

Sustainable eNews

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Promoting Sustainable Use

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IWMC
World Conservation Trust

Welcome to the 161st Party to CITES

The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has deposited its instrument of accession to CITES on 28 January 2003 and will so become the 161st Party to CITES on 28 April 2003.

Editorial: Sustainable Fisheries and Sustainable Use Tactics

by Eugene Lapointe

Back in the 1940s, when it became obvious that the industrial whaling industry was not a sustainable effort, forward thinking nations came together in a treaty effort to save both the whale stocks and the industry from itself. The idea of an international treaty seemed workable at the time; countries would get together, pool their scientific knowledge, trust one another regarding quotas, and work to understand which stocks needed special protection, and which should be protected at levels ranging from no harvest to moderate levels. The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) was signed and its signers created the International Whaling Commission. Now it is 57 years later, and the global treaty tactic, based on respect for science and on respect for resource users, has proven to be a flawed strategy for sustainable use. The flaw is not in the treaty, but lies in the fact that countries with no present vested interest in a working conservation of the resource are leading the effort to abolish use through the power of their votes. Abolition was not the goal of the original Parties to the ICRW.

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Some perceive that the protectionist NGO movement has had much influence on these anti-whaling Parties because they feel their domestic political security is threatened by them. The trend has been to forget the science, and vote to abolish whaling regardless of treaty mandates.

Somewhat later in history, CITES was formed to control trade in species that are determined to be at different levels of abundance and depletion. Species are "placed" in appendices due to recognition of the need to prevent trade, curtail trade, or declare that trade can be carefully conducted, depending on scientific assessments of stocks.

This is also a global treaty effort, but its conservation effects have similarly been blunted through a process that eerily mirrors that of the IWC. Parties that have no vested interest in certain species (because their constituents are not current or traditional users), encourage decisions to be made through votes that are based on political security concerns, rather than on the objective advice of scientists. Protectionist NGOs do all they can to add to the political insecurity of Parties that might waver, and vote according to scientific advice, as the treaty intended. In both these cases, the principles of fairness, respect for science and for traditional diplomacy, have been all but thrown out when

use of charismatic species is being debated.



The main strategy in the 21st century is rapidly becoming one of self-preservation, not one of resource conservation through encouragement of sustainable use, best management practices. Therefore, in both treaties, the practice of taking a reservation to anti-use motions passed on political bases, has become a survival strategy for Parties whose

constituents wish to continue to use and sometimes, trade, their resources.



In both IWC and CITES, sustainable use through the reservation clause is being accomplished by Parties whose votes are overwhelmed by the reality of political process. In IWC, Norway clung to the right to take a reservation to the moratorium, and since that time, has conducted scientific research and commercial whaling on a robust minke population. Japan and Russia were bullied by the US and others into rescinding their reservations. Having learned the hard way, Japan has more recently kept its reservation to the Southern Ocean Sanctuary. In CITES, inappropriate listing of certain marine fish species (whale sharks, basking sharks, and some sea horses) was accomplished by the voting majority but Japan, Indonesia, Norway and Iceland each took a reservation to the sharks' inclusion, while Japan and Norway also took reservations to listing of sea horses. Other Parties may also have joined them in this reservation process. All these nations are taking a legal (under CITES) route to continue their own sustainable management practices because they believe that an inappropriate decision was made under CITES, and this is their just recourse.

The CITES Convention long ago agreed that IWC is the appropriate body to make management decisions about cetaceans, and that the FAO of the United Nations is the appropriate body to manage marine fishes. That early decision was made on the advice of experts with great knowledge in these restricted fields. FAO, IWC and CITES should keep their functions separate and efficient in order to best fulfill their original functions.

Today's concerns about appropriate science based management of resources are being addressed through new sustainable use strategies; regional management bodies such as NAMMCO, ICCAT, IOTC, and WCP, are operating on a scientific and legal basis to ensure sustainability of both traditions and resources. Getting the outsiders out of the management scheme may be the way to avoid the wrangles and impasses that have happened in IWC and CITES. Bigger is not always better.

IWMC applauds the innovations of those Parties to IWC and CITES that have had the courage to resist political and economic wars of persuasion. Voting wars are not the answer. IWMC considers that courage and the staunch investment of "user" nations in the conservation process will eventually result in genuine sustainable use on a global scale.

Your Opinion Counts: Opinion from Dr. Brendan Moyle

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NEW
FEATURE

Possum Problems Highlight the Pitfalls of Polarity - December 2002 eNewsletter

The chief reason poisoning (with 1080) has not worked is because most conservation areas in New Zealand are "paper parks". Thus, with enough money to control 5% of the parks, possum control by poisoning is not enough. Local areas that are controlled do bounce back, and the incidental losses from poisoning are quickly compensated for in the absence of possums.

