

beautiful trees which will become the living monuments of people's love for Nature.

Apart from this we also conduct regular training programmes on environmental conservation to college and school students. Through this we reckon to have trained another 50,000 students who, in turn, act as agents of environmental conservation in their own areas. Each student plants 10 saplings and follows their growth regularly, thus contributing to afforestation programmes in the areas where they live.

#### *A Request*

So far we have been able to contribute only a small

fraction to the stupendous task of protecting our environment. We believe that, by training and educating students and rural people, we will be able to build a better world for future generations.

We have been able to do all this with the meagre funds available to us and with the help of some donations. We would greatly appreciate contributions from Nature lovers to help us to carry on our work.

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### **Need of Universal Legislation to Protect Global Freshwater Supplies**

We are appealing to you to invoke universal legislation to protect the world's fast-diminishing supplies of available fresh water. This, perhaps most valuable and utterly indispensable of all the Earth's natural resources, is fast being undermined by irresponsible governments allowing overexploitation, wastage, and pollution.

Here, on the Capricorn Coast of Central Queensland, we have a permanent and hitherto reliable freshwater supply, provided by a continuous flow from the high-dunes of Shoalwater and Byfield. But we are in an intolerable position where both State and Federal governments are intent on allowing two companies — one of them foreign-owned, the other foreign-funded — to sandmine this water catchment and dunal reservoir of fresh water.

Our governments do not appear to realize that a region cannot function without a reliable water-supply; nor will they admit and face up to the possible consequences of the loss or depletion of that water-supply.

The federal government has ignored all expert advice and scientific evidence, and has chosen to grant leases in the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area on the basis of only a single, biased environmental impact statement (EIS). Federal ministers ignored environmental legis-

lation and failed to comply with the terms of the pertinent Act. The State government is about to embark on the same farcical EIS process to achieve their ends in the Byfield National Park.

When global freshwater supplies are fast diminishing as a result of human impact and widespread abuse, not to mention the foreseeable effects of expected climate change, why would the world's driest continent deliberately destroy this most valuable of all its natural resources? We can only suspect some sinister motive of general or personal greed.

We call on your organization to protect the world's vital freshwater supplies and catchment areas, by pressing for universal legislation whereby governments are held accountable and responsible to international laws enacted for the general good.

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### **Nigeria's Forests Gain from New National Park\***

#### *Introduction*

In an effort to preserve two of the country's remaining large tracts of rain-forest, the Nigerian Government has announced the creation of a major new national park. The Cross River National Park in southeastern Nigeria — established with the help of WWF-UK — will be situated alongside ecologically identical park areas in neighbouring Cameroon. Together they will include areas of rich biological diversity, with more species per square kilometre than almost any other moist equatorial forest in the world. The scheme represents a regional initiative to conserve valuable ecosystems and ecocomplexes, and the areas are also important for protecting the watershed in Cameroon and Nigeria.

The Oban Hills section of the new Park lies south of the Cross River, which 'snakes across the belly' of Cross River State. It merges with Korup National Park in Cameroon where a WWF programme is already under way. The Boshi–Okwangwo section to the north of the river lies next to Takamanda Forest Reserve, where protection measures are already being introduced. Together the areas formed part of a moist forest refuge during the

Pleistocene period, and have therefore experienced a prolonged period of uninterrupted evolutionary activity,' explains Peggy Allcott, WWF-UK's Conservation and Development Officer for Cameroon and Nigeria, continuing 'Oban (3,000 sq. km) and Korup (3,500 sq. km) will be one of the largest and most important conservation units in moist equatorial forests, and [together will] contain more kinds of plants and animals per square kilometre than almost any other in Africa or [indeed] the world.'

#### *Implementation*

Overall, the scheme is expected to cost between US \$55M and US \$60M over the next seven years. Funding for the development of the Park plan, and for the work so far, has been with support from the European Economic Community (EEC) and Overseas Development Administration (ODA). The EEC has also agreed to fund its implementation in the Oban Hills sector of the Park, but funding for the Boshi–Okwangwo sector has yet to be secured.

At the request of the Nigerian Federal and Cross River State authorities, a detailed plan for the Park was drawn up by WWF-UK with the help of a team of environmental consultants. The team conducted surveys in the field to identify current patterns, constraints, and potentiality, of

\* Adapted, with appreciation, from *WWF Features*. — Ed.

natural resource use in and around the National Park. Also identified is a core protected area around which there will be other zones of land where different activities can occur — for instance, some areas will be designated for 'traditional use'. Here the gathering of forest produce such as nuts and vegetables will be allowed, together with limited hunting (no dogs or night-lights, and only of specified species) and fishing in sustainable ways.

