

# Sustainable eNews

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Promoting Sustainable Use

November 2004



IWMC

World Conservation Trust

## Welcome to the 167th Party to CITES

The Independent State of Samoa has deposited its instrument of accession to CITES on 9 November 2004 and will so become the 167<sup>th</sup> Party to CITES on 7 February 2005.

### Editorial: Some thoughts after CoP13

by Jaques Berney



More than one month has passed already since the closure of the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP13) and it is time to make a brief analysis (the word is probably a bit excessive) of the procedure and of the outcome of the meeting. As after elections, everybody tries to underline the successes rather than the failures but in this case, we believe that we may be rather satisfied, certainly more than after the earlier meetings, at least CoP11 and 12.



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As far as the way the meeting was conducted, the general views were that the Chairman of Committee I made an excellent job, although there were perhaps some abuses, at least in the earlier sessions, in the use of the term 'consensus' when decisions were taken without votes because there were obviously some Parties opposed to such decisions. In Committee II, the Chairman was certainly less sharp and tried too often to reach a consensus when this was obviously not possible, and a decision could have been made without reopening debates and excessive postponement. In addition, it remained noticeable that the proper implementation of the Rules of Procedure was still a problem. This was especially the case when the sturgeon issue was considered at the end of the meeting of Committee II. Whether this was the fault of the Chairmen themselves or of the Secretariat, which is supposed to advise them, the question remains open. In general, nevertheless, the meeting was rather well conducted, although it is sometimes difficult, in particular for non-English speaking people to follow the debate, when amendments to draft resolutions or decisions are presented. Here also the Chairmen should be advised to give time to interpreters, so indispensable individuals, to do their job as they would appreciate being able to do it. Unfortunately, it appeared that delegates did not know how to make use of 'points of order'.

Finally, we should thank the Secretariat this time for having returned to the earlier practice, largely abandoned at CoP12, of providing documents to make available timely amended draft resolutions and decisions, with revised copies when necessary.

Let us come to the results now. As supporters of the sustainable use of natural resources, we may be very pleased with several proposals to amend Appendices I and II, e.g. the transfer from Appendix I to Appendix II of the population of Swaziland's white rhinoceros,

of the bald eagle, of the Cuban population of the American crocodile, of the population of Namibia's Nile crocodile and of two orchid species. The decisions to allow the trade for commercial purposes in leather goods from the populations of Namibia and South Africa of the African elephant and, after a successful request to reopen the debate in the final plenary session, to allow Namibia to trade in 'ekipas' (traditional ivory items) incorporated in finish jewellery items for non-commercial purposes were certainly also successes, as was the adoption, for the same countries, of increased export quotas for leopard hunting trophies and skins for personal use, and of quotas of five hunting trophies of adult male black rhinoceros. The withdrawal by Kenya of its proposal to transfer the lion from Appendix II to Appendix I, to avoid an evident defeat, must be added to this list of positive outcomes.



What was rewarding also with these decisions was that they were obtained thanks indeed to excellent presentations made by the proponents, and their supporters, but, to some extent at least, because the opponents were very often unable to advance any reasonable arguments, when they were not expressing irrelevant, poor and sometimes outrageous views.

Nevertheless, in particular with respect to the African elephant, the successes were limited, although we noted with satisfaction the rejection of the proposal by Kenya to impose a moratorium on the transfer of populations from Appendix I to Appendix II and of trade in any elephant parts and derivatives. We should not forget that Namibia was unable to get an annual export quota for raw ivory and that Botswana, which is probably faced with the most concerning situation, had not even felt that it would be useful to submit such a proposal..

We still seem very far from the point where CITES would allow the trade in ivory originating from the culling of elephants necessary to bring some populations back to a level compatible with the conservation of the habitat in which they occur.

Success was also far away regarding whales and the rejection, once again, of a Japanese proposal on the minke whale was the best illustration. For many Parties, politics and emotion, purportedly to please the general public, still have more weight than science for these species.

With regard to other decisions, the following must be welcomed: the adoption, without any further discussions, of revised and improved criteria for the inclusion of species in Appendix I and II; the withdrawal by Israel of its proposal to amend Resolution Conf. 5.10 on the Definition of 'primarily commercial purposes'; the adoption of measures to

improve the synergy between CITES and the Convention on the Biological Diversity; that of a new resolution urging the Parties to make use of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and of a related decision directing the Secretariat to distribute these Principles and Guidelines to all CITES Management and Scientific Authorities; and the adoption of a revised resolution on sturgeons, which, although not perfect, should help to improve the situation.