The second point is we used to have a viable fur industry based on possums right up to the 80s. My brother's father-in-law got the deposit on his farm by trapping possums. Scientists were trying to work out how to breed possums in captivity for the fur-trade. Then with the anti-fur movement in Europe, overseas demand and prices collapsed. Or as one trapper commented to me: "the guts dropped right out of the market". The sudden release of trapping pressure led to a large surge in possum numbers.

New Zealand plants are also very palatable to possums, as in the absence of boreal herbivores, many New Zealand plants lack the chemical defenses that about in Australian trees.

Carnivores Living Large... Bring on the Eco-Tourists!

by Edward A. Wright

When Ugandan president Yoweri Museveni assured a group of 200 Western visitors at Murchinson Falls National Park that his country was safe for eco-tourism, chances are he was addressing political instability.

But insurrection is not the only consideration these days for those planning eco-visits to Africa's spectacular wildlife parks and preserves. Tourist camps in the heart of Wild Kingdom are increasingly viewed as fast food outlets by wild carnivores.

"There have been a fair number of lion attacks on humans in the last couple of years,"

And it's not just lions feasting on tasty Western tourists in Kenya. In Botswana, hyenas are discovering the dining convenience of eco-tourist bush camps. An 11-year old American boy was killed and eaten by hyenas after he was pulled from his tent in the Xakasa Safari Camp in the Moremi Game Reserve. A few weeks before, lions had killed and eaten a 20-year old man.

Shortly after a fatal lion mauling of one of its rangers, the manager of Okapuka Ranch in Namibia, Frank Schaffer, observed that lions don't differentiate between an antelope, cattle or human.



Craig Packer, director of the University of Minnesota's Lion Research Center in St. Paul, told New Scientist. "The problem is, there are a growing number of eco-tourist camps that are putting people in the bush."

What were once ambushes from infirm lions giving in to desperation are now attacks by roaming, displaced young males unable to pass up a tasty human. "It may be all too much for a young lion to resist," added Packer.

"To them, meat is meat and nothing else," Schaffer explained to The Namibian in Windhoek. "A lion is a wild animal and it doesn't kill for fun, it kills to eat."

All this brings new meaning to "leaving your heart" on holiday. But then camping in the bush with hungry carnivores on the prowl is a quick way for the rich, bored, SUV crowd to reconnect with the realities of nature.

California Dreaming - Fresno: A Permissive Stage for the Nightmare of Domestic Terrorism

The left coast of North America was host to Hell's eco-activists this past week, as some of the worst of America's eco-felons came together to celebrate their victory over respect for law and ordinary civilians in civil society. The scofflaws - Paul Watson, Rodney Coronado, Craig Rosebraugh, Gary Yourofsky, and a handful of others, all were invited by the social science faculty of California State at Fresno to speak at the "Revolutionary Environmentalism" conference on eco-terrorism, and to outline its goals, value system, strategies, and successes. The symposium was convened to "give them a voice" while "academics" and California undergraduates all "celebrated the spiritualism" of the eco-terror movement.

This astonishingly antisocial event was first highlighted by the Center for Consumer Freedom, whose website, consumerfreedom.com, is well worth a regular visit by anyone who wishes to keep abreast of information on those who would break laws in the name of a "higher good." Local and state police agencies

were dispatched to protect the Cal State at Fresno agricultural college and farm, since animal agriculture has always been high on the list of eco-terrorists' pet projects. Local automobile dealers also received extra protection because these activists have recently targeted large vehicles in their "save the earth" campaigns against use of fossil fuels. Some activists recently burned a number of SUV vehicles in a Pennsylvania dealership, and have never been apprehended.

Thanks to the Center for Consumer Freedom, California legislators took notice of this event, which was closed to the public and to the press. Concerned parents of Fresno students could not attend, nor could students from other universities, the general public, or anyone who did not have a Fresno State ID card. University officials admitted that the school would pay the travel, lodging and meal expenses of the participant terrorists. State legislators who became exercised over this immediately began to examine the Cal State at Fresno budget, since public funds are usually spent for the benefit of the public, not for the benefit of those who threaten public welfare and the general economy.



