

Sustainable eNews

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Promoting Sustainable Use

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IWMC
World Conservation Trust

Editorial: Islands of Strength by Dr. Janice Henke, Anthropologist

During the recent International Whaling Commission meeting in Ulsan, South Korea, a number of dramas were enacted on which the final curtain has not yet fallen. The Like Minded Group nations who all oppose resumption of commercial whaling as well as any further scientific research whaling, continue to be frustrated in their attempts to stop Japan's lawful and rational plans regarding the whale resource.



Australia in particular has made threatening and unpleasant noises towards its tiny island nation neighbors, and a number of non-governmental organizations are planning to do these tiny islands as much harm as possible in retribution for their stance in support of Japan on whaling issues.

Nauru complained that Australia's criticism of its voting record "undermines its sovereignty", and that it supports scientific research on whales and harvest of whales in order to preserve its tuna stocks. (ABC Online, 6/28/05) A spokesperson for Nauru said "some whale species have the potential to devastate Nauru's tuna stocks." Nauru stood firm in its decision. IWMC congratulates this little nation for resisting the bullying of its large neighbor.

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The Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Palau are now all being threatened with a substantial economic boycott in retribution for their own courageous stand at IWC – these little nations all voted to restore regulated commercial whaling. The Hawaii International Surf and Dive Association, and other such groups of recreational divers have indicated that they shall boycott these nations’ dive destinations for the next two years. This is outright bullying, reminiscent of the efforts of anti-use NGOs to boycott resorts in the Caribbean when those nations supported Japan on the Southern Ocean Sanctuary issue. The Caribbean nations have also firmly stayed their ground in support for sustainable whaling. Good job, friends.



IWMC urges all those who enjoy recreational diving in the warm and beautiful Pacific to take advantage of all that Nauru, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Palau have to offer.

Their reefs and beaches are beautiful and waiting. Their people are honorable and well-informed world citizens who are being unfairly and unjustly targeted for their stand in support of sustainable and scientifically justifiable use of renewable resources.

All small island nations are concerned about the sustainability of their marine resources, which for them are everything. Their courageous decision to do what they believe is right for their people and their livelihoods is being highlighted by the anti-use crowd as somehow dishonorable and unwise. This imperialistic attitude is entirely out of sync with modern post-war economic and social realities. IWMC congratulates all those nations who stand up to bullies regardless of the consequences. We say to them, “This too will pass” and the world shall come to encourage these small nations as they prosper in their independence and in their spirit.

Let’s Not Save the Multi Million Dollar Mousies

IWMC wonders why the United States, a bastion of scientific learning and rigorous regimes for wildlife management, continues to fall prey to the fallacies of the Endangered Species Act. Once again, the answer is simple; so-called endangered species are being used as political pawns in efforts to please those who wish to keep human beings out of the natural environment. The original idea about protecting and restoring the stocks of endangered species of plants and animals was a good one. It supported the efforts of scientific wildlife management in identifying and preserving critical habitats for such species. Unfortunately, politics reared its ugly head, and a large number of plants and

animals that were not endangered were put on the list.

Since the Act was first voted into law in the early 1970s only 1% of the species on the list have been declared recovered. This is an abysmally poor record. Today, millions and millions of dollars spent to effect recovery are being squandered because the species involved are either not key species in the environment or were not truly endangered in the first place.



Congressman Pombo, Chairman of the House Resources Committee, has long recognized the structural and practical problems with the Endangered Species Act and now has a bill in the works that he believes would correct the problems of inappropriate listings and inappropriate spending efforts. His bill would be a relief to those landowners in the United States whose property rights have been endangered, threatened, or eliminated because of the original ESA. Naturally, those whose ideology is focused on keeping people from using the land, and keeping people boxed up in cities, are opposing Endangered Species Act reform.

According to the July 1st Wall Street Journal, protection of the Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, a non-endangered species, would cost taxpayers between \$79 and \$183 million dollars over a ten year period if it remained on the List, where it never belonged in the first place.

IWMC fervently hopes that the ESA shall be appropriately reformed through the efforts of Congressman Pombo and the Property Rights organization. According to the July 1st Wall Street Journal, protection of the Preble's Meadow Jumping Mouse, a non-endangered species, would cost taxpayers between \$79 and \$183 million dollars over a ten year period if it remained on the List, where it never belonged in the first place. Such

boondoggles must stop. Federally paid scientists should be listened to in these matters.

