

It is anticipated that initial funding would be for a three-years' programme with the possibility of future extensions, if this should prove necessary. During that time, workshops would be held in various locations world-wide, to broaden the perspective of the research and encourage other independent research in the field. The proceedings of the workshops would be published and widely circulated.

Co-sponsors and research co-workers are being approached in a broad cross-section of countries and from both the private and public sectors. Those desirous of

receiving additional information on this new initiative in major accident prevention are encouraged to write to: Dr Roger Batstone, The World Bank, Washington, DC 20433, USA.

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Proposed Greek Law Could Kill Remaining Forests and Reduce Wetlands

The Greek Government should withdraw a bill, now being debated in Parliament, which could drastically damage the country's already-endangered forests—according to conservation officials at WWF International, who feel that it 'could be the finishing stroke for much of the Greek forests', and claim that 'None of the economic, ecological, or social, problems were faced before the law was drafted.'

The bill, introduced by the Ministry of Agriculture, would free 61% of Greece's remaining woodlands for grazing. Woodlands freed for grazing are not reforested in Greece. Indeed already some three-quarters of the forests of Greece have disappeared during this century, while the remainder have suffered seriously from mismanagement during recent years, according to Greek conservationists.

The same law would free drained marsh and arid lands for agricultural use. Ill-conceived drainage has already greatly reduced Greek wetlands, including those protected by the international Ramsar Convention. It is moreover to be feared that, in addition to the loss of soil, water, and

wildlife, which could follow if the law is passed, rehabilitation of threatened wetlands could be hampered, and further illegal drainage encouraged, if the law is allowed to go ahead.

Illegal and authorized encroachment for grazing, agriculture, and building, excessive woodcutting, and fire, are steadily reducing what is left of Greece's southern and central forests. Insufficient reforestation efforts do not compensate for losses by fire, while wildlife is dwindling and erosion spreading. Yet in northern Greece, the few remaining forests are still among the least disturbed in Europe, and contain a diversity of plant and animal life that is unequalled on the rest of the continent, including as it does populations of large mammals such as bear, wolf, and lynx.

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The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, Canada

In 1931, a group of naturalists in the Province of Ontario, Canada, formed a conservation organization named the Federation of Ontario Naturalists (FON). The primary purpose of this non-profit organization, according to one of the founding members, was 'to provide the means whereby naturalists throughout the Province might be able, collectively, to formulate policies and provide the machinery for taking whatever action is deemed necessary in support of such policies.' From the original seven clubs with a total of only 28 members in 1931, the FON has grown to an organization representing 69 member clubs and approximately 20,000 individuals, and employing 15 permanent staff and numerous volunteers. The original purpose—of providing a provincial voice for naturalists on environmental issues—remains as one of the Federation's objectives, in addition to which there is now a second objective of promoting the understanding and appreciation of Nature through public education.

Those objectives are met through a wide variety of activities which are undertaken by FON and its members. Perhaps the most visible and colourful FON activity is the quarterly magazine, *Seasons*. Feature articles analyse current conservation issues and introduce readers to the Province's flora, fauna, and natural areas. Regular departments report on environmental news, bird migration, volunteer projects, and events for naturalists.

Public education is also attained through the activities of the Education Program. Comprehensive kits on current environmental issues—such as acid deposition, wetland conservation, endangered wildlife, and hazardous waste—are available for different age-groups, and a recent endeavour of the programme has been the production of education videos about hazardous-waste management and acid deposition. In addition, the Education Program runs a summer camp for young naturalists.

Wetland conservation has been a specific focus for public education. Through a generous grant from the Donner Canadian Foundation, fifteen volunteer wetlands awareness groups have been organized across the greatly-populated, southern portion of the Province. These groups raise local awareness of wetlands through public seminars, shopping-mall displays, school events, and in meetings with local government officials. FON staff work at the provincial level, keeping track of wetlands legislation and case-studies, and initiating contact with agricultural associations and with other conservation organizations.

The FON is also involved in active supervision and management of natural areas in Ontario. Through gifts and purchases, the Federation has developed the largest private Nature Reserve system in the Province. These Nature reserves protect, in perpetuity, a wide spectrum of botanical and faunal habitats for Nature appreciation and education.

Providing a voice for the viewpoint of naturalists and conservationists is the mandate of the Environment Program. The program staff make submissions on provincial resource-management issues, review and comment on park management plans and new environmental legislation, and provide advice to individuals and groups taking on local environmental campaigns. The staff becomes actively involved in issues that have Province-wide ramifications, such as participation in the environmental assessment process on forestry practices in Ontario, and the campaign to establish a National Park on the Bruce Peninsula.*

Other activities of FON include support for the production of an atlas of the breeding birds of Ontario, based on five field-seasons of work by some 1,600 volunteers, the

* Successful as of 20 July 1987.—Ed.