IWMC wishes the Fresno community and their students well in the aftermath of the Revolutionary Environmentalism conference. Perhaps a number of those students will recognize the hypocrisy of a public university that pretends to "respect" extreme radicalism at public expense, especially in today's jittery and vulnerable environment. We support the punitive and investigative efforts of those California state legislators who have decided that "political correctness" is the act of demanding respect for law and the rights of all people to practice animal agriculture and to sell and own the vehicles of their choice. Those who advocate terrorist acts in any form are morally bankrupt, and they must not be honored with public money while they indoctrinate our children with their hateful values and strategies of anarchy.

Media Adventures in Reporting on Extremism



ABC's John Stossel tried hard to present the radical organization PETA as a group that does not operate within the mainstream American value system, and that definitely markets itself through the tune of its own brand of eco-terrorism. The program 20-20 featured Ingrid Newkirk, co-founder and present head of People For the Ethical Treatment of Animals, as she spewed her usual messages about how evil it is to keep and confine animals as meat objects. To be fair, although some PETA film of confined cows and poultry was used, 20-20 also had obtained footage of animals in better circumstances, such as cows in grassy fields, and wild turkeys in breeding behavior, and Stossel pointed out that the PETA images are not typical of conditions under which animals are kept, nor are they typical of animal behavior in general.

One glaring weakness of the report was the fact that Stossel failed to do enough homework on PETA's tactics and value system; while the group markets itself through deploring alleged cruelty to animals, the PETA goal is to bring about an end to animal use, not a change to the ways in which animals are treated. Newkirk has always claimed that animals are not "ours" to eat, own, ride, confine, or use in any way, whether for food, education, entertainment, or scientific research. This ultimately abolitionist agenda is almost never recognized by media personnel who may find themselves offended by PETA campaigns such as those against the use of milk, meat, or fur. Maybe someday a media spokesperson will have the wit to say to Ms. Newkirk, "Hey, would you go along with animal use and animal agriculture if all the things you deplore about their treatment were suddenly corrected?" She would then have to admit that her campaigns are not about "cruelty" to animals, but about

the power politics of depriving humans of their traditional rights to animal use for their own benefit.

Stossel did a fine job of demonstrating that PETA has often given financial support to those who have committed terrorist acts. The money was "for their defense" as Newkirk claimed. Thus, PETA bought \$70,000 worth of legal services for Rodney Coronado, convicted arsonist, who had personally burned down a university laboratory that used animals in research and teaching. 20-20 did obtain film of the burned lab, and video of Coronado himself speaking defiantly about his acts, and encouraging others to similarly commit arson and other crimes for the sake of animal liberation. Stossel did a good job of driving this point home when he said that if one donates to PETA, that sort of thing is often where the money goes. Thus, good people who are moved by tales of cruelty to animals, and who believe that PETA would work to force legislative mandates for better animal treatment, donate to this tax exempt organization for this reason. Their money then supports crimes against society, and buys lawyers to lessen the penalties of those who commit them.

IWMC salutes all those media executives who make responsible decisions to expose the anti-social, misleading, and hypocritical claims and behavior of tax-exempt animal rights and environmentalist organizations. We know that the general public appreciates this exposure. Kind animal lovers and their children may ultimately see the light and stop supporting the campaigns of PETA and other such organizations. Truth is a powerful tool in this society. Our media organizations should seek it and voice it, show the images of truth, and contrast them often with the images put forth by PETA and their colleagues.

Canada fights to undo the Sea(L) Disaster

by Janice Henke, Anthropologist

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans has recently announced that the harp seal population in Canada's waters has grown to something over 5 million animals in the last thirty years. Seals eat nothing but fish. They don't discriminate - any fish that will fit down the throat is fair game. Therefore, harp seals eat both the small species and the young of large species, so the prey list includes herring, mackerel, capelin, cod, turbot, and anything else, throat-size, that may swim by.



Back in the late 70s, early 80s, the International Fund for Animal Welfare, using trumped up and false claims of "cruelty" to harp seals, persuaded the legislators of the European Union to ban the import of the products of any seals under the age of one year. Consequently, the market for all seal products crashed. Not only Inuit subsistence hunters, but Quebecois in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, and Newfoundlanders, all suffered from the immediate impact of this loss of market. At the time, the harp seal population was 1.8 million and slowly growing. The harvest was not only certified by veterinarians to be humane, but was proven sustainable from a population dynamics perspective. Scientific data did not matter to European politicians, who feared for their political security due to the immense public outcry stimulated by IFAW and secondarily, Greenpeace.

The intervention of these NGOs in the political ecology of the region changed the entire western Atlantic marine environment. It has resulted in cruel conditions for seals, fish, sea birds, whales, and human beings.