Integrated rural development is another key feature of the scheme and will take place in a support zone around the Park. In addition to infrastructural improvements (water-supply, basic health-care, and possibly even family-planning services) there are also plans to develop agricultural 'outreach help.' This includes the introduction of new, improved crops and farming techniques, agro-forestry nurseries, livestock breeding centres, and fish hatcheries. The extension programme will specifically aim at identifying village-level projects and activities to increase incomes. Research will be an important part of this programme, so that the project should gain widely from indigenous wisdom.

#### *Settled Cultivation Favoured*

Included in the project are schemes designed to make settled cultivation more profitable than slash-and-burn practices and haphazard gathering. The emphasis is on agro-forestry (trees complementing crops), which is better suited than 'full' agriculture to areas of fragile ecosystems. Stress is also laid on the need for a variety of crops. 'It is important for the project that people grow a very diverse range of tree crops — bush-mango (*Mangifer* sp.), rattans [*Calamus* sp. of spp.], and any number of other,' Miss

Allcott says, adding that 'This is much safer — for economic reasons as well — than growing monocrops.'

An education programme, which will be crucial in the long-term, is already being introduced throughout the Support Zone with the help of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, one of WWF's affiliate organizations. A key element is the Village Liaison Officer (VLO) — a local villager who will act as a bridge between the project and local people. The VLOs will organize clubs, tree-planting programmes, and habitat surveys. They will also be available to answer everyday questions and to raise awareness of why the Park is being created, as well as to communicate the desires and concerns of the local people to the Park management — a very important role.

In August 1990, WWF appointed a new project manager, Nicholas Ashton-Jones. 'His previous experience in rural development projects will be invaluable in ensuring that the Project meets the needs of the local population,' says Miss Allcott. Mr Ashton-Jones has to date spent most of his time with the local communities affected by the project, while plans are under way to organize training for the VLOs, and to include villagers in the decision-making of the programme. 'We consider the involvement of the people as absolutely vital,' points out Miss Allcott: 'Only when they truly support the Park, can the project be viewed as a success'.

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### Summer Institute for Environmental Values Education

Each year the Harmony Foundation of Canada offers an 8-days' residential environmental education programme for educators from all over the world. Teachers from all levels, as well as community educators, attend the Institute in order to improve their knowledge of environmental issues and values, explore teaching methods, and cultivate their skills in environmental education.

This year's Summer Institute for Environmental Values Education is offered from 17–24 July 1992, and will be held at Econiche — a beautiful, forested Nature retreat near Cantley, Quebec (Canada). The first two Summer Institutes energized and inspired participants,

and seeded many new and rich relationships between them. In addition, participants returned to their homes with concrete examples of their own enriched skills in environmental education. Anyone interested should contact the undersigned:

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of the pivotal importance of the structure, functions, and diversity, of the world's natural systems, development will undermine itself and fail.'

Major causes of biodiversity loss also include industrial agriculture and forestry, while pollution strains ecosystems and threatens some species. Air pollution is said to have contributed to the extinction of 43 species in Poland's Ojcow National Park; pesticides, used to control crayfish along the boundaries of Spain's Cota Donaña National Park, killed an estimated 30,000 birds in 1985; and acid rain has poisoned thousands of lakes and pools in Europe and North America.

#### *Climate Change Menace*

In the coming decades, climate change may pose the greatest risk of all to biological variety. Human-induced 'greenhouse gases' are likely to cause an increase in the global temperature by from 1 to 3°C during the next century, raising the sea-level by up to 1 metre. Many species seem unlikely to be able to adapt fast enough to

survive such changes.

Loss of marine diversity, especially in coastal waters, is already reaching crisis proportions. Scientists predict that Florida's Barrier Reef, one of the world's most diverse yet intricate eco-complexes, may be doomed in the next decade because of water pollution and mysterious marine diseases. In Rio de Janeiro — the site of UNCED in June — beaches and the sea are so polluted that local officials fear the tourists will not return.

'The world is beginning to recognize that there are practical as well as ethical reasons to stop the destruction of the Earth's biological richness and genetic heritage', said IUCN's Director-General Dr Martin W. Holdgate: 'The Global Biodiversity Strategy provides policymakers with guidelines to make major changes in laws and policies that [will be] needed over the next decade.'

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