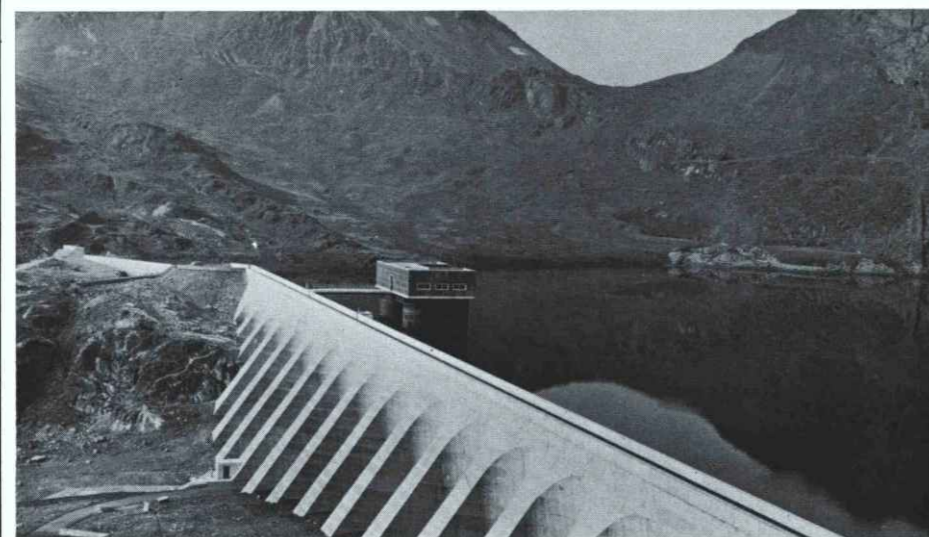
The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has recommended that governments of member states assess at once the quantity and quality of water resources in their territories. They should also determine, from the point of view of quality as well as quantity, the future needs for water for all uses.

Within the framework of a national water policy aimed at the rational use and conservation of water resources, ways of meeting these needs should be indicated by establishing the balance of supply and demand within a river basin.

The Committee of Ministers sees this as a first step towards establishing the balance between supply and demand at a European level, and towards cooperation between riparian states, and have invited the governments of member states to inform the Secretary General every three years of action taken on this resolution.



Council of Europe



Council of Europe



**2 500 000 STUDENTS
 OF NATURE**

Some 2 500 000 young people of school age took part in the Council of Europe-supported European Schools Day competition which this year focussed its attention on the need for nature conservation.

Children up to 14 years were asked to draw a poster, given the following theme:

'Europe has a very large number of inhabitants and more and more of them wish to spend their holidays in the country or at the seaside.

Many of them come to your country and many of your friends spend their holidays in other European countries. Unless everyone knows how to behave in the woods and fields, at the seaside or lakeside, nature will be spoiled.

Boys and girls in all European countries must help to keep nature beautiful'.

In the 14 to 16 years age group the competition was to prepare (individually or by team work) the subject for a ten-minute European television programme illustrating the need for European cooperation in the field of nature conservation. Their theme was:

'Europe is the world's most densely populated continent.

Towns, industrial areas and means of communication are expanding, pushing aside and spoiling nature as a result of air and water pollution, rubbish dumps, car cemeteries and the spoiling of beaches.

Many species of animals and plants are disappearing.

And yet we are more and more in need of this 'nature' as a source of clean air, calm, and contact with living things'.

Eleven international prizes and eighteen other prizes were awarded to school children in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Sweden and Switzerland.

water resources:

- for power
- for irrigation
- for leisure
- or for pleasure...

COURSE IN APPLIED ECOLOGY

An experimental course on the planning and management of the natural environment has been approved by the Committee of Ministers for autumn 1971 at Wageningen (Netherlands). The course is being planned jointly by the European Committee's working parties on flora, fauna and landscape and on information and education. It will last two weeks and is intended for some 25 participants: senior officials of organisations and institutions concerned with environmental planning and management. The following subjects will be studied: Regional planning, zoning, land utilisation, creation of buffer zones, etc. in relation to nature conservation; Management of geological areas, soil and water; Management of vegetation (planting, cutting, burning-off, protection); Wildlife management (protection, control, hunting, fishing, etc); Control of human activities (recreation, tourism, pollution, trampling, picking, photography, etc).

Three reports will be presented on each subject by lecturers invited from different countries. A great deal of the time will be spent in discussions and exchanges of views and there will be cooperation with the IUCN, FAO and UNESCO. It is hoped that the course will lead to similar courses being held in other member States. This would help to overcome difficulties of language and distance, and also enable the problems encountered in different areas to be the subject of field study during the courses.

PROTECTION OF SALMON IN TURKEY

The number of salmon in the eastern region of the Black Sea is decreasing noticeably due to intensive poaching while the fish, whose natural habitat is the sea, swim upstream in order to spawn. The Turkish Government has already introduced legislation to protect five important rivers with the aim of preserving salmon (*Salmo salar*). Nevertheless it would welcome an expert in 1971 to undertake a study on the ecology of the salmon in this region of Turkey. At a recent meeting the Committee of Ministers accepted the recommendation of the European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources to provide funds for sending an expert to Turkey.

SHORT NOTES

Declaration of the International Youth Forum for European Conservation Year

An International Youth Forum on European Conservation Year was convened by the International Youth Federation for Environmental Studies and Conservation at Inzmühlen in the Lüneburger Heide from 13 to 25 July, 1970. In this area, which received the European Diploma for Nature Conservation, the representatives of European Youth reviewed the problems of the environment, discussed the role that young people can play in their solution and considered the results of the Strasbourg European Conservation Conference.

The aim was to establish a common European basis in preparation for the 1971 World Youth and the Environment Conference to be held in Canada before the United Nations Environment Conference in Sweden in 1972. This aim was eventually achieved and a ten-point declaration, which includes the following proposals, was produced, after several hours of sometimes heated discussion:

- the establishment of an optimum population;
- the stabilisation of living standards and economic growth;
- guarantees for a healthy and congenial environment;
- one ministry in every country ultimately responsible for the environment;
- a permanent Council of European Ministers concerned with environmental affairs;
- a European environmental research institute; environmental education at all levels;
- and a European trust fund for youth activities in conservation.



Schools tackle conservation

Children from nearly 400 British schools fought pollution during European Conservation Year by cleaning up polluted rivers and canals, planting slagheaps with grass and trees, turning disused railway cuttings into wildlife sanctuaries and creating nature trails. The projects were entries in a competition run by Shell and BP. One of the most ambitious projects was the grassing of a 27.5 m high spoil heap from a local colliery and the planting of 1600 trees. Abandoned railway lines were tackled usually with ideas of introducing wildlife, large areas near towns were turned into parks, woods were surveyed, derelict land recultivated and nature trails laid out.

In the literary field Esso Standard Italiana organised a '1970 European Youth Newspapers' contest throughout Italian secondary schools. The theme of the contest was 'Relations between the conservation of nature and human

environment and scientific and social progress'.

Cash prizes of 150000 lire were awarded to the authors of the four best articles published in school newspapers and student bulletins during European Conservation Year. The school or student bulletins publishing the prize-winning articles were awarded a 100 000 lire prize.

These are but two examples which illustrate the enthusiasm with which schools and private industry, especially the major oil companies, responded to the challenge of ECY.

Young industrialists discuss pollution

The Annual Congress of the Federation des Jeunes Chefs d'Entreprise d'Europe, held in Brussels on 6 and 7 November 1970, took as its main theme 'Management with Conscience: Is Industry Polluting our Society?'

Over 100 delegates from industry and commerce drawn from the affiliated

organisations of the Federation participated in the Congress.

Papers were presented by Mr H Haccourt of the Council of Europe, Mr H C Butcher of the Confederation of British Industries and Mr C Boschloos, President of the Belgian Institute for the Protection of the Environment, as well as papers on the practical aspects of combatting pollution, by industrial experts.

The Congress ended with visits to industrial plants in and near Brussels to see practical methods of reducing pollution of the environment.

Woodrow Wilson Center Fellowships

The newly-formed Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars was established on 24 October 1968 by Act of Congress to be '... a living institution expressing the ideas and concerns of Woodrow Wilson... symbolising and strengthening the fruitful relationship between the world of learning and the world of public affairs'.

Envisaged is a fellowship programme of up to 40 scholars, approximately half of whom will be from countries other than the US. Many disciplines will be represented. Two immediate study projects are: the development of international law for ocean space; and 20th-century man in perspective, including the implications of social biology and the deteriorating environment. When the fellowship programme is fully operational, distinguished scholars will be selected from various occupations, professions and fields to work in Washington for periods ranging from a few weeks to a few years. In addition, a small guest scholar programme will provide space, information and other services for eminent scholars making short visits to Washington.

Nomination forms and a brochure giving the background and aims of the Center are available from:

The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Smithsonian Institution Building WASHINGTON DC 20560 USA

Mercury references

The United States Department of the Interior has announced the availability of **Mercury Contamination in the Natural Environment**, a bibliography of more than 200 references to contemporary English-language literature on mercury with particular reference to fish, wildlife and water pollution.

The bibliography was prepared cooperatively by Interior libraries and the Librarian of the Fisheries Board of Canada at Winnipeg, Manitoba.

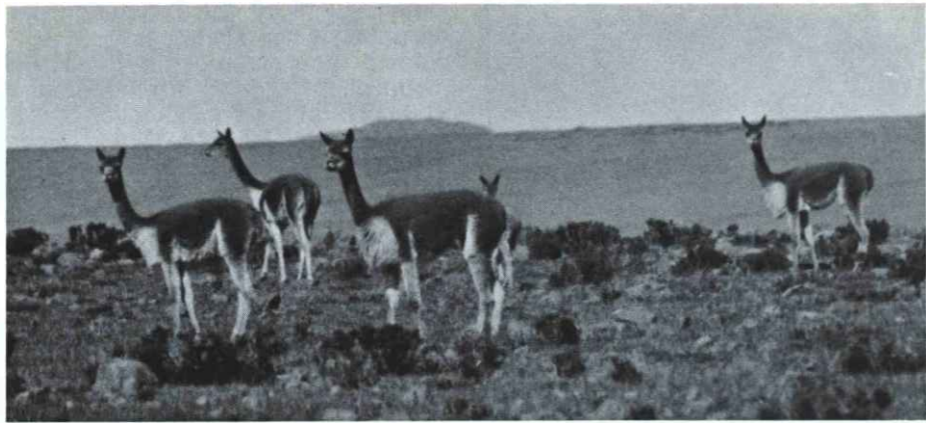
Copies are available from the Natural Resources Library, Department of the Interior, Washington, D C 20240.

38 million francs for nature protection in France

Five months after being set up, the Ministry of Agriculture's Directorate-General for the Conservation of Nature (see Nature in Focus autumn 1970 p 22) which is responsible for studying, promoting and coordinating all activities aimed at protecting nature, has drawn up a special programme containing a number of specific measures for the protection and improvement of natural areas. A sum of 38 million francs has been made available for these activities.

'No one's gonna change our world'

The Royal Houses of Europe united behind the conservation cause at the Strasbourg conference in February. In the United States young people have been demonstrating in the streets against the lack of proper anti-pollution controls. Now the British National Appeal of the World Wildlife Fund has added a new dimension of support — pop singing stars — and successfully united them with youth and Royalty. On a 12-inch record (EMI Regal Starline SRS 5013) the following stars sing for the World Wildlife Fund: The Beatles, The Bee Gees, Cilla Black, Dave-Dee-Dozy-Beaky-Mick-Tich, Bruce Forsyth, Rolf Harris, The Hollies, Lulu, Spike Milligan, Cliff Richard and Harry Secombe. The record sleeve carries a photograph and the following message from HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh: 'A meeting of the World Wildlife Fund was convened at Buckingham Palace on 21st December 1967. It was in the nature of a 'Talk In' with the view to stimulating new ideas. Among those present were several people from the entertainment world, on whose behalf Spike Milligan suggested making a long-playing record on which the artists, composers, publishers, and recording companies would waive all fees. This record is the result of that idea. Royalties from its sale will go towards the funds dealing with rare animals in danger of extinction. This in itself makes this a unique record. I can do no more than wish it great success.'



World Wildlife Fund

First European Festival of Recreation

The International Recreation Association is to be congratulated on its initiative in organising the first European Regional Festival of Leisure at Geneva in 1970. The Festival's very wide programme included many practical displays of leisure activities on and around Lake Geneva, an international exhibition and a high-powered international conference. The conference attracted delegates from all over the world with varied backgrounds and a wide range of interests. The programme considered leisure under four main headings based on a time-scale; daily leisure, weekends, annual holidays and after retirement. Facilities were subdivided according to their relationship to the home; within easy walking distance (community centres, libraries) within easy reach by vehicular transport (town park, sports grounds) outside the city (country parks) and the more remote forest parks and national parks.

Among the various contributions we may cite two made by the representatives of two leisure oriented firms in Germany and in Holland.

Dr Mittelbach, Chief Construction Director for a regional organisation of leisure facilities in the Rhine-Ruhr area spoke of his organisation's work in promoting green spaces and care of the countryside; since 1967 they had put increasing effort into creating regional leisure facilities such as country parks. Initiative for these facilities came here, as in the Netherlands, from the towns rather than from the country.

The role of big business in leisure was outlined by the Chief of the recreation services of the Dutch firm of Philips at Eindhoven. Recreation provision here went far beyond the traditional sports ground and works canteen; and this example, and others discussed from Switzerland, brought

Soft-wooled and rare: vicuñas high in the Andes of South America.

to mind the opportunities in other European countries for links between industry, and country parks.

The Conference stressed the need for readily available and up-to-date information about the techniques, procedures and projects employed in other countries.

New Eural Reserves in Ireland

Within the framework of European Conservation Year 1970, the European Association for Free Nature Reserves (Association Européenne des Réserves Naturelles Libres - Eural) was able to create two new Free Nature Reserves in the Cork and Galway areas of Ireland. As their title indicates, these reserves were established by Eural with the consent and collaboration of the landowners.

The two new reserves in Ireland are especially interesting as wintering places for waterfowl and are part of a plan for Eural Free Nature Reserves which, in time, will extend all over Europe.

World Wildlife Fund

Contraband vicuña wool in Europe

Threatened with extinction, the graceful vicuña (*Lama vicugna*) still provides wool that is openly woven into cloth in Britain and sold through some large London stores. This wool can be obtained only by killing the animal. Its only habitat known to the WWF is Peru and Bolivia where export of this wool or skin is strictly banned.

The killing is mainly by Indians at near-starvation level in the high forest-covered slopes of the Andes. Obviously this activity is promoted by smugglers. Recognising this, and even more determined to stamp out this

trade, the Bolivian and the Peruvian Governments last year raised the penalty to a three-year jail sentence for smuggling this wool and to a one-year sentence for killing vicuña.

Seething with indignation at the continuation of this trade, Señor Felipe Benavides, President of the Zoological Association of Peru and International Trustee of the World Wildlife Fund, came to London to investigate. He saw a £340 vicuña-wool bedcover offered at an internationally famous London store. He traced one weaving source to a cashmere works in Bradford, England. A spokesman of this company said: 'In the past we have bought vicuña through a firm in the United States and they can always supply us with a certificate of legal capture which comes with the invoice...'

It is obvious that this US firm has either discovered a new habitat of the vicuña or is prepared to issue fraudulent certificates. After years of effort by international organisations and especially by the Fauna Preservation Society and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) the British Government has decided to prohibit absolutely the import of vicuña hair and skins from South America. Britain is the first European country to adopt this measure which is long overdue and it is hoped that other countries importing and manufacturing products from vicuña hair will follow Great Britain's example.

Thoroughbred alpine ibex

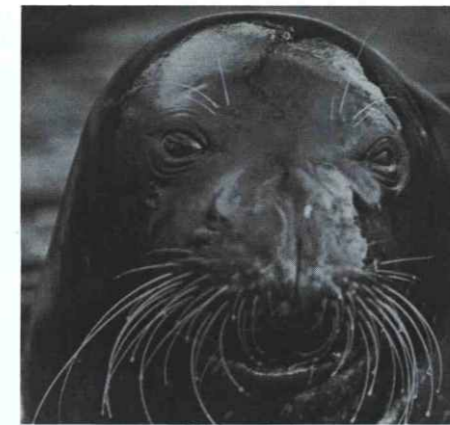
The alpine ibex mates easily with goats and it often happens that bastards are offered for sale by unscrupulous dealers.

Permanent preservation can only be ensured if a mammal species lives in many colonies in different areas. So,

on the occasion of European Conservation Year 1970, the Austrian Game Preservation Association (Verein Österreichischer Wildgatter) passed the following resolution on 11 June.

'Knowing of the great importance of the thoroughbred preservation of the alpine ibex (*Capra ibex ibex*), the Austrian Game Preservation Association and the undersigned suggest the introduction and administration by a zoologist of a record of the occurrence of this animal.'

The resolution was also signed, for



Popperfoto

Monk seal. Meditating on its fate?

Italy, by Prof Dr Videsott, for Germany, by Prof Lutz Heck, Regierungsförstdirektor, E Rössner, Landesforstdirektion München and Oberforstmeister Nerl, for Yugoslavia, by Mr Fabian (forestry superintendent) and Mr Svigelji (forestry superintendent) for Austria, by Landesjägermeister Dr Knaus and Dr Heinrich Prinz Reub and for Switzerland, by Dr Nievergelt and Dr Schilling.

Fund to save Mediterranean monk seal

Some of the last refuges and suitable breeding places of the Mediterranean monk seal are in the grottos of the Sardinian coast. One of these is the 'Grotta del Bue Marino' (Grotto of the Sea Ox) in the Gulf of Orosei, which will soon be unsuitable for this rare and endangered species (*Monachus monachus*) due to excessive tourist development.

Expert geologists and biologists in the Speleological Group of Piedmont in northern Italy, financed by the Italian World Wildlife Fund, are surveying the entire Gulf of Orosei to find the refuges of the seals. They are also surveying the Grotto of the Sea Ox to find a new access for visitors which will not disturb or compromise the breeding of the monk seal.

Little is known about the monk seal, of which no more than 500 individuals survive around the Mediterranean, Black Sea and North African Atlantic coasts.

Dr W Scott, a British zoologist of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, is completing the Italian research by studying the seals' biology. The funds required for this research project are being collected by the Italian National Appeal of the WWF by a campaign among its members and appeals to public and private institutions.



Charles A Vaucher: from Chasse en montagne Editions Marguerat

Alpine aristocrat: a pure bred ibex.

Plants in danger

Data on rare and endangered flowering plants has been issued in a new volume of the Red Data Book published by the IUCN.

Compiled by Dr Ronald Melville, of Kew Gardens (U K), the new loose-leaf book is the fifth volume in IUCN's Red Data Book. This is universally recognized as the standard reference publication on species threatened with extinction.

The Red Data Book, with volumes on mammals, birds, fish (amphibians and reptiles is in preparation) has provided basic material for international conventions and legal action concerning preservation, and its continuing re-evaluation — so important in fast-changing environments — indicates trends in the status of the world's biological 'capital'.

Volume 5, **Angiospermae**, is the first attempt to provide data on the status of rare and endangered flowering plants. Unfortunately there are large areas where information is inadequate, and the number of threatened taxa is very large, perhaps as many as 20 000 presently in danger of extinction. Consequently, Volume 5 will be enlarged and modified as new studies are undertaken and new data accumulated.

Available from IUCN, 1110 Morges, Switzerland at 7.00 US \$, 30.— Swiss Francs, or £ 3.0.0., postage prepaid.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNGEN

ÖKOLOGIE: WISSENSCHAFT VON DER NATUR UND VOM MENSCHEN

— S 2

Professor A Noirfalise, Staatliche Fakultät der Landwirtschaftswissenschaften, Gembloux, Belgien, und Leiter der belgischen Delegation im Europäischen Ausschuss für den Schutz der Natur und der natürlichen Hilfsquellen.

Ökologie wird definiert als die Wissenschaft von den gegenseitigen Abhängigkeiten zwischen den Organismen und ihrer Umwelt; die Leitlinien der spezifischen Ökologie, Biozöosen, Ökosysteme und der natürlichen Gleichgewichte sind herausgearbeitet. Unter spezifischer Ökologie wird die morphologische, physiologische und verhaltensmässige Anpassung verstanden, die für die Verbreitung einer Art verantwortlich ist. Die Biozönose oder Biosoziologie beinhaltet den Einfluss anderer Arten im gleichen Lebensraum. Ein Ökosystem ist folglich die gesamte Gruppe von Organismen und der physikalische Lebensraum, dem sie zugeordnet sind; ein natürliches Gleichgewicht sei dann hergestellt, wenn sich ein Ökosystem in einem geschlossenen Zyklus entwickelt, wobei der physikalische Lebensraum die potentielle primäre Produktivität (gewöhnlich in den grünen Pflanzen) ermöglicht, die wiederum Nahrungsgrundlage für die sekundäre Produktivität der Pflanzen- und Fleischfresser sind, von denen schliesslich alle auf den physikalischen Lebensraum innerhalb desselben Ökosystems zurückgeführt werden.

Weiterhin ist die Stellung des Menschen als Teil dieses ökologischen Konzepts erklärt, und es wird aufgezeigt, wie seine Anpassungsfähigkeit und schöpferische Intelligenz ihn befähigt haben, seine Umwelt zu ändern, so dass sich viele Ökosysteme nur in einem semi-natürlichen Ausgleich befinden. Diese Kontrolle über die Umwelt und die Verschmutzung und Verseuchung, die sich aus dem Bevölkerungszuwachs und dem Wirtschaftswachstum ergeben, legen der Menschheit neue Verantwortung auf. Der Autor schliesst mit der Feststellung, dass ein lebensnotwendiger Aspekt menschlicher Ökologie das Eingehen einer neuen Art von ökologischer Verantwortung in das Gewissen des Menschen sein muss.

JUGEND UND UMWELT IN EUROPA

— S 7

J Raty, Europarat, Strassburg

Der Ausschuss für ausserschulische Erziehung des Rates für Kulturelle Zusammenarbeit hat sich bereits seit einigen Jahren für die Verbreitung der Naturwissenschaften einschliesslich des Umweltschutzes innerhalb der Jugend eingesetzt. Die verschiedenen naturwissenschaftlich ausgerichteten europäischen Jugendorganisationen, unter ihnen eine Anzahl von Naturschutzorganisationen, sind jetzt in dem vom Europarat unterstützten Internationalen Koordinations-Ausschuss für die Verbreitung der Naturwissenschaften und die Entwicklung ausserschulischer naturwissenschaftlicher Betätigung (CIC) zusammengeschlossen.

Ausbildungskurse für Jugendgruppenführer auf dem Gebiet der Feldstudien sind vom Europarat auf gesamteuropäischer Ebene unterstützt und in etlichen Mitgliedsländern fortgeführt worden.

Das neue Europäische Jugendzentrum mit seinem eigenen Gebäude und seinen Fachkräften wird während des ganzen Jahres Ausbildungskurse abhalten und neue Gelegenheiten für junge Menschen bieten, die am Schutz der Natur und der natürlichen Hilfsquellen interessiert sind.

JUGEND IM NATUR- UND UMWELTSCHUTZ — S 8

George HM Bechet, Projekt-Referent des Internationalen Jugendbundes für Naturbeobachtung und Umweltstudien.

Etwa 40 000 junge Menschen in verschiedenen Organisationen in West-Europa, der Tschechoslowakei, der Türkei und Kanadas sind in der IYF zusammengeschlossen. Die Vereinigung koordiniert und lenkt die Arbeit der einzelnen Mitgliedsverbände und setzt sich für den Umweltschutz bei der Jugend der ganzen Welt ein. Dem Informationsaustausch wird dabei besondere Bedeutung beigemessen, u.a. mit den zweimonatlichen europäischen und nordamerikanischen Zeitungen, dem Jahrbuch, einer alle 2 Jahre erscheinenden Zeitschrift und Berichten über Studienlager und Konferenzen.

IYF wird von der IUCN unterstützt und hat kürzlich mit Hilfe der UNESCO ein internationales Zentrum für Umweltstudien für Jugendliche in London eingerichtet. Die Arbeitsgruppe für Ausbildung, Erziehung und Information führt gegenwärtig eine Landschafts- und Naturschutzmeinungsumfrage durch. Die Arbeitsgruppe Ökologie unternimmt alljährlich eine Bestandsaufnahme ölgeschädigter Seevögel. Die jüngste Arbeitsgruppe für Umweltschutz hat sich die Durchführung von Aufklärungsaktionen zum Ziel gesetzt.

PFADFINDER UND PFADFINDERINNEN SETZEN SICH FÜR TIERE UND PFLANZEN EIN

— S 10

Pfadfinder-Welt-Büro und Weltvereinigung der Mädchenpfadfinderbünde

Das Pfadfindertum mit seinem erzieherischen Inhalt und seiner praxisnahen Ausgestaltung ist für junge Menschen besonders zur Natur- und Umweltschutzarbeit geeignet und hat sich in der Tat seit langem damit befasst. Naturbeobachtung und die Grundregeln des Naturschutzes gehören zum Ausbildungsprogramm der 15 Millionen Pfadfinder und Pfadfinderinnen in 150 Staaten.

Das Leben in der freien Natur, wie es von der Pfadfinderbewegung praktiziert wird, und die damit verbundenen Möglichkeiten zur praktischen Arbeit im Naturschutz gewinnen zunehmend an Bedeutung, weil mehr und mehr junge Menschen ausschliesslich in Städten, fern von der freien Natur, aufwachsen müssen.

Als Beispiele praktischer Naturschutzarbeit werden einige von Pfadfinderinnen in den USA und Neuseeland durchgeführte Projekte, wie die Säuberung eines 10 km langen verschmutzten Flusslaufes und dessen Ausgestaltung als Erholungsgebiet, angeführt.

Eine der Verpflichtungen auf dem Gebiet des Naturschutzes innerhalb des Pfadfindertums lautet: «... die Natur und ihre Hilfsquellen in meinem Land sauber zu halten, den Boden und seine Bodenschätze, die Wälder, das Wasser und die Tiere und Pflanzen zu schützen». Im Jahre 1972 wird das Ausbildungszentrum der Weltvereinigung der Mädchenpfadfinderbünde in Mexiko eine Konferenz über «Die Erhaltung und Pflege der menschlichen Umwelt» durchführen.

JUGEND IM TIER- UND PFLANZENSCHUTZ — S 12

RD Jennings, Field Direktor, Britische Treuhandgesellschaft für Freiwilligenarbeit im Naturschutz
Ein Naturschutz-Korps junger Freiwilliger hat während der vergangenen 12 Jahre in Naturschutz-

reservaten und ähnlichen Gebieten in ganz Grossbritannien gearbeitet. Etwa 2 000 Freiwillige arbeiten in kleinen Gruppen regelmässig an Wochenenden und Ferientagen an der Freihaltung von Hochweiden oder pflanzen Bäume und Hecken, bauen Fussgängerbrücken und Dämme, säubern Teiche, legen Naturlehrpfade an und pflegen Wanderwege. Die Freiwilligen innerhalb des Korps sind in der Regel zwischen 17 und 21 Jahre alt, vorwiegend Studenten oder Arbeiter aus grossen Städten; sie lernen bei ihrem Einsatz sowohl die ökologischen Zusammenhänge als auch die traditionellen bäuerlichen Arbeiten wie die Anlage von Hecken und Entwässerungsgräben, den Zaunbau, den Holzeinschlag, die Niederwaldwirtschaft, das Torfstechen und den Sensenschnitt. Die Treuhandvereinigung hat zudem Lehrgänge eingeführt, die zu einem Abschlusszeugnis in praktischer Naturschutzarbeit führen und dehnt ihre Tätigkeit auf überörtliche Projekte aus. Sie hat ausserdem erst kürzlich auch internationale Naturschutzlager in Grossbritannien durchgeführt und plant den Austausch von Freiwilligen mit anderen europäischen Ländern.

DIE LANDSCHAFT VON MORGEN

— S 13

RF Gregor, Generalsekretär des Europäischen Ausschusses für Jungbauern-Clubs und 4H-Clubs

Die wachsende Belastung der Landschaft, die von der sich immer mehr ausdehnenden Stadtbevölkerung ausgeht, zwingt zum gegenseitigen Verstehen und Abstecken der Interessen der Menschen auf dem Land und in der Stadt. Da die meisten älteren Menschen jedoch nicht mehr von ihrem z.T. festgelegten Denken abweichen, muss die Jugend diese Kluft überbrücken.

Um sicherzustellen, dass die Landjugend sich dieser Verpflichtung stellt, wollen die Clubs das Wissen ihrer Mitglieder über die Landschaft, das Wild, Tiere und Pflanzen fördern und sie zu Bewahrern dieses europäischen Erbes machen.

OPERATION «ARCHE NOAH - SOS NATUR» — S 14

Marcel Clébant, Direktor der Operation «Arche Noah - SOS Natur» und der Weltkampagne «Botschaft in der See».

Der weltweite Erfolg der Aktion gegen die Wasserverschmutzung «Botschaft in der See», die aus einem einfachen Flaschenpostspiel an den Küsten hervorging und von dem Wochen- und Familienmagazin «Femmes d'Aujourd'hui» durchgeführt wurde, liess dieses Magazin auch die Aktion «Arche Noah - SOS Natur» beginnen.

Junge Menschen nehmen in Schulklassen oder Jugendorganisationen unterschiedlichster Art an «SOS-Natur»-Massnahmen teil, z. B. an Tiermalwettbewerben, Aufräumungsarbeiten oder Aufklärungsaktionen. Die Kampagne begann in Belgien und hat sich inzwischen auf Frankreich, Luxemburg, Spanien, Portugal, die Türkei, Grossbritannien und die skandinavischen Länder ausgedehnt, und es bestehen bereits Pläne, mit Hilfe vielseitiger Aufklärungs- und Unterrichtsmassnahmen, eine weltweite Aktion daraus entstehen zu lassen.

DIE KREUZIGUNG DES HEILIGEN FRANZ VON ASSISI — S 18

Roel van Duyn, Einer der fünf Vertreter der «Amsterdam Kabouterstad» im Amsterdamer Stadtrat, einer revolutionären Partei junger Menschen, deren Wahlfeldzug auf die Feststellung der Unfähigkeit der modernen Gesellschaft gegründet war.

Die Geschichte des mit den Vögeln sprechenden heiligen Franz von Assisi ist dem von der Natur entfremdeten modernen Menschen, den Gefahren der Vergiftung und Verseuchung der Umwelt und der Ausrottung von Arten gegenübergestellt. Der ausgeglichene ökologische Haushalt mit seiner grossen Vielfalt von untereinander abhängigen Arten wird mit einer festgefühten Gesellschaft und ihrer Mannigfaltigkeit unterschiedlicher Menschen und Tätigkeiten verglichen.

Ebenso wie die Monokultur den natürlichen Ausgleich in der Landwirtschaft durcheinanderbringt, so führt eine Überzentralisierung der Produktion und sozialer Konformismus zur Verschmutzung der Umwelt und zu anderen Problemen in der Gesellschaft.

Eine zunehmende Vielfalt in der modernen Gesellschaft und wachsende individuelle Verantwortung werden als Weg gefordert, den Menschen erneut in Harmonie mit der Natur zu bringen.

AUFRUF AN DIE JUGEND — S 19

Auszug aus der Broschüre «What are we to do with our planet?» von Professor Mario Pavan, Direktor des Instituts für Landwirtschaftliche Entomologie der Universität Pavia, Italien, und Leiter der italienischen Delegation des Europäischen Ausschusses für Naturschutz.

Jugendliche in aller Welt, die ihr in naher Zukunft die Regierungsgewalt übernimmt und als eigenverantwortliche Bürger handelt, dies ist ein Aufruf, der unabhängig von jeder religiösen, sozialen und politischen Ideologie, von Nationalität, Rasse und Kultur sein soll.

Die Welt, die ihr vorgefunden habt, und die ihr weitergeben werdet an kommende Generationen wird von einer Zeit gedankenloser Ausbeutung geprägt. Die Bevölkerung wächst unglaublich rasch, ihr Einfluss und ihre Auswirkung auf die Natur machen sich immer tiefer und bedrohlicher bemerkbar, die Erde ist dagegen die gleiche geblieben, und die natürlichen Hilfsquellen werden unaufhaltsam verringert.

Jugend in allen Erdteilen, die früheren Epochen — und vor allem die letzten Jahrhunderte — haben die Bedingungen geschaffen, denen wir uns heute nicht mehr entziehen können. In vielen Fällen sind sie tragischer Art und nicht mehr zu ändern, in anderen haben sie kritische Ausmasse erreicht und in weiten Teilen der Welt befinden sie sich in einem ständig bedrohten und höchst empfindlichen Gleichgewicht. Boden, Pflanze und Tier, Wasser und Luft haben Schaden genommen und Wandlungen durchgemacht, die eine gesunde, andauernde und harmonische Entfaltung von Zivilisation und Kultur für die nach uns kommenden Generationen schon nicht mehr möglich erscheinen lassen.

Die Wissenschaft hat uns inzwischen die tiefe Verantwortung unserer Vorfahren aufgezeigt; heute wird auch uns — und vor allem der Jugend — bewusst, dass jetzt wir allein die Verantwortung für den richtigen Umgang mit der Natur, ihren Hilfsquellen und der ganzen Welt tragen. Die technische Allmacht des Menschen, mit der er schon in der Gegenwart — um so mehr in der Zukunft — die Natur zu bezwingen vermag, macht ihn in der Tat zum Gestalter des Schicksals des ganzen Menschengeschlechts.

Möge die Jugend von heute, welche die Welt von morgen beherrscht, ihre Verantwortung erkennen, hier auf der Erde — in unserem Schicksalsbereich — die Voraussetzungen eines vernünftigen Umgangs mit den natürlichen Hilfsquellen zu schaffen.

Wir stehen ganz ohne Zweifel am Scheideweg: es hängt von der Jugend in aller Welt ab, die Weichen richtig zu stellen.

H. K.

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