

Policy Matters

Newsletter of the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP)

Environment and security - A role for IUCN

Mark Halle

At first glance, the relationship between Environment and Security appears an obvious one. With populations growing and resources dwindling, it stands to reason that a time must come when the two lines cross, and conflict results. Indeed, seen from this angle, the environmental perspective appears to offer a compelling insight into recent conflict and humanitarian drama: massive soil erosion, combined with drought in Ethiopia and there follows the familiar spectacle of thousands of emaciated Ethiopians moving into lands already maltreated by others, with inevitable conflict on the horizon. Note that Israel's water supply depends fundamentally on the hydrological resources of the West Bank, and the Jordan Valley and Israeli political intransigence takes on a new perspective. Read years of reports saying that the population pressure on Rwanda's fragile resources is reaching breaking point, and the horrific genocide of 1994 takes on a different hue.

All of us are familiar with the slow decline of development aid funding which, despite the promises made in Rio, has dwindled year after year throughout this decade, though the need for it has in no way disappeared. This decline is matched by the rising cost of dealing with a lengthening roster of humanitarian emergencies and the steep upward curve of peace-keeping expenditure. If environmental mismanagement is a significant cause of conflict, then attention to the environment may prove a cost-effective way to avoid future conflicts and to avoid the spiralling cost of addressing humanitarian disasters. Environmental action to avoid conflict appears to be the ultimate opportunity for the Precautionary Principle to be applied.

IUCN is currently completing a State-of-the-Art Review of Environment, Security and Development Co-operation commissioned by the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Its purpose is not only to shed light on the origins of the debate on Environment and Security, how it has developed, what is the current thinking in this field, and what are present trends in research, but also to look at the implications for development co-operation. In the margins of this study, IUCN held a two-day workshop on Environment and Security, for which the Review report provided background. This workshop, held at IUCN world headquarters in Gland on 20 – 21 July, involved Environment and Security experts and a broad selection of IUCN senior staff from headquarters and the regions. It was aimed at assessing the relevance of Environment and Security to IUCN's mission and programme and identifying a niche for the Union in this field.

Pinpointing the Union's interest

From the Review and the IUCN workshop it is clear that the relationship between Environment and Security is an important one and highly relevant to the mission and programme of the Union. At the same time, it is essential to avoid oversimplifying the relationship and to take a very clear look at IUCN's particular advantages in determining its niche. It is also essential to be clear in the use of terms. Shunning the more abstruse end of the academic debate on the subject, IUCN's interest lies in understanding how resource degradation can aggravate social tensions and create the conditions in which conflict is most likely to break out. Put more positively, the

Contents

Issue no. 3

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Environment and Security - Special Issue

Environment and Security - A Role for IUCN

Mark Halle 1

Human and Environmental Security

Tariq Banuri 8

Biodiversity, Mercantilism and Globalisation

Andrea Bagri & Frank Vorhies 11

Critical Remarks on "Environmental Security"

Matthias Finger 13

Discussion

Some cautionary Notes on linking Population and the Environment

Betsy Hartmann 14

Regular features

CEESP Contacts 2

Letter from the Chair 3

News 15

Meetings 17

Calendar 20

IUCN

The World Conservation Union

CEESP

Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy

continued on page 5

Policy Matters.....1

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About IUCN

IUCN - The World Conservation Union, was founded in 1948 and has its headquarters in Gland, Switzerland. IUCN brings together sovereign states, governmental agencies and non-governmental organisations in a global partnership to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable.

The Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) is one of six IUCN commissions that draw together a network of expert individuals. CEESP is an inter-disciplinary commission, whose mission is to act as a source of expertise on economic and social factors that affect natural resources and biological diversity; to assist in the formulation of policies for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from this use; to contribute to the IUCN programme and mission; and in performing this mission, to establish itself as a central source of guidance, support and expertise on environmental policy.

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Letter from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

IUCN celebrates its 50th anniversary this month. I would like to use this occasion to reflect on the last 50 years and the challenges of the next 50. While these are personal reflections—based on only slightly less than 50 years of life as a Southerner, and somewhat less so as a social scientist, intellectual, and activist—I hope that they will find a resonance among the CEESP community.

Fifty years ago, the environment was a marginal concern. The imagination of the world was consumed by the need to understand the causes and cope with consequences of a global war. The concern for nature as an independent entity was restricted to aristocratic Europeans and middle class Americans. It is useful to recall that then development too was a marginal concern. The modern conception of “development”—i.e. a marker of economic progress—had emerged only three years earlier (in a speech by Harry Truman), and had not yet become the framework for defining North-South relationships, nor the mantra for legitimising all sorts of intervention. The South too was far more marginal than most people remember. It was not yet a political entity. It spoke, if at all, in muted terms, mainly against colonial rule. Although colonialism had produced considerable environmental dislocation in some areas, the region had yet to experience the mass-scale disruption and degradation that we see today. North-South equity was not a serious political issue, except insofar as it served the ends of the cold war.

Many things have changed. While we may quibble about the greater priority given to economic and trade matters, the environmental agenda is no longer marginal. It has acquired a diverse global following, in the North as well as the South, among the pillars of the establishment as well as the fiercest anti-establishment critics. Its political influence extends far beyond nature. It provides the template for most discussions on global governance. By challenging mainstream development it has also challenged conventional notions of national governance. Its emphasis on biological diversity has drawn attention to cultural and political diversity, and thus to the need for strong local governance.

Not all of the above could have been in the minds of IUCN's founders in 1948, but they were remarkably prescient in identifying the threat as well as structuring the response. IUCN was an NGO before such entities became fashionable. Its status as a union of governmental and non-governmental organisations prefigured the growing need for partnership

between the state and civil society. Its commission structure is perhaps the most successful attempt by an organisation to bridge the gulf between science and activism. Finally, at least in its evolving years, it had the flexibility to incorporate into its mission several emerging needs: sustainable development, equity, North-South partnership, and collaborative management.

But there are serious gaps as well as reversals, mostly in areas of importance to CEESP. They provide a clue to the dangers faced by the Union, and I would like to reflect on these for a moment.