The Property Rights people suggest that much inappropriate listing behavior is due to green groups' lobbying in the Congress, many of whose members are afraid to deny their demands and requests for fear of being labeled "anti-environment".

IWMC calls on all responsible legislators to clean up the Endangered Species Act immediately. Legislators should insist that all listings for the Act shall be based on good scientific data. Such data are already

supplied by those government agencies whose people are closest to the problems and successes of plants and animals in the American environment. Once again, we see this as a classic struggle between those who want environmental policy to be based in science, and those for whom green ideology is the motive for using contrived status for plants and animals as a way to block development.

Watson - Down Under or Down and Out?

Once again Paul Watson of the Sea Shepherds is claiming he shall head back to Australia in time to intercept the Japanese scientific whaling fleet. His plan is to try to prevent them from conducting their lawful and meaningful research. This plan turned into a fiasco the last time he tried it, when the Shepherds couldn't find the flock. This time, Paul is asking Greenpeace to bring their vessels and help in the effort.

Lots of luck!

Greenpeace won't want to share the media spotlight with an unpredictable wingnut who may try to do damage to any research vessels he stumbles across. Even Greenpeace leaders know when to fold them. Australia will not send its government vessels out to interfere with the research effort, and our bet is that neither will Greenpeace, especially now that Paul is getting into the act.

The Australian newspaper The Sunday Mail outlined Watson's alleged plans back on June 26, calling the Sea Shepherds "a radical American green group". More established organizations such as Greenpeace shudder to think that their supporters might associate them with any outfit that would be likely to fire on a research vessel, ram it in heavy seas, or otherwise conduct some rash and ill-advised operation.



Our guess is that Paul Watson will be down and out on this one. All alone in the Southern Ocean and wondering where the action is. We

hope he doesn't hurt anyone or lose a crewmember in this stupid venture. May the world media refuse to send anyone to accompany him on this pointless journey. He doesn't deserve any positive attention for his exploits.

Give it up, Paul. No one wants to watch you puff and blow and spend donated money for another potentially destructive campaign. You will never put an end to scientific research because the sane people in this world know it is necessary in these times of proven and ongoing environmental change.

People for the **E**thical **T**reatment of **A**nimals

OR

People **E**xecuting **T**ame **A**nimals

OR

People **E**ncouraging **T**errorist **A**cts

OR

People **E**liminating all **T**heir **A**llies

OR

People **E**ncouraging **T**orture of **A**nimals



PETA has been in the news lately. None of the news is good for PETA. People in North Carolina who trusted this organization to find homes for stray and unwanted pets have been brutally betrayed. PETA employees have taken thousands of dogs and cats, apparently most of them adoptable, and have immediately killed them and then illegally disposed of the bodies in mall dumpsters. This was a deliberate betrayal by PETA employees, because they told those who handed over the pets that they would make genuine attempts to place them in adoptive homes. It's not that PETA could not

afford to keep the animals, and feed and house them for even an extended period of time. Its officers simply wanted to get rid of them and spend PETA money elsewhere... supporting those who set fire to medical and pharmaceutical and university laboratories, for instance.

The Center for Consumer Freedom has recently featured an extension of its website to include these disgusting facts, and has put up a billboard in New York City which proclaims that PETA kills Animals. A graphic of a hypodermic needle is part of the sign.

PETA founder Ingrid Newkirk has been foundering around trying to explain herself and her organization, to little avail. We suspect that hundreds of thousands of good people who once donated to PETA will never do so again. They have all been betrayed by

PETA for the last time. The world will be a better place when this phony and socially dysfunctional organization has drawn its last dollar out of a society sick and tired of betrayal.

Whose Whales Are These?

The Australian government and a number of Australian citizens have recently been noisy regarding Japan's plans to extend its scientific research whaling to include fin whales and later, humpbacks, in the Southern Ocean. This is ostensibly because Australians have an allegedly thriving whale watch industry and are afraid that Japan's research would impact the number of animals available for watching, thus damaging the Australian industry's reputation as a good place to see the leviathans. Millions of dollars at stake, and all that.

Instead, Australia has merely been profiting (at no cost) from whale stocks that migrate past the southern continent on their way to feeding grounds in the Antarctic.