In conclusion, the progress from earlier meetings was evident but should not lead us to let up our efforts in the promotion of the sustainable use of natural resources as a tool for conservation. In addition, although progress was also realized in the coordination of such efforts, much more is still possible and necessary. We have three years before CoP14 to achieve that goal.

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## The HSUS / Fund for Animals merger

### Why should anyone be surprised?

Years ago, Wayne Pacelle was a protégé of the late Cleveland Amory, who founded the Fund for Animals. Mr. Amory had previously been an executive of the HSUS, and left it to form the Fund. When Wayne left the Fund to work on ballot initiatives for the HSUS, it was rumored that Mr. Amory felt betrayed. None of this really matters today. The Fund for Animals and the Humane Society of the United States are about to become one legal entity, perhaps called the HSUS Fund For Animals or some other version that combines the two identities. The real news is that the combined entity will be reorganized as a 501(C)(4), which means that it shall be able to put a lot more money into direct lobbying on issues that affect not

only all Americans but wildlife users and managers from all around the world.

At present, it has been reported that the combined amount that can be spent on direct lobbying by the two groups is only about \$1.5 million dollars. The combined budget of the new organization shall be \$95 million dollars, with a proportionately higher amount of money to be spent on lobbying than was the case before the merger/reorganization.



Pacelle's expertise includes anti-hunting, anti-trapping ballot initiatives, and some legislation that has hampered the pork industry. He learned much about how to milk the American value system under Amory's tutelage, reaping huge donations for the Fund and later, for the HSUS, on cruelty to animals themes. Wayne Pacelle is young, charismatic, and a dedicated "true believer", a "power ranger" with marketing and public relations sophistication. His colleague at the Fund, Michael Markarian, was also tutored by the late Mr. Amory, and also shares these skills and extreme animal rights philosophy. Why should anyone think that the concept of merging these two organizations is anything new? This has probably been in the works for years.



The message in animal rights extremism is to convince the general public that wrongs are being committed by animal users, and that

those wrongs must be legislated out of existence. All the incorrect, misleading, and yes, outright egregious falsehoods that are spread by animal rights extremists must be addressed and corrected – in print, on the Internet, and in direct messages to both the public and its elected representatives.

This has to be a sustained, consistent, coordinated effort on the part of all legitimate animal users and wildlife managers in the country. There is simply no other way that legitimate animal use is going to continue as a significant part of our cultural heritage and lifestyle. This is but a prelude to a culture war that promises to be violent before it is put to rest, because extremism breeds contempt for the rule of law. Animal users must convince both the general public and our legislators that human rights must always be defended and given priority, for the sake of the quality of life now and in the future.

## Riding the Fur cycles and Watching Fashion trends

People love to entertain each other, emulate one another's styles, and express their creativity through ever changing variations on dress, language patterns, music and dance. Those humans defined by their culture as attractive individuals may thus have a huge influence on the styles adopted by their admirers. Over the past twenty years, a number of celebrities in the entertainment industry were defining themselves as "good people" through their clothing preferences. They declared that fur and leather were not appropriate choices for "good people", and they encouraged their fans to pass up wearing fur and choosing leather for clothing or accessories. Plastic was "in." Faux furs were all the rage, as was the range of gaudy, unnatural colors that signified they were not animal products.



For whatever reasons, the anti-fur, fake fur and pro-plastic fashion choices have now suffered diminished general acceptance. Some analysts are attributing this to the new stardom of hip hop entertainers such as Sean "Puffy" Combs, and some new female stars, whose bodies are now adorned with variants of genuine fox, chinchilla, and mink. Women's magazines such as Vogue are veritable catalogues of fur choices. Models decked out in untraditional fur garments fill every page. Fur fashion is equated with sex appeal and the lure of the exotic, expensive, and exclusive choices made by the beautiful people. One has to wonder where it all comes from, and why such cycles rise and fall about every thirty years, and if there is anything meaningful about it all.

Back in the real world, down to earth, it matters a great deal. Local people who live in rural areas have a relationship with furbearers that is cultural, social, and economic. Untrapped, un hunted wildlife react to a lack of predation on them during the “buy plastic” fashion trend times. They increase in numbers, and suffer more often from diseases such as rabies, distemper, mange, and parvovirus. They affect people when they



prey on livestock and pets, cause vehicle accidents, property damage to buildings, flood land, and cause roads to flood or wash out. Beavers cause hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of road damage in rural and suburban areas. Muskrats tunnel through pond dams and stream banks, creating unexpected sink holes and wet spots that are expensive to correct. Municipal water supplies are contaminated by increased furbearer presence, and people find themselves sickened by giardiasis and other intestinal ailments. “Boil water” orders come too late to prevent thousands from contracting these illnesses.

Our natural environment changes all the time, and factors as urban and urbane as the fur industry, entertainment stars, and slick magazines, affect the most backwoods and

isolated of areas, simply because human predation on furbearers is important in keeping them from being menaces and nuisances. Fur fashion trends thus directly affect human health, car insurance rates, local taxes, building maintenance costs, agricultural expenses and profits, and even tourism.

In North America, fortunately, fur bearers are often regarded as resources, even as they are recognized as potentially dangerous parts of the natural world. The more common, state regulated, enthusiastic trapping of fur bearers is carried out, the better. Trappers do it for the money they receive. Rural residents and even those in small communities and cities reap the benefits when populations of raccoons, beaver, muskrat, coyotes, mink, bobcat, fox, opossum, skunk, fisher, marten, and otter are regularly trapped “just for their fur”.

The fur industry keeps them from being exterminated wholesale because of the damage they would otherwise cause to humans with whom they share this environment. For all these reasons, IWMC hopes that the “beautiful people” of the world keep on demanding the right to deck themselves out in fur clothes and accessories, and that all their admirers follow their lead. We’ll all be warmer and wiser when the fur cycle is a permanent part of our cultural heritage.

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## Seals, Lies and Videotape

We note with dismay and disgust that the animal rights crowd is once again planning to cash in on the vitally important Canadian harp seal hunt. Their campaigns in the late 1970s and early 1980s were aimed at the general public, especially in Europe, where hunt protest guru Brian Davies encouraged the citizens he had outraged to flood their legislators' offices with demands that pelts of the animals be banned from entering the European community. This worked for him, and the pelts of animals less than a year old were banned. His attempts to orchestrate a boycott of Canadian fish in the UK, US and Europe, however, failed.



This time around, IFAW, HSUS, and other lesser groups are using the Internet to encourage the American public to boycott all fish products that might have originated in Canada, and to claim that Americans will not travel to Canada on vacations, because Canadian fishermen kill "baby" harp seals. Although the hunt for white coated harp pups has been stopped, and hunters now take only older animals, all campaigns are using the image of white coat harp seals in order to rekindle old hatreds.

Web sites of these renewed protests contain links to government officials' emails, so the general public, fired up again by anti-hunt rhetoric and images, will be likely to protest directly to their own elected officials. Canadian citizens are especially encouraged to demand that their own government "put an end" to the hunt for harp seals.

Because IFAW was so skillful the first time around, the hunt nearly did come to an end. For a number of years, seals were not taken in numbers adequate to keep the herd from growing. The animals increased from 1.8 million in 1983, to over 5 million in 2004. By

the late '90s, new markets were found outside the EU. The pelts and seal oil capsules began to be in demand in Norway, Denmark, and China. Gradually, prices rose and the number of seals harvested increased yearly, but it was not enough to get them back in balance with the marine ecosystem. Seals will eat anything small enough to fit down their throats. This means that those species that are also prey of the cod are targeted by seals, as well. Canadian fishermen know that they

have to control seals in order that the fish they also depend upon shall continue to exist and proliferate. Capelin, mackerel, herring, turbot, shrimp and krill all occupy necessary niches in the environment. The downfall of the cod was once thought impossible. When it happened due to over fishing, marine environment disturbance due to oil exploration, and inadequate data collection for management, this was Canada's wake-up call. It may not be reasonable to "blame" the seals for the collapse of the cod. It is reasonable, however, to support Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans as its biologists and policy experts work together to make sure the seals are brought back under control.

The protesters are right about one thing: The planned harvest of nearly a million seals over a three year period ending this coming year, is not sustainable. That is the entire point of such a large harvest. It is intended to dramatically cut down the size of the herd so that it shall once again be more in balance with the fish available to seals, sea birds, whales, and fishermen. A misinformed general public contributed to a loss of the market for harp seal products twenty years ago, resulting in an ecological disaster for the western Atlantic and all the people who live on its shores.

IWMC urges all who care about the precedent that has been set, and about the future of scientific wildlife management, to write to their own legislators, to the press, and to the Canadian government, in support of the renewed, professionally managed seal fishery in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and off the coast of Newfoundland. The very idea of a renewed attempt at a fish boycott to “stop the hunt” is a crass example of a culturally biased power play that shouldn’t be allowed to get off the ground anywhere. The bottom line of this animal rights campaign is not seals. It is all about the power of unscrupulous people to manipulate innocent voters, who then cause public officials to choose between science

based wildlife management and losing the next election. The world does not benefit from this kind of behavior, and neither do seals, fish, or people.

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## British Public and Parliament outfoxed by IFAW

Today came the sad news that the British parliament has finally taken the long feared and misguided steps to outlaw the hunting of any game with dogs. Another



successful public relations campaign by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has resulted in extreme dismay among those UK citizens who live outside of London, and who

know that foxes will no longer be controlled without the traditional hunts with horses and hounds. Foxes cannot be trapped in the UK. Already, they are being recognized as a pest species around towns, villages, and even in London, where they sneak close to houses looking for house cats and garbage, and the offerings of food from those foolish enough to leave it out purposefully for them.

When France faced this problem, their solution was to outlaw trapping. Foxes are now a menace in France, where an increasing

number of people must be treated every year for exposure to rabies, as infected animals charge and bite them and their livestock. When the Chunnel was built, there was great concern that rabies would enter the UK through it, as foxes and dogs could easily enter the passage and carry the disease to people and animals on the other side. Extreme high-tech measures have been taken to ensure that no animals shall enter the UK through this route.

IWMC urges support now for the legal efforts of the Countryside Alliance, which has done all it can to prevent the ban on hunting with dogs. The Alliance is about to try legal maneuvers to overturn this action. In addition, their supporters may disobey it en masse, because the hunt traditions are so deeply embedded in the culture and economy of the uplands and lowlands, that to stop them will cause extreme distress. This is a public relations effort to avert both social and ecological problems that no one wants to deal with.

Not only foxes, but other potentially troublesome species such as mink, are now off limits, to the detriment of native birds. (Mink were unwisely introduced to the UK, and escaped animals now ravage Britain's beloved songbirds). Again, a public ignorant of management principles and fired up by animal rights "cruelty" stories has responded. Legislators have heeded their demands

instead of courageously replying to constituents that a ban on this very old tradition would eventually cause great harm to people and to wildlife. IWMC applauds and supports the Countryside Alliance in its efforts to get this ill-advised ban on hunting overturned before serious damage results. This is not the end of the story.



## Fundraising Organization Launched

IWMC has established the World Conservation Trust Foundation (WCTF) to raise money for the sustainable use of wildlife.

WCTF is registered in Washington, DC and has charitable status with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, making donations from individuals the U.S. and many overseas countries tax deductible. Donations can be made through a new website:

**[www.conservingwildlife.org](http://www.conservingwildlife.org)**

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC, said: "The sustainable use philosophy is much more rational and much more mainstream than the alternative being promoted by animal

rights groups. The problem is that the campaigners have extensive resources, which gives them a disproportionate amount of power and influence."

"We have to move forward and WCTF is a way of ensuring that we can continue to promote sustainable use as a conservation mechanism in an effective way in the future."

Supporters of sustainable use will receive copies of this newsletter and regular updates on what is happening to our wildlife, the people whose livelihoods depend on using it sustainably, and wildlife campaigns around the world.

## PETA admits cruelty might not do the trick

We note with interest that the Center For Consumer Freedom has hit another nail squarely where it does the most good...as its press release on November 17 quotes a PETA spokesperson as admitting what must be, for them, a sad reality: People may not

care particularly whether or not fish feel distress when they are caught. Realizing this, PETA has stooped to claiming that fish are not good food for people, and may be contaminated with pollutants and poisons.

This tactic is not new, nor is it unique to PETA. A number of animal rights and environmentalist groups commonly use scare tactics about animal-origin food items; seals, whales, fish, cattle, pork, all have been claimed hazardous to our health for one reason or another. Instead of consuming animal products, we should all get our protein from beans, and we should all stop reproducing, because there are just too many of us. A vegetarian world, according to PETA and other animal rights organizations would be a happier, healthier, kinder world.

Never mind that total vegetarianism would rob us all (people and animals) of habitat

space, and never mind that our beloved livestock would become extinct while game animals would overrun the bean fields.

We don't think the vegetarian utopia shall come to pass. People are omnivores. They want beef with their beans, and chips with their fish, and hope for the best when it comes to population control. Perhaps the best of all possible worlds shall come about; vegetarians who are concerned about world overpopulation may decide not to add their genes to the pool, while the rest of us continue our meat-enhanced lives in blessed silence from that quarter.

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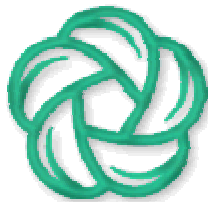
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A global voice for sustainable use of the earth's resources and the preservation of the cultures and traditions that depend upon them.