The years since the ban has seen temporary resurgences of market value for harp and ringed seal products, and this includes the use of seal fat rendered into oil for human consumption as an important dietary supplement. Some Norwegian distributors have bought seal pelts and have also found markets for the Omega 3-rich oil. The US and mainland Europe, however, remain out of this market sphere.

The crisis in the Canadian cod fishery may be due to a number of factors. One is that increased melting of Greenland's ice cap is

causing a sea temperature change that affects fish spawning success, and may increase fry mortality. Another factor is the oil exploration off the Grand Banks, which used seismic waves caused by dynamite blasting. This increased turbidity and certainly, impacted the spawning cod, which have been observed to have lost a few year classes since that time. Over-fishing by other nations, with or without Canadian government permission and oversight, has undoubtedly made a difference. And of course, the seals have eaten their increasing share of all fish resources.

The fact of a drastically reduced seal harvest has taken a huge toll on the fish.

IFAW and others want to blame Canada's foreign policy towards other fishing nations for the loss of a viable cod population. They say that Canada is unfairly blaming the seals. At this time, the fact remains that there are over 5 million harp seals in Canada's waters, the market for products is steadily growing, and the DFO has made the wise decision to let the fishermen take up to 350,000 animals per year for the next three years. Of course, this harvest will not be sustainable. Of course, the seal herd will be decreased, with good fortune, to more ecologically harmonious levels. Intraspecies (seal to seal) strife and wounding will be decreased if this harvest can be accomplished at these levels for the next few years. Seals are now so overcrowded that they are hurting each other as they gather for the annual mating season. Young males are bullied and bitten and scratched by the older bulls. The fact that females may experience delayed sexual maturity under these crowding conditions is not enough to control this ravenous herd. They all need to eat, and there is not enough food. Pup mortality will

increase, but it will not be sufficient to do the necessary job of herd depletion.

IFAW has caused this seal disaster, and the organization is still claiming untruths about past harvests and the impending seal harvest.

As always, fisheries officers will be actively enforcing the Seal Protection Regulations. Despite protests and problems, Canada will once again harvest seals, and attempt to bring the environment back into balance.

IWMC wishes the Canadian people, the seals, and their marine environment, well. After the current crop of whitecoats has shed off to the *bête-de-la-mer* stage, or "beaters", the hunt will begin. Sealers will take both older and newly matured seals, and continue the traditional cycle of processing and selling their bounty. Their government will stand by them in these hard times, and with fishermen, officers, and trade officials working together, things will get better.

Good luck, Canada. 

Hunting Turns Boys Into Men of Heart, Scientist Claims

by Dr. Randall L. Eaton

Speaking on January 31 at Safari Club International's annual conference in Reno, Dr. Randall Eaton, an evolutionary psychologist claims that hunting is the right medicine for turning boys into men of heart. "Men evolved to protect and provide. Around the world for hundreds of thousands of years, boys became men by proving themselves worthy as hunters. To this day among hunting-gathering societies, successful hunting qualifies a man for manhood and marriage," Eaton said.

An award-winning author and TV producer, Eaton said that the primary dimensions of masculinity are warring, sex, hunting and sport, but according to Eaton only hunting connects men profoundly to nature. "The instinct to hunt awakens spontaneously in boys, but the taking of a life opens the heart and tempers that instinct with compassion. If we want to transform boys into men who respect life and are responsible to society and the environment then we need to mentor them in hunting as a rite of passage," he said.

Eaton is convinced that hunting teaches empathy and that it would be a less competitive, more peaceful world if more men hunted. "The hunt is the ideal way to teach universal virtues, including generosity, patience, courage, fortitude and humility," Eaton said.

He pointed to wilderness survival programs in which delinquent boys' lives were successfully transformed by subsistence hunting. He said, "Hunting is good medicine for bad kids because it's good medicine for all kids."

Eaton also encourages vision quest and artistic expression as rites of passage for initiation of adolescent boys to adulthood. He said, "Modern civilization has forgotten the critical importance of properly initiating boys to men. I think that hunting as rite of passage is a major answer to the social and environmental crisis."

According to Eaton, hunting is justifiable in terms of its benefits to environmental conservation. He said, "Look at Ducks Unlimited. Never have so few done so much for the environment. They've permanently conserved over ten million acres of wetlands." But, he said, the social justification for hunting lies in its positive influence on the development of our youth.

For additional information contact Dr. Randall L. Eaton at reaton@eoni.com. Advance copies of Eaton's new book, [From Boys to Men of Heart: Hunting as Rite of Passage](#) are available on disk.

Conservation Benefit from Harvesting Kangaroos: Status Report at the start of a new millennium.

by Gordon Grigg, Department of Zoology & Entomology
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(full paper available from the author)

Over the last twenty years, kangaroo harvesting has gained much greater public acceptance and risen in monetary value. However, most landholders still regards kangaroos mainly as pests, and are a long way off making enough money from kangaroos to encourage any shift away from their focus on sheep. Yet kangaroo meat is now sold legally for human consumption in all Australian States and is common on restaurant menus, while its export is rising steadily.

Extensive aerial surveys have established the abundance of the three large kangaroo species and their resilience to harvesting. A small number of landholders are benefiting from kangaroos, either by selling access to shooters/processors or through direct

involvement as licensed operators. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature has supported the concept of achieving conservation benefits from the sustainable use of wildlife, and this has been incorporated into kangaroo management programs (for leather and meat) by most Australian governments.

Despite all these positives, the low price of kangaroo meat, which has still not found the place it deserves on the international game meat market, is a major impediment to implementing "sheep replacement therapy for rangelands", and only when prices rise significantly will landholders choose to reduce sheep numbers and invest their hopes in kangaroos.

Meanwhile, land degradation continues unabated and low prices for coarse fibre wool, while encouraging woolgrowers in the sheep rangelands to overstock, also provide a stimulus to landholders to diversify. Alarming, many landholders are choosing to diversify into goats which, though profitable in the short term, will extend the damage done by sheep.

Low prices for wool from the sheep rangelands also amplify the clamour for kangaroo control, and governments are responding by researching or implementing programs designed to significantly reduce kangaroo numbers. South Australia now has a program which if implemented fully would reduce kangaroos by 60%. In Queensland and NSW, research projects are examining more effective ways to reduce kangaroo numbers. These goals reflect an acceptance of the folklore that competition from kangaroos compromises wool production and markedly reduces sheep carrying capacity, even though scientific evidence for this is lacking.

But reducing kangaroos will not bring the anticipated benefits to woolgrowers, because kangaroos are a much smaller component of the total grazing pressure (TGP) than is generally assumed. This is because the factor of 0.7 DSE (dry sheep equivalent), by which kangaroo numbers are translated into forage lost to sheep, is an over-estimate. Taking body weights into account the factor should be about 0.4 and, taking measurements of field metabolic rate into account, may be as low as 0.15-0.2. Hence, even if the desired reductions in kangaroos could be achieved, there would be little or no difference to the economic viability of woolgrowers in the sheep rangelands. Furthermore, if governments decide to institute significant reductions in kangaroos without data to confirm the conservation and economic benefits of doing so, there will probably be strong criticism from conservation and animal

rights organisations as well as from Australians at large, and this approach may have to be abandoned.

For these reasons, the focus of kangaroo management as pest control aimed at improving wool productivity, is doomed to failure. I still support the alternative view that the best way to reduce grazing pressure on the rangelands is by reducing sheep, and that the best way to achieve this is to develop a market for a high-value kangaroo industry and to sell its monopoly product on the world market for game meat. A significant increase in the value of kangaroo meat could make the harvest of free-range kangaroos for skins and meat a profitable and ecologically desirable enterprise for landholders. This would harness economic incentives in the service of ecological sustainability and rangeland rehabilitation and thus provide another example of achieving conservation goals through the sustainable use of wildlife.



Furthermore, the development of a high value, sustainable kangaroo industry stands in sharp contrast to the fatalism of some ecological commentators who can only prescribe mass closure of Australian rural communities and essentially evacuating marginal country. What is needed to achieve these desirable social, economic and conservation goals is a strong marketing effort and I provide some suggestions about the attributes of kangaroo meat and the benefits of kangaroo harvesting which could feature in a marketing campaign.

Grigg GC 2002 Conservation benefit from harvesting kangaroos: status report at the start of a new millennium. A paper to stimulate discussion and research. pp. 53-76 in "A Zoological Revolution: Using native fauna to assist in its own survival" Eds. D Lunney and CR Dickman. Royal Zoological Society of New South Wales and the Australian Museum.

Upcoming Events

- 22 to 25 April 2003** CITES 49th meeting of the Standing Committee, Geneva, Switzerland
- 19-13 May 2003** World Aquaculture 2003 , Bahia Convention Centre, Salvador, Brazil
email: worldaqua@aol.com
- 15-17 June 2003** Organic Aquaculture and Sea Farming 2003, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
email: infish@po.jaring.my
Organised by INFOFISH, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Vietnam Association of Seafood Exporters and Producers (VASEP) www.infofish.org
- 21-23 August 2003** International Symposium on Freshwater Prawns, Kerala, India
email: kaufish@vsnl.com

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