As I see it, the real danger is the erosion of the uniqueness that many people find attractive in IUCN—its ability to unite science, policy, and advocacy through a partnership between volunteer experts, activist NGOs, government officials, and a professional secretariat. Such uniqueness requires a careful balancing of different activities and elements. Today the very success of the Union threatens this balance and therefore its uniqueness. IUCN's size, funding considerations, and programmatic imperatives all pressure it to join the corporate world and adopt the textbook operational style of modern corporations.

John Kenneth Galbraith argued in *The New Industrial State*, modern organisations behave at the behest not of their titular owners (the stockholders), but of their technostucture or middle management. Their organising perspective becomes, simply, management or fundraising. They pursue institutional imperatives not fundamental goals. They prefer a safe niche, become resistant to change, and wrap themselves in self-congratulatory complacency. We can see the seeds of the danger already. Will it IUCN gradually become a giant consultancy organisation, acting on behalf of its donors? Will begin to resemble, say General Motors (albeit less efficient than the genuine article)? In the future, will it attract only the kind of people who

are attracted to consultancies or corporations? I am aware of the standard answers to these questions, that IUCN is resisting such pressures, that it uses participatory methods, that it works closely with NGOs, and so on. I fear, however, that admirable though they are, they are not enough. Every large bilateral organisation today pays lip service to such measures, with far from satisfactory results.

This trend has weakened the relationship between the different arms of the Union, especially between the commissions and the secretariat programme. Paradoxically, this has accelerated with the regionalisation of the secretariat. Staff changes have hit especially hard at areas where the links with the commissions were the strongest. In the secretariat, there is a growing inhospitality towards commissions, and repeated questioning of their “value” added. On the other side, many potential commission members ask why they should donate their free time to IUCN. One reason for this alienation, I suspect, is the perception that established corporations do not need networks of volunteers; they need networks of buyers and sellers. Similarly, volunteers do not donate their free time to corporations. They sell their time to them or use it as a form of investment, but their free time they reserve for communities and groups with a mission.

Of special concern in this regard is the patent weakness of the Union in social and economic policy. Indeed, even the limited activity in this area was cut to the bone during the budget revision (and staff retrenchment) of a year ago. There is little interest and little capacity to analyse, for example, the impact

of trade policy or trade trends, or of fiscal measures, the financial crisis, the crisis of governance, poverty, the inequity and injustice within the South or that in the relations between the North and the South. Although they are at the heart of the CEESP agenda, such questions lack a receptive audience in the rest of the Union. A Northern member of the IUCN Council is fond of repeating ad nauseam that social science is not science and should not form the basis of IUCN's work. While this view (apart from being plain silly) is not shared by most others, that fact that such sentiments can even be expressed without significant challenge is an indication of the change.

This has a bearing on Southern issues. Over the years, a distinct form of environmentalism has emerged in the South. It focuses not on the "Noah's Ark" type of concerns of traditional environmentalism, but on sustainable livelihoods, poverty, equity, governance, and justice. The issue—and this was central to the controversy during the 1993 General Assembly in Buenos Aires—is whether IUCN can integrate the two kinds of environmental concerns. To the credit of the Union, it must be said that it has tried in at least three ways: regionalisation, symbolic affirmation in the mission statement, and gradual reorientation of commissions. But the response only highlights the distance that needs to be travelled.

Notwithstanding the desirability of regionalisation—which has vested unprecedented powers in Southern staff members—it is not a panacea. A counter example will suffice here: no one has ever accused the World Bank or the IMF of being sensitive to Southern concerns, despite the proliferation of their regional and country offices. Technostructure-driven systems, oriented towards programme management and fundraising are often not the best vehicles for integration or innovation. Without such integration, mission statements simply remain statements. Lastly, although the commissions have taken great strides in broadening their mandates—note, for example, SSC's programme on sustainable use, or WCPA's initiative in collaborative management—the growing alienation between them and the secretariat-led programme diminishes their effectiveness.

Where does all this leave us? As one who has been involved in IUCN's work for close to a decade, I would be greatly saddened if this trend continues or accelerates. In moments of weakness, I am tempted to say that that if the battle is

already lost, and what was a unique movement has become yet another corporation, effective and efficient as corporations are, but without a heart, then it is time to move on. Then those who are interested in the movement, in the pursuit of a just, sustainable, and prosperous society, and in the vision of an equal partnership between the North and the South, between the scholar and the activist, between the rich and the poor, between the government official and the citizen, and between the community and the outsider should start looking for another home. But I hesitate for two moments before saying so. First, this does not seem to me to be the future that the architects of IUCN had envisaged, else they would not have crafted the elaborate and unique institutional structure that is still with us. Second, this vision of the future is also not shared by many people who define IUCN as a home, and their voice should have the same meaning as those who would take it in a different direction.

Thus, I would like to be able to say that overcoming these gaps and reversing the regression is the IUCN agenda for the next 50 years. It is also the CEESP agenda.

Tariq Banuri

Environment and security - A role for IUCN

(continued from page 1)

Union's interest lies in determining the extent to which conservation of biodiversity, and sustainable and equitable use of natural resources, may be a significant factor in reducing social tensions and avoiding the costly conflicts from which the world has suffered.

It is also important to stress that the notion of security has broadened considerably in the past years. Initially the term was used in its military sense, and referred to the security of borders and national institutions from outside threat.

Research has shown that many of the more intractable threats can be – and increasingly are – internal to frontiers. Further, the notion of security has broadened from borders and national institutions to embrace the security of societies, communities and, in some cases, even individual human security. The debate on the scope of security is to some extent academic, and IUCN has not sought to adopt a binding definition for its own purposes. The Union is interested in security in terms of the stability and sustainability of society and its essential institutions. It is therefore interested in threats to these societies and institutions, whether these threats are external to the country or community, or internal to them. However, expanding the notion of security, as some propose, to embrace the security of person, and to include all factors that present a risk to the individual's sense of security – ill-health, poor education, unemployment, globalisation, etc. – does not seem useful, and certainly leads to watering down the notion of security to the point where it no longer justifies a distinct focus.

The seminar concluded that Environment and Security offers two particular opportunities for the Union. First, it offers a unifying concept around which a number of IUCN activities, whether headquarters-based or operated in the field, might be pulled together,

consolidated and given greater coherence. Second, it opens the way towards new partnerships and alliances which go well beyond IUCN's traditional constituents and appear to offer the opportunity for IUCN to influence society – and therefore achieve its mission – in a more compelling way.