Australians are in a fix, because they have done no research on "their" whales. And, they can't use the Japanese research as an accurate assessment of the state of whale stocks, because they have already defined themselves as untrusting of Japan's "so-called scientific research". It is really a shame that Australia has done no research of any kind on the stocks themselves, even though they are dependent on them as income producers through tourism. Australians have not even conducted rigorous "non-lethal" sighting surveys that would at least give them a population estimate of fins and humpbacks with which to compare migrating stocks

against future counts after Japan's planned research had been going on for some time.

Instead, Australia has merely been profiting (at no cost) from whale stocks that migrate past the southern continent on their way to feeding grounds in the Antarctic. Now we have a recognized situation of increasing

Antarctic ice shelf melting, warmer waters, and surely, a changing marine environment for krill, penguins, seals and whales. Wouldn't it be reasonable to expect that Australia, of all nations, would already have begun to investigate the state of fish and whales that are impacted by these changes? But no, Japan is

the only nation that has been doing significant, peer reviewed scientific research in the Southern Ocean on whales and their ecosystem. Two hundred scientists from thirty nations (Japan included) pour over the data amassed by Japan each year, and the Scientific Committee issues a report regarding the relevance and focus of this research to the conservation of minke whales. Now that Japan's sighting surveys have revealed surprising numbers of fin and humpback whales in Antarctica, these species shall be investigated with the same rigor and the data from that research shall be submitted to the IWC Scientific Committee for its review.

IWMC applauds Japan for sticking with this program and for expanding it as these distinguished scientists see fit. Why would any rational person or body of national officials object to research on whales and other creatures in an ecosystem that is apparently undergoing rapid change? It makes no sense to ignore the warming that is taking place in the Southern Ocean. These are not Japan's whales, or Australia's whales. They are animals that migrate south each Austral

summer to feed, and some of them pass through Australian waters to do so. It is in the interest of science that the condition of these stocks shall be examined in an on-going program concurrent with rapid changes in that marine environment. It is time that Australia and other Like Minded nations try to change their positions on scientific research whaling, and contribute something useful to the field, instead of objecting to it as if it were an audacious activity.

Wake up Australia. This is the 21st century.

Grizzly Bears and Washington Residents

(Source: Responsive Management Report, Spring 2005)

A survey of residents from Skagit and Whatcom Counties of Washington state revealed widespread support for grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades. A majority of respondents (52%) reported strong support for recovery and 24% reported moderate support for recovery. Support for grizzly bear recovery was about the same in each county.

Wildlife agencies are determining if grizzly bears will need to be relocated to the North Cascades to recover the population. Relocating bears can be controversial. However, 33% of the respondents in the survey reported that they would be more supportive of grizzly bear recovery in the North Cascades if 5-10 bears had to be added, while only 15% said they would be less supportive.

Very few realize that full recovery of the grizzly bear population in the North Cascades

will take around 100 years. Nearly everyone knew that it is legal to kill a grizzly bear in self-defense or defense of other people. However, almost a third did not know that it is illegal to kill a grizzly bear if it were to attack livestock.



Almost everyone (91%) agreed that residents and visitors to the North Cascades could prevent most problems with grizzly bears by taking a few simple precautions and avoiding areas where grizzly bears are known to be present.

The results of the study are being used to assist the Grizzly Bear Outreach Project in determining if and how grizzly bears should be reintroduced into Washington state. The study measured residents' attitudes and opinions prior to the project, and another survey will be conducted by Responsible Management this spring to determine progress.

Hunters becoming endangered species

The sport is taking hits from all sides:

high cost of guns, escalating urbanism and the stigma of violence

(Source: National Post, 2005.06.11 – All but Toronto, page A8 by Katherine Dedyne – CanWest News Service)

VICTORIA - If current trends persist, the he-man hunters of Vancouver Island and B.C. may themselves become an endangered species. Committed hunters say the decline is precipitated by much more than the hugely controversial federal gun registry, with its fees and compulsory wildlife courses. Hunting as a knowledge-based leisure pursuit has suffered collateral damage from escalating urbanism, the stigma of violence, snobbery about blue-collar and rural pursuits and the high cost of guns.



There is even a major issue with lack of access to hunting grounds.

The wilds of Vancouver Island are getting harder to reach, according to Steve MacDonald, 50, a past president of the Victoria Fish & Game Protective Association.

In the past five years, access has gone from "yeah sure, you can go hunting, to hoping like hell you can find a gate open," says Mr. MacDonald, a B.C. Ferries worker.

A hunter for most of his life, he now heads over to the Mainland.

A lot of the land on the South Island that used to be owned by the E & N Railway is now in the hands of forestry companies he says are less willing to provide access to Crown lands via their roads.

"If you can't get into where the animals are, there's not a lot of hunting to be done," he says. "It seems like every time you turn around, the gate's locked a little earlier in the year and stays locked later."

There are lots of deer around town, but needless to say, no hunting within municipal boundaries with few exceptions on the Island and Lower Mainland. Hunters have to go a long way to find habitat.

Meanwhile, the gun registry means that "a perceptible amount" of people who once used inherited guns now and then have given them up because "it's too much hassle," Mr. MacDonald says.

On top of the dropouts, the culture of hunting is changing radically, asserts Gary Mauser, chairman of the firearms committee of the B.C. Fish and Wildlife Federation.

"We've got hunters pushed into an embattled minority. We could certainly call it an endangered species."

The number of B.C. hunters has declined by almost 50% in the last quarter-century. In 2003-04, there were 69,000 hunting licences issued to B.C. residents, compared with 132,500 in 1976-77 he says.

"Urbanization trends have continued so brutally that people are divorced from their wilderness," says Mr. Mauser, a professor of business at Simon Fraser University. In the process, the very visceral idea of hunting for food is being lost.

"Now when people do want to experience the wilderness, they do so on quickie weekend trips either as family camping or rock climbing."

These days, few hunters are under 40. His four adult children are not among them.

Mr. Mauser grew up thinking hunting was "bizarre" and could not comprehend why his father presented him with a rifle when he was 20. He told his dad to stick it. "When I turned 40 I began to think it was time to stop being a teenager and being angry at my father." As a show of solidarity, he picked up the rifle and became a fervent hunter.

Hunting also suffers from "urban-rural snobbism and white-collar/blue collar snobbism," he says, complicated by lack of practice that working-class people have in talking up their hands-on pursuits amid the up-market aspirations of the overall culture.

"Big game hunting is turning elitist in the U.S. and it will probably turn that way in Canada unless the resident hunter can figure a way to evangelize the new immigrants or women or young people," Mr. Mauser says. "There's big money in that, there's big adventure in that, and so the guide outfitters will be the more typical kind of hunter rather than standard blue-collar guy in the pickup."

Hunters can't even relax in a pub after a long day with their buddies the way a team of other sportsmen can, says Murray Charlton, 60, president of the North Saanich Rod & Gun Club.



"If you've got a firearm in the car, you're so afraid of parking it at the pub and having it broken into that what you want to do is just go home and protect your investment."

Mr. Charlton, a former RCMP officer who still teaches police across Canada how to use a Taser

and pepper spray, attributes the decline in hunting to public disapproval of firearms use. "The general public views gun owners as bad people so if you own a firearm, you're considered kind of a redneck terrorist. The minute you mention a firearm we're judged to be on the ugly side of the street."

Non-hunters can't understand why hunters want to spend all day in the woods just to kill an animal for meat when they could go to the grocery store and buy meat from animals already slaughtered.

Hunters are viewed as violent, even though the hunters he knows cannot bear the idea of an animal wounded or in agony. "It's the sport of going in the outdoors, enjoying the hobby of hunting and the sideline is the meat. Most of the time, most average hunters will come back empty-handed."

Mr. Charlton says guns now cost upwards of \$500 -- another impediment to financially strapped young people taking up the sport.

Noteworthy

September 11-16, 2005: The International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA) and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, are preparing for the IAFWA Annual Meeting that will be held at the Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. To register, visit: www.iafwa.org.

September 14-16, 2005: The 6th World Congress on Seafood Safety, Quality and Trade will take place in Sydney, Australia. To register, please visit: <http://www.seafoods-services.com.au/conference/iafi/program/>

September 8-10, 2005: The Whaling Museum in Sandfjord, Norway, will hold its 2nd Symposium on Whaling and History. For more information contact Jan Erik Ringstad at jan.erik.ringstad@sandefjord.kommune.no

Subscriptions / Submissions

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