

be controlled to some extent. Such regional environmental monitoring centres could look after their areas, keeping a strict vigil on sensitive environmental matters. Such unbiased, honest and fearless monitoring of our environment could be enforced following the laws and legislations properly through mutual cooperation of scientists, social workers, human-rights activists, and government agencies — including the courts of law, as they would be keeping an eye on each other for the very purpose of protecting our

rapidly deteriorating environment. Perhaps in this way we could then avoid some future Bhopal disasters!

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Eritrean National Code of Conduct for Environmental Security

The Government and Peoples of Eritrea,

Supportive of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN General Assembly Nr 217(III)A, 10 December 1948), and affirming the 1981 African Charter on Human & Peoples' Rights (UN Treaty Series Nr 26363 [in press]);

Recalling the 1972 Declaration on the Human Environment (UN General Assembly A/CONF. 48/14/Rev. 1 (pp. 3–5, November 1973), and conscious of the 1992 Declaration on Environment & Development (UN DPI/1344 [pp. 9–11], April 1993);

In approval of the 1982 World Charter for Nature (UN General Assembly Resolution Nr 37/7, 28 October 1982), and in sympathy with the 1968 African Convention on the Conservation of Nature & Natural Resources (UN Treaty Series Nr 14689 [1001: 3–33], 1976);

Observant of the 1973 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna & Flora (UN Treaty Series Nr 14537 [1993:243–438], 1976), in recognition of the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (UN Treaty Series, in press), and mindful of the 1994 Convention to Combat Desertification (UN Treaty Series, in preparation); and

Aware that Humankind not only depends upon The Biosphere for its survival and well-being, but also that it must share that Biosphere with the other living things on Earth,

Herewith solemnly proclaim:

1. A deep respect for all living things, and the natural environment upon which they depend, for each is a link in the chain that supports life on Earth.

2. A firm endeavour to make use of the environment in such a fashion that no species will disappear as a result of domestic actions; and, in support of this endeavour, to maintain in perpetuity an adequate fraction of both the

terrestrial and marine environments in their natural state; and, further, to eschew any trade in species of plants or animals threatened with extinction.

3. An unflinching dedication to maintain the national lithosphere (land), hydrosphere (waters), and atmosphere (air), at levels of purity conducive to a healthy environment.

4. A steadfast resolve to utilize the national renewable natural resources sustainably and the non-renewable ones frugally, and also to dispose of all wastes sustainably; and, in support of this resolve, to achieve a national population level that is in balance with available national resources and sink capacities, so that both present and future generations can live in dignity, and especially so that development can be carried out sustainably and with equity.

5. A faithful desire to carry out no activity that would harm the environment beyond national boundaries.

6. A staunch commitment to cooperate as necessary with neighboring states, and with the world community of nations, to protect and enhance the regional environment, the environment of regions beyond national jurisdiction, and the global Biosphere in general; and, in support of this commitment, a constant devotion to resolve any environmental or other interstate dispute solely by amicable means.

7. A thorough acceptance of the need to infuse into all levels of the educational process, social and environmental philosophies that would nurture an acceptance of the fundamental rights of both humans and Nature.

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'Charter' for Protected Areas and Their People

National parks experts from seven South Asian countries as well as from China and the Far East, met in Islamabad at the 42nd Working Session of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), from 21–23 September 1994, to seek means of improved protection of the biological wealth of the region. Cooperation among these countries — which include India, Pakistan, China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, among others — was also high on the agenda. Members of UNESCO, IUCN, and ICIMOD*, also participated in it.

CNPPA is the largest network of protected-areas specialists in the world, and attempts to foster intra-regional cooperation among countries with similar protected-areas' needs. In particular, CNPPA promotes bilateral cooper-

ation for the management of protected areas along international borders. This is important where political boundaries divide ecosystems or wider ecomplexes which should, in fact, be managed together.

As human populations grow, using more and more land, it has become ever more critical to conserve natural areas and the *wild* plants and animals that live in them. It is also becoming more and more obvious that local people have to be involved in the conservation process if it is to succeed; no longer can a government impose 'park status' on an area and expect people to adhere to it!

Background Observations

The title of the meeting — '*Parks for Life*' — succinctly expressed the intimate connection between protected areas and the livelihood of rural communities that are

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particularly characteristic of South Asia, where the number of protected areas has grown impressively over the past two decades. However, as population growth and increased demands from rural peoples for biological resources have grown even more rapidly, protected areas have often become the focus of intense struggles between biodiversity conservation and development demands. There is an urgent need — at the local, national, and regional, levels — to demonstrate the practical benefits of protected-area management to local and rural communities in ways that ensure the long-term ecological integrity of protected areas.

Professor Adrian Phillips, in his address at the opening of this 42nd Session, presented in brief the historical background and details of the tasks ahead in view of the changing scenario in different parts of the world.

Basically, IUCN's mission is to influence, encourage, and assist, societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of Nature and consequently ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and sustainable ecologically. Briefly, IUCN stands for conservation and ecologically-sustainable development. This applies equally to protected areas. Moreover, IUCN is on its way to implement decentralization and regionalization programmes, extending its services to global membership while keeping in view the priorities and needs of natural communities.

The CNPPA mission, as approved by the IUCN General Assembly in January 1994, is to 'promote the establishment and effective management of a world-wide network of terrestrial and marine protected areas'.

After the Bali Congress in 1982, the next World Parks Congress was held in 1992 at Caracas in Venezuela. Such a Congress, held once in ten years, is organized by CNPPA. The Caracas Congress listened to alarming reports about the present and future threats to the world's protected areas. However, it had a positive outlook in presenting a vital input to the Rio 'Earth Summit' on Environment and Development. Thus the Caracas Action Plan represents the conclusions of the Congress and provides a pattern of action to help shape the programme of CNPPA.

The Caracas Action Plan conveys four key messages:

- 1) Protected areas must be integrated into larger planning frameworks (e.g. within a national conservation strategy, and into policies for sectors such as agriculture, forestry, and tourism).
- 2) Support for protected areas needs to be developed among local communities and non-traditional interest groups (such as industrialists, the media, and even the military).
- 3) The capacity for management needs further development, including such matters as training of protected-areas staff.

- 4) International cooperation should be expanded, especially in financing protected areas.

New Perspective on Protected Areas

The above-mentioned messages, emerging from the Caracas Action Plan, reflect the facts that:

- Protected areas are to be managed *with* and *through* local populations, not against them.
- Protected areas must be seen to be of value to society if they are to survive — they cannot any longer just be 'set aside' from the mainstream of a country's pursuit of 'sustainable development'.
- Protected areas are linked to practically every aspect of a nation's concern, and are touched by nearly every arm of public policy.
- The traditional view of protected areas, as national parks to be owned and run by the State and from which local people will be banned, must be supplemented by other models based on partnerships with local communities, NGOs, and private owners.
- Managing protected areas calls for a very wide range of skills — above all, the skills of dealing with human beings.

Conflict resolution, marketing, public relations, communication skills — these, more than mere animal wildlife management, are the hallmark of the successful protected-area manager in the 1990s.

Future Tasks of CNPPA

Responding to the Caracas challenge, CNPPA has now developed a clear view of its major tasks, namely:

- to develop regional action plans to implement the Caracas Action Plan;
- to stimulate the preparation of national systems plans for protected areas, especially relevant to the requirement of the Convention on Biological Diversity to conserve biodiversity;
- to communicate policy advice to protected-area planners and managers; and
- to develop guidance on such key issues as tourism and protected areas, the economic benefits brought by the existence of protected areas, and methods of financing protected areas — for each of which a task-force operates.

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India's Rajaji National Park and Threatened Elephants

The focus of the Center for Elephant Studies is on two urgent needs:

- 1) To find suitable corridors for the Elephant (*Elephas maximus*) herds to migrate between the bifurcated Park areas that are separated by the River Ganges, thereby relieving them of excessive concentration, disturbances, and dwindling of food reserves; and
- 2) to find solutions to the growing conflict between 'Man and Elephant', as hunger for land and its concomitant

pressures of human population are mercilessly destroying the habitat, with grave environmental consequences.

The Rajaji National Park covers an area of 831 sq.km, with a resident Elephant population of over seven hundreds. The majority of the herds are boxed into the western edge of the Park, so being devoid of sufficient access to the eastern region owing to mushrooming growth of towns, villages, industrial complexes, and irrigation networks.