Indeed, environmental thinking has significantly penetrated defence establishments over the

past few years and, in some cases such as the United States and the European Union, the environment is becoming a major focus of foreign policy. Thus to the extent that IUCN can contribute to this field, it would appear to have the opportunity to influence defence and foreign policy and – why not – economic and trade policy as well.

The Jordan River Valley

The legacy of controversy over freshwater in the Jordan River basin region dates back thousands of years. The availability of adequate freshwater supplies is a central factor in the tensions between Israel and the Palestinians. Significant constraints on economic growth exist in certain sectors of national or regional economies due to deterioration of the groundwater supply. Indeed, King Hussein of Jordan has noted water as the only issue that would lead him to go to war with Israel.

Virtually all of Israel's freshwater comes from two sources: surface water supplied by the Jordan River, or groundwater fed by recharge from the West Bank to one of three major aquifers. In the 1950s, there was a proposed comprehensive plan for co-operative use of the Jordan River (the Johnston Plan), but this was derailed by mistrust among the four riparian states (Israel, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria). Each nation has tended to follow its own water policies since the failure of that agreement, often to the detriment of other nations.

On numerous occasions Israel and its neighbouring Arab states have feuded over access to Jordan River waters. This may have been a major contributing factor in the tensions leading to the 1967 War. At the time, Israel was consuming almost all of its available freshwater supplies. Occupation of the West Bank, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip after the war changed this situation by: (1) increasing the freshwater available to Israel by almost 50% and (2) giving the country almost total control over the headwaters of the Jordan River and its tributaries and over the major recharge region for its underground aquifers.

Israel's average annual supply of renewable freshwater is about 1,950 million cubic meters. Current Israeli demand exceeds this supply by about ten percent. Over-pumping aquifers covers the deficit, causing water tables to drop. This may lead to exhaustion of wells and the infiltration of sea water. Projected population growth in the next thirty years, even without major immigration from the former Soviet Union, will cause the country's water demand to outstrip supply by at least forty percent. Presently, Israel draws over forty percent of its freshwater supplies from the West Bank alone, and the country would face immediate water shortages and a significant curtailment of its agricultural and industrial development if it lost control of these supplies. Former Israeli agricultural minister Rafael Eitan stated in November of 1990 that Israel must never relinquish the West Bank because a loss of its water supplies would "threaten the Jewish State."

To protect this important source, the Israeli government strictly limits water use by Jewish settlers and Arabs on the West Bank. But there is a stark differential in water access between the groups: only 4.5% of West Bank water is used by Palestinians, while 95.5% is used by Israelis. However, the population is over 90% Palestinian. Israel restricts the number of wells Arabs can drill in the territory, the amount of water Arabs are allowed to pump, and the times at which they can draw irrigation water. Since 1967, Arabs have not been permitted to drill new wells for agricultural purposes, although the Israeli water company has drilled more than thirty wells for settlers' irrigation. Furthermore, some Arab wells have become dry or saline as a result of deeper Israeli wells drilled nearby.

These Israeli water policies, combined with the confiscation of agricultural land for settlers and other Israeli restrictions on Palestinian agriculture, have encouraged many West Bank Arabs to abandon farming and move to towns. Those who have done so have mostly become either unemployed or day labourers within Israel. The links between these processes and the unrest in the occupied territories are unclear; many political, economic, and ideological factors operate. But it seems reasonable to conclude that water scarcity and its consequent economic effects contributed to the grievances behind the intifada both on the West Bank and in Gaza.

The downside

There are, of course, dangers. Particularly in the developing world, there are serious doubts about the motivation of military establishments in embracing environmental causes. There is a strong and sometimes justified suspicion that the military wish to justify their privileged access to national budgets even after the Cold War threat has receded. Further, there is a suspicion that military and intelligence communities are looking for fresh excuses to intervene in the affairs of other countries, particularly in the South. And, finally, there is a fear that security considerations will come to be used as a new form of aid conditionality. These suspicions are real and must be addressed.

From the review of the field undertaken for OECD it is clear that rarely (if ever) can a direct and immediate causal link between environmental degradation and conflict be drawn. Scarcity, pressure on resources and access to environmental goods are factors which contribute to conflict only when matched with other factors. Often, these other factors are more significant than the environmental ones in determining whether and when conflict will eventually break out. However, this should not minimise the link between Environment and Security. Sometimes, the environmental factor seems to be the final trigger for conflict. In other cases, the non-environmental factors may be very difficult to address, whereas the scope for intervention on the environment side appears more promising.

A niche for IUCN

The link between Environment and Security now rests on a reasonably solid empirical base and a number of serious research projects have established the link between environment, social tension and conflict. There is, however, a great deal that still needs to be done. Among the significant gaps is the imbalance in the research and case material between developed and developing countries. The research

The Senegal-Mauritania Conflict

The Senegal River valley demarcates the border between Senegal and Mauritania in West Africa. Senegal has fairly abundant agricultural land, but much of it suffers from wind and water erosion, nutrient loss, salinisation, and soil compaction from intensification of agriculture. The overall population density is 38 people per square kilometre with a population growth rate of 2.8 percent – in 25 years the population will double. In contrast, except for the Senegal Valley along its southern border and a few oases, Mauritania is largely arid desert and semi-arid grassland. Its population density is only about 2 people per square kilometre with a growth rate of 2.9 percent. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) included both Mauritania and Senegal in their list of “critical” countries whose croplands cannot support current and projected populations without large increases in agricultural inputs.

Normally, the broad floodplains fringing the Senegal River support productive farming, herding, and fishing based on the river’s annual floods. During the 1970s, however, the prospect of chronic food shortages and a serious drought encouraged the region’s governments to seek international financing for the Manantali Dam on the Bafing River tributary in Mali, and the Diama salt-intrusion barrage near the mouth of the Senegal River between Senegal and Mauritania. These dams were designed to regulate the river’s flow to produce hydropower, expand irrigated agriculture, and provide river transport from the Atlantic Ocean to landlocked Mali.

However, anticipation of the new dams sharply increased land values along the river in areas where high-intensity agriculture would become feasible. The elite in Mauritania, mainly of white Moors, rewrote legislation governing land ownership, effectively abrogating the rights of black Africans to continue farming, herding, and fishing along the Mauritanian riverbank.

There is a long history of racism by white Moors in Mauritania towards their non-Arab, black compatriots. In the spring of 1989, the killing of Senegalese farmers by Mauritians in the river basin triggered explosions of ethnic violence in the two countries. In Senegal, almost all of the 17,000 shops owned by Moors were destroyed, and their owners were deported to Mauritania. In both countries several hundred people were killed, and the two nations nearly came to war. The Mauritanian regime used this occasion to activate the new land legislation, declaring the Mauritians who lived alongside the river to be “Senegalese”, stripping them of their citizenship and seizing their property. Some 70,000 of the black Mauritians were forcibly expelled to Senegal, from where some launched raids to retrieve expropriated cattle. Diplomatic relations between the two countries have now been restored, but neither has agreed to allow the expelled population to return or to compensate them for their losses.

Here two sources of human-induced environmental scarcity interacted: degradation of the land resource and population pressures helped precipitate agricultural shortfalls, which in turn encouraged a large development scheme. These factors together raised land values in one of the few areas in either country that offered the potential for a rapid move to high-intensity agriculture. A powerful elite then changed property rights and resource distribution in its own favour, which produced a sudden increase in resource scarcity for an ethnic minority, expulsion of the minority, and ethnic violence.

to date has been dominated by institutions and individuals in North America and Western Europe. Much more needs to be done to understand the perspective of Southern partners and to gather examples, case material and best practice from real situations in the field.

This concern is not ideologically motivated. There are real differences in the role of the security establishments – most prominently the military – between different countries and regions, and the role of defence and intelligence agencies in society varies enormously. Research based mostly in North America and

the European Union cannot fail to be influenced by assumptions which arise from their particular context. The role of technology in the security establishment is another important distinguishing feature, as is the robustness of democratic institutions, or the existence of traditional conflict management mechanisms. It is not sufficient to study cases in the developing world from the perspective of the North. Research based in the developing world must complement the excellent work which characterises the field at present.

A second requirement is to strengthen the involvement of Non-Governmental Organisations and the private sector in the Environment and Security field, dominated to date by university-based researchers and government projects. The rich experience of hundreds of NGOs working in the environment or humanitarian aid fields must somehow be harnessed to our efforts to understand the role and interaction of the different factors that lead to conflict. It was very enriching, at the IUCN workshop, to hear from the Director of the OECD Club du Sahel. His decades of experience on the ground in Africa offered a perspective which no amount of empirical number-crunching could have afforded.

The same is true of the private sector. Corporations are well used to assessing risk – it is, indeed, their bread and butter. The instability of institutions and the risk of conflict are major considerations in evaluating potential investments in developing countries. It would appear worthwhile to engage interested corporations in looking at the role of environmental management in reducing these risks. An initiative in this area may be proposed to the IUCN Private Sector Advisory Group.

And, finally, there is a need to understand mechanisms which communities have traditionally used to avoid conflict over resources, to gather best practice in this area, and to make it more readily available to the community working on conflict resolution. Of particular interest are cases where, despite all the ingredients for conflict being present, conflict was in fact avoided. The mechanisms of this conflict avoidance should be examined closely. With its vast network of members and its Regional and Country programmes, IUCN is ideally-placed to gather and assess this material.

IUCN will launch an initiative on Environment and Security involving both Headquarters and Regional and Country Programmes, and the voluntary networks – most prominently CEESP. CEESP proposes to establish a Task Force on Environment and Security, including experts from North and South, to support this effort. Should the initiative develop as expected, the Task Force could well become an established Working Group of the Commission. IUCN is particularly interested in identifying and recruiting to the Task Force selected experts from developing countries as well as developed country experts with extensive field experience in the South.

The three authors of the IUCN study for OECD – Steve Loneragan of the University of Victoria, British Columbia; Richard Matthew of the University of California at Irvine; and Geoff Dabelko of the Woodrow Wilson Centre, Smithsonian Institution, will be invited to join, as will a number of prominent authorities already well-established in this field. Any CEESP member interested in joining the Task Force, or wishing to recommend candidates for it, is invited to contact Mark Halle care of the CEESP Secretariat.

Mark Halle is senior adviser to the Chair of CEESP

For a copy of the Executive Summary of the OECD Report, please contact: Catherine McCloskey, CEESP Secretariat; email: catherine.mccloskey@iied.org

Human and environmental security

Tariq Banuri

In thinking about the theme of this issue of *Policy Matters*, environmental security, I am reminded of a seminar I attended a few years ago on the relationship between television violence and social violence. A speaker presented the results of a study that compared the behaviour of two groups of young people after seeing a violent and non-violent movie respectively. Both groups of participants were given a long questionnaire to complete at the end of the movie, after which they were sent to another part of the building to collect radios as rewards for their participation. There, a clerk (sitting behind a grilled window) informed them that they had run out of radios. The researcher reported that while all participants expressed their anger and frustration, those who had just seen the violent movie became more violent. The discussion period following the lecture was mostly desultory - questioners restricted themselves to technical or methodological questions - until one member of the audience asked a question that completely transformed the issue. The questioner said that the research raised another question that was far more significant than the proximate relation between violence and television, namely that the cause of violence was injustice. In the present case, the underlying reason for the violence was not what the participants had viewed on the screen but what they experienced in person - the renegeing by organisers on their promise to give radios to participants.

It is important to keep this larger dimension in mind as we look at the evidence, reported by Mark Halle in the accompanying article, that many violent conflicts have environmental causes. There is now little doubt that environmental degradation and resource scarcity are associated with conflict, violence and insecurity—although the precise causal links are hard to establish in the real world. It is not, however, correct to deduce from this that conflicts are caused by a simple technical relationship between diminishing resources and escalating claims. For the causes, we have to look elsewhere, in particular at persistent inequities in access to these resources, and the inability or unwillingness of societies to handle emerging scarcity in a just and equitable manner. Behind this incapacity lie governance-related factors: the weakness and steady erosion in social institutions, a selective (to be charitable) commitment to justice, and an acute and growing awareness among people of current and past inequities.

It is useful to recall also that the insecurity produced by resource degradation, conflict, and violence, is part of a

broader syndrome of insecurity. Indeed, insecurity, i.e. a heightened exposure to want, deprivation or violence—has become a stylised fact of contemporary life. Increasing numbers are exposed to economic, political, or environmental crises, especially in what is euphemistically called the “developing world”—a category that for most practical purposes now includes the former socialist countries.

This is a paradoxical trend for an age of unprecedented economic prosperity and growth. “Development”, “Modernisation”, “the Conquest of Nature” and other ambitious ways of describing the modern project all held out the hope of increased human control, a hope that has turned out to be a mirage for all but a small minority. On the contrary, people increasingly find themselves subject to the whims of arbitrary natural or economic forces, and to the tyranny of equally arbitrary organised groups. Global (and growing) economic instability coupled with persistent poverty, endemic civil war, governmental corruption and oppression, and the emergence of organised crime groups in large parts of the world complements the insecurity created by resource degradation.

The above is not intended to expand the list of issues to be covered under environmental security. Nor is the intention to engage in esoteric debates or explore every issue thrown up by such debates. The purpose rather is to provide an additional means of focusing the CEESP agenda. The IUCN workshop on environmental security suggested two eminently reasonable goals for this activity. First, to bolster the advocacy of IUCN’s mission—the conservation of biodiversity and the equitable and sustainable use of natural resources—by showing that besides being intrinsically desirable it can also help reduce social tension and conflict. Second, to this end, to try to influence economic, defence and foreign policies of countries, instead of restricting attention to conservation programmes and policies alone. The purpose of this note is to provide an additional prism for undertaking these tasks.

My argument is that in the so-called developing world, many of the causes of human insecurity can be traced back to the ideology of mainstream development. Without a radical transformation in the approach to development, neither conservation nor security is achievable.

Proximate causes of insecurity

We will return to the narrow focus of the exercise shortly. However, it is important to keep the broader perspective in view. Human insecurity today is caused not only by wars and conflict, or by loss of access to natural resources, but by a range of factors. It has many proximate causes, including political or military conflicts, environmental degradation, and economic turbulence caused by systemic or policy factors. All have been endemic in the recent period. In the half century following the second World War, there have been at least 160 wars, involving over 7 million military casualties, over 30 million civilian casualties, and uncounted incidents of injury, torture, rape, dislocation and loss of economic livelihood. In the same period, there has also been a massive proliferation of civic and political conflicts, mob action, torture by state authorities, the use of oppressive laws, and of course common forms of violent crime—murder, armed robbery, rape, and assault. People can still remember when it was safe to walk the streets of New York City, Rio de Janeiro, Nairobi, or Lagos, or to travel overland in Asia, Africa, or Latin America.

Another cause is economic instability of which we have seen dramatic

examples in the last six months. It is the product of economic globalisation and its underlying ideology. Financial globalisation especially has resurrected the business cycle in a virulent form, enabling it to spread from country to country and region to region, dramatically enhancing its speed as well as reach. The same ideology has sustained recurrent episodes of structural adjustment and liberalisation, which has subjected vulnerable communities and groups to unpredictable cycles of fiscal largesse and strangulation. The result of all this is the erosion of the assets and livelihood bases of millions, especially the poor and the most vulnerable, in Russia, Southeast Asia, and Latin America. The growth in the global economy has failed to eradicate poverty, inequality, or unemployment.

This ideology has supported an aggressive development programme, which sought to pursue economic growth at the expense of human and social well-being. Among other effects, this programme has been responsible for the displacement and expropriation of large numbers of people to make way for development projects.

Accompanying the development process virtually everywhere is environmental degradation. Resource depletion, environmental degradation, industrial pollution, and urban congestion undermine the quality of life, lower productivity, reduce incomes, and consequently, create and exacerbate conflict. While irresponsible industrial systems are associated with recurring human-made disasters - toxic spills, industrial or nuclear accidents - natural resource degradation and possible climatic change have increased the frequency and destructive impact of natural disasters - floods, hurricanes, cyclones, landslides, and earthquakes.

Underlying causes of insecurity

I would summarise my view of the relationship between human security and development in five broad propositions.

First, insecurity is a structural condition of our times. It is not an aberration restricted to poor countries or selected areas or limited episodes. It defines the nature of existence in the modern world. In terms of their effect on human security, there is a symmetry between extreme events (loss of lives and livelihoods), deforestation (withdrawal of access to food

and fodder), development projects (dislocation resulting in the destruction of cultures and communities), the business cycle (loss of employment and assets), civil war (whether or not precipitated by environmental degradation), and the random terror of mafias, terrorists, or street criminals.

Second, insecurity is the leading cause of violence. Insecurity produces paranoia (which is also a structural condition of our times) which leads to violence—against society, against others (minorities, women), against nature, and against oneself. Paranoid societies erect social, cultural, and legal barriers to exclude others. They create elaborate justifications for unprovoked and unfettered violence. Fear of expropriation leads communities and individuals to destroy the environment on which their livelihoods depend. Fear of cultural domination leads to violence against the weak and vulnerable in one's own midst. Fear of failure leads to violence against one's own body and psyche.

Third, conventional responses to insecurity create further insecurity. Fear of expropriation leads to neglect of and violence towards natural resources. Fear of unemployment creates hatred for immigrants. Fear of cultural domination leads to a refuge in militant and oppressive ideologies. Fear of terrorism creates justifications for random attacks on other countries as well as compatriots.

Fourth, an important source of injustice in the South is conventional development. Development is associated with an onslaught on nature as well as society, and has served to legitimise injustice and irresponsibility. It provides an incentive to switch to an organised mode of existence from one that might have been in greater harmony with natural rhythms. It facilitated the expropriation of the rights of "backward" and vulnerable communities. It has given a justification to all forms of governmental regimes to use state power aggressively. Finally, it has created a social role for "out-

siders" regardless of their political or cultural commitment to the communities in which they work.

The model of development inherited by poor countries from the colonial period was one of opening up natural resources for the interplay of market forces. This model was created, as a leading development economist, Gerald Meier, puts it, "by colonial economics out of political expediency". However, whereas colonial economics aimed to wrest natural resources from people in other countries, development economics could only help developing countries expropriate their own populations, especially those in the rural hinterland. The economic prospects of countries were often measured in terms of the economic hinterland available for exploitation.

This strategy would have been difficult to implement if economic and political power were not concentrated in a centralised state. The result is the almost universal experience in the South of centralisation and concentration of powers in the hands of proto-technocratic elites. Ironically, it is precisely in the South that the societal capacity for controlling centralised power is the weakest.

Development also provides a clear legitimisation of the role of the outsider without the safeguards of accountability of responsibility. The outsider in this context might be a distant bureaucrat from the capital city, a development banker or aid worker, or an expatriate consultant or banker. The primary commitment of all of these is to their expertise and to their reference group or intellectual community, rather than to the community that is supposed to

benefit from their actions. In democratically functioning societies, the legitimacy of all such individuals would be subject to a review of performance. In Southern, post-colonial societies, however, such legitimacy is taken as given because of the unquestioned belief in development.

Finally, development involves a preference for impersonality and discontinuity. Built into this approach was a drive towards an organised existence. Large organisations could mobilise large bodies of people more readily, and thus take advantage of the opportunities being thrown up by the development process. This provides an incentive for instrumental thinking, building large-scale organisations, and a drive to control people as well as resources. It severs the organic link between the civil society and the state, between custom and law, between education and training, between the informal and the formal sectors, and between the past and the future. It destroys bridges between different parts of society, between communities, between genders, and between identities. At the same time, it undermines the value of spontaneity, idleness, and diversity, and indeed challenge the legitimacy of non-instrumental or romantic outlooks on life. It produces a reified form of politics that oppresses and cannot emancipate.

All this has not gone unchallenged. It has in fact produced its own nemesis in the form of increasingly intransigent and violent reactions to the hegemony of instrumentalism. As the philosopher James Carse has put it, "The more power we exert over the natural process, the more powerless we become before it. In a matter of months, we can tear down a rainforest that took tens of thousands of years to grow. But we are helpless in repulsing the desert that takes its place. And the desert is no less natural than the forest". Carse could have used the same words to describe our relationship to the social environment. In a matter of months we can destroy the fabric of a peaceful society that took hundreds of years to grow. But we are powerless in repulsing the social desert that takes its place. The most peaceful places on earth - in Asia alone the mind immediately thinks of Sri Lanka, Karachi, Kashmir, Indo China - have become the most violent.

The result is a social transformation that can hardly be termed progress. It is an experience of the expropriation of the customary rights of local communities, and the deliberate destruction of local forms of governance. Not surprisingly, it

has led to the gravitation of the population towards centres of power, from rural to urban areas, from towns to metropolitan centres, and from the south to the north. It has led to the abandonment of responsibility towards the countryside. On the one hand, this has produced the degradation of the natural environment. On the other hand, the over burdening of centralised national institutions and the erosion of decentralised local institutions has destroyed the very means of protecting and nurturing this environment. This casual violence against nature is mirrored in the legitimisation of injustice against the poor and the vulnerable. The erosion of systems of governance is equally responsible for sustaining and permitting the expanding circle of injustice. Today, society generally, and the security of humans especially, is at far greater risk from this expanding circle of injustice than from military conflict.

If the above reflections strike a resonant chord amongst social observers in developing countries, it is probably because the greatest threat to us today comes from the expansion of injustice. It is this that we must fear and address, not some mythical concept, such as underdevelopment. This means that the response to the current crisis must start with the strengthening of governance, especially in urban areas, with some measure of decentralisation and restoration of local self-governance, with the revamping of judicial institutions and judicial processes, with cultural processes that help build bridges between divided identities and polarised ideologies, and with what can only be called social therapy to help overcome a long love affair with development. In the end, it is these indirect measures, intangible as they might appear, that will turn out to be important in the struggle for the creation of a good society—perhaps even more important than the tangible remedies proposed by more practical people.

The main argument of this essay was first published in *Slums, Security and Shelter*, SDPI publication, 1997.

Biodiversity, Mercantilism and Globalisation

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Andrea Bagri and Frank Vorhies

Note: This article is no more than a thought piece and does not necessarily reflect the views of the IUCN Secretariat, Commissions or Members.

One of the major forces impacting on the status of biodiversity is globalisation. This short article presents a preliminary vision of the interface between globalisation and biodiversity and highlights why the globalisation phenomenon is of critical importance to IUCN.

Biodiversity is both a scientific concept and a political concept. The political concept of biodiversity is particularly relevant to globalisation as it deals with the interface between the ecological, economic and social structures that are the core components of the globalisation process. Biodiversity is about control over and access to biological resources. It is about power over the planet's living natural resources. Biodiversity as a political concept is essentially a global security agenda with a core trinity of objectives:

- ecological security (biodiversity conservation),
- economic security (sustainable use), and
- social security (equitable benefit sharing).

The driving force behind the politics of biodiversity is ecological security. Globalisation contains these same three elements, but the driving force behind globalisation is economics. Development also contains the same three elements, but in this case the driving force is social. Hence the interface between biodiversity and globalisation is essentially about the relationships between ecological security and economic security.

Globalisation is fundamentally an economic phenomenon. Yes, there are technological aspects of globalisation – the rapidly developing global information and transportation networks, as well as energy aspects – readily affordable and abundant petroleum supplies. These aspects lower the costs of globalisation by lowering the costs of supplying goods and services, but the forces behind these supply-side aspects are fundamentally economic. Such supply side aspects of globalisation have been made possible by the global acceptance of a particular economic development path – the market economy. The essence of globalisation is the ascendancy of the global market economy.

Though the market economy has had and always will have shortcomings, traditional socialist alternatives are no longer

an option. Despite continued concerns about the failures of markets as well as the failures of governments, virtually all political parties, from the new Labour Party of the UK to the African National Congress of South Africa to the Communist Party of China, fully accept that the basis of any economy is the market. Additionally, the market is now recognised as a transnational, global phenomenon.

Modern economic policy debates today centre around the role of markets to address government failures and the role of governments to address market failures. In this context, support for politically-administered or “mercantilist” economies remains strong in many national and international institutions and is particularly relevant to IUCN's area of work.

Mercantilism was the economic system of the European colonial powers. The Portuguese, Spanish, British and French brought this system of politically-managed markets to their colonies in the Americas, Africa, and Asia. Mercantilist elements remain today in many of the national structures of these former colonies as well as in the approaches of multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank Group, the United Nations, and the World Trade Organisation. The Peruvian economist, Hernando de Soto, defines mercantilism as follows:

“Mercantilism was a politically administered economy in which economic agents were subject to specific, detailed regulation. The mercantilist state did not let consumers decide what should be produced; it reserved to itself the right to single out and promote whichever economic activities it considered desirable and to prohibit those which it considered inappropriate. ...To achieve its objectives, the mercantilist state granted privileges to favoured producers and consumers by means of regulations, subsidies, taxes and licences.”

At a global level, the topic of market failures versus government failures is closely related to

the topic of market economies versus mercantilist economies. While globalisation has emerged from the ascendancy of the markets, mercantilist approaches remain widespread in terms of internationally agreed rules for international trade, environmental protection and human rights. They also remain at the national level as evidenced by the attempts of governments to maintain economic control through central banking, national transport systems, national communication systems, national energy systems, and even national systems of protected areas.

Both market-based and mercantilist approaches impact on biodiversity as they govern the way biodiversity is managed. Nature conservation and the management of natural resources harvesting practices, such as forestry and fisheries, however, have traditionally been the responsibility of government agencies. Government conservation agencies, for a number of reasons, have almost universally preferred to rely on administrative procedures and regulatory instruments rather than market processes and economic incentives, and have thus remained true to the mercantilist paradigm.

This preference for government control over nature and natural resources is rooted in the development of the modern nation state. In earlier days, monarchs put much effort into searching for new resources and securing control over the natural resources of their kingdoms. With the emergence of the nation state, national governments – even in market-based countries like the United States – maintained strong national control over natural resources. Thus today in the face of

the "marketisation" of most sectors of the economy, management of nature and natural resources continues to be dominated by mercantilist, regulatory systems.

With the ascendancy of the market economy, there is now increasing pressure for governments to "privatise" nature and to turn the conservation and utilisation of natural resources over to market forces. At the global level, this pressure is evidenced in the potential conflicts between the rules of international trade administered by the World Trade Organisation and the objectives of the biodiversity-related conventions. At the national level, this is reflected in pressures to ensure that protected areas "pay for themselves" and in the pressures to commercialise access to and management of nature.

The conservation community, with its long history of reliance on and use of the mercantilist structures of government, is currently ill-equipped to deal with pressures for commercialising or privatising biodiversity. Further, many market-based approaches to biodiversity conservation remain untested and indeed may not work. Hence, there is both a critical need to strengthen the business acumen of the conservation community and to develop precautionary approaches to the marketisation of nature. In this respect, IUCN has a unique opportunity and responsibility to take the lead in building the capacity of the conservation community represented in its Commissions and Membership to understand and address the forces of globalisation. It would seem that this is a matter of particular importance to CEESP.

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CEESP presence at GBF in Buenos Aires

Biodiversity, Climate Change and Finance GBF 11, Buenos Aires, 6-8 November 1998

The conventions on biodiversity and climate change are linked in part through the use of GEF as their financial mechanism. The GEF has an important and clearly defined role to play in financing the incremental costs of country-driven projects that provide global environmental benefits in the context of both conventions. Additional financial innovations, however, are needed to implement these conventions. For biodiversity, some ideas for new approaches to finance were generated at the GBF 10 workshop held last May in Bratislava. For climate change, the Kyoto Protocol calls for the creation of several new market-based mechanisms.

A workshop organised by the Economics Service Unit of IUCN in close collaboration with CEESP will explore the possibility of developing financial mechanisms and tools that support the objectives of both the Climate Convention and the Biodiversity Convention. Divided into three sessions, the workshop will consider the linkages between the energy sector and conservation; the role of the private sector; and innovative financing for climate change and biodiversity. Speakers include Atiq Rahman of BCAS, Bangladesh and a member of the Ring; Anil Agarwal of the Centre for Science and Environment, India; Ross Gelbspan of WEMP; Mark Trexler, with representation from Shell International; UNIDO, the Biodiversity Development Institute of Nigeria and CIEM.

This is one of four workshops taking place during GBF 11 whose over-arching theme is the synergy between the UNFCCC and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Others include Forests in the Climate Change Agenda; and Co-ordinating National Strategies and Action Plans under the UNFCCC, the CBD, and the Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); and Sustainable Use and Climate Change.

The purpose of the GBF

GBF II will be convened during the 4th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 2-13 November. The Global Biodiversity Forum provides an independent, open and strategic mechanism to foster analysis, dialogue and debate among all interested parties to address significant ecological, economic, institutional and social issues related to the options for action to conserve biodiversity, and use biological resources sustainably and equitably. It is designed to contribute to the further development and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biodiversity-related instruments at the international, regional and national levels. It complements intergovernmental processes by: providing a broad spectrum of perspectives, proposals and experiences from all stakeholders; building diverse partnerships among stakeholders (including governments, indigenous groups, local communities, NGOs and the private sector); and providing an impetus to key issues that require further development and attention.

A full report of the workshop will follow in the next issue of Policy Matters.

For full details visit the website <http://www.economics.iucn.org/98-09-00.htm>

Critical remarks on “Environmental Security”

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Matthias Finger

Words are not neutral. This is especially so in the case of newly created words which connect things that were not traditionally considered to be linked. “Environmental security” is such a concept. I would like to argue here that environmental security is not just an inappropriate combination of words. It is moreover a dangerous concept, a concept that is wrong, and probably ultimately counterproductive.

Linking the unrelated

Let us be clear: environmental security is not an isolated concept. Rather, it is part of a much larger trend which consists of *extending the term* “security” to more or less everything. In particular, security is extended (downwards) from the security of nations to the security of groups and individuals, (upwards) from the security of nations to the security of the international system, and (horizontally) from military to political to economic to social and ultimately to environmental security. As a result, we observe, especially since the 1980s, the emergence of concepts such as “Common Security” (Palme Report, 1982), “World Security”, “Human Security” (UNDP, 1994), “Food Security” (FAO), and “Environmental Security” (UN General Assembly, 1987).

It is worthwhile noting that all these terms are promoted by two fundamental types of players: the UN on the one hand, and the traditional “*security community*”, composed of “cold warriors” and international relations academics on the other. All these find an interest and a new legitimacy for their activities by extending and redefining the word security, and this at a time when traditional security considerations have been made obsolete because of the end of the Cold War. In other words, this extension of the word security is probably also related to a strategy of maintaining Cold War institutions and interests.

More precisely, and within this Cold War framework, *environmental security* came to be defined during the 1980s as the threat posed by global environmental problems to State and individual security. However, filtered as they are by the security people, these global environmental problems, such as climate change, deforestation, desertification, and so on are said to affect humans only indirectly: environmental change exacerbates population pressure, migration, and social conflict, and thus poses a serious threat to individuals and States alike. As such environmental security, like human security and common security, is one of those concepts that deliberately promotes a naive perception of the State. It is a

perception which leads people to believe that the interests of the State are identical to their own. Or, in other words, it promotes the belief that the State is still the answer to their “security” problems.

Instead, I would like to argue that the opposite is the case: the *State* through its way of addressing environmental issues and problems might itself have become a threat to the individual’s security. And the term environmental security is only exacerbating that threat.

“Liaison dangereuse”

Linking the environment to security is dangerous. It leads one to believe that it is possible to develop a safe space through technology and organisational efforts, which will protect us from environmental threats. In addition, the concept can make one believe that environmental threats, like all other threats to security, can be fought against, if need be by *military* means. This is especially the case if environmental threats, as “environmental security specialists” argue, take the form of population “movements” or conflict over “environmental resources”. And if such environmental security threats are not directly “solved” by military means, they will most likely be addressed by techno-fixes and large-scale operations, preferably organised in a military-style, top-down managerial manner. As such, the term environmental security not only tends to justify national protectionism against immigration, but moreover military-type technological developments, such as new super-missiles to fight the ozone hole. Furthermore, the “friend-enemy” distinction, essential to the idea of security, clouds our understanding of the root causes of our environmental crises, which are not “out there” to be fought against, but rather “in here” as they pertain to issues of industrial culture and (post) modern life-style.

Environmental security salves our conscience by allowing us to externalise the problem, and

thus, once again, to delegate its solution to the experts and the “powers that be”, and is just another step in the process of removing responsibility from individuals and communities.

Counter-productive

Though many would agree that the concept of environmental security has been used by security specialists and UN agencies for the sake of their own institutional survival with all the concomitant risks of militarisation and confusion of causes and effects, as described above, they would nevertheless stick with the term for pedagogical reasons, arguing that it has the potential to place environmental issues higher on the priority list, mainly by *dramatising* them. If one can define environmental issues and problems as threats to individuals, States, and Humanity, they argue, then there is a chance that attention is being paid to them.

I will not deny that the media love to portray social strife over water resources which have become rare as a result of drought and over-consumption. Nevertheless, stigmatising the environment as a threat and addressing it accordingly, i.e. by means of *high-tech fire-fighting operations* organised in a military manner, will not solve the problems. At worst, it will further disempower people and communities from collectively addressing the underlying causes through a long-term participatory process.

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DISCUSSION

Some cautionary notes on linking population and the environment

Betsy Hartmann

The following observations are offered as discussion points, and are not based on research on actual integrated population and environment projects in the field.

No doubt these differ in philosophy and impact, depending on the sponsoring institution, project personnel, and national and local power structures. Moreover, good projects sometimes result even if the underlying ideology is problematic. Nevertheless, it is important to identify and examine the basic assumptions behind linking population and the environment because as the history of population programmes amply reveals, neo-Malthusianism has done much to distort the delivery of health and family planning services, as well as to scapegoat the poor.¹

Demographic factors, such as migration, spatial densities, age and gender distributions, can clearly have environmental impacts, but framing them in terms of the relationship between population and the environment risks falling into the neo-Malthusian trap. Viewed through a neo-Malthusian lens, 'population' is typically read as population growth, and population growth in turn is blamed disproportionately for land degradation, water scarcity, biodiversity loss, etc. This is especially true in the U.S. where the mainstream environmental movement is closely linked to the population lobby in a marriage of both ideology and convenience. I would prefer to see demographic issues desegregated, analysed in a context-specific manner, and taken outside of the old neo-Malthusian paradigm.

Population and environment projects also risk reinforcing certain gender stereotypes. As Cecile Jackson has pointed out, many sustainable development projects typically rest "upon a stylised gender division of labour in which women are responsible for all reproductive labour, food production, domestic labour, child-rearing, community and natural resource management, and in which men monopolise cash cropping and market-oriented production."² This is a dangerous stereotype since rural women are automatically assumed to want to contribute unpaid labor to conservation management. Projects target them as 'resource managers', adding to their workloads without giving them real rights over resources, as well as target their fertility through population control programmes. The larger political economy, as well as the political economy of women's access to productive assets and social power, is too often left out of the picture. (As are differences between women, and between specific locales.) More generally in development circles, the trend

has been to try to improve women's efficiency so that they can more effectively 'manage' austerity.

In terms of the actual family planning and health services provided by population and environment projects, several questions need to be asked. How broad are the services delivered, and do they guarantee real freedom of choice in terms of contraceptives and access to the necessary health back-up to ensure their safe use? Do they support, rather than substitute for, the development of comprehensive primary health care services in the region?

The latter question is relevant because over the past several decades, the population control imperative of international agencies and governments has done much to undermine and defund primary health care services in many countries so that contraceptives may be available at the local clinic but not basic medicines. In India and Bangladesh, for example, population control absorbs from one-quarter to one-third of the annual health budget; in Indonesia there are almost twice as many family planning clinics as primary health care centres.³

This trend needs to be opposed, especially given the decimation of many public health systems as a result of structural adjustment. After the 1994 UN population conference in Cairo, more attention has been placed on the need to integrate family planning with broader reproductive health services, but progress is uneven and slow, and the focus on reproductive health also begs the question of women's health needs during their entire life cycle. I am not arguing here against family planning — clearly, many women, and men, want and need access to safe birth control — but it is critical that services be safe, ethical and part of more comprehensive health care.

Last but not least, too often the 'population and environment' paradigm tends to view human environmental impact as largely negative.

Peasant agriculture, for example, is seen as destroying biodiversity, when it can serve to protect it, as with the case of traditional maize cultivation in Mexico which has preserved and expanded genetic diversity in corn. Whether or not humans have a negative impact on the environment depends much less on numbers than on systems of resource use and of course political and economic institutions. Demographic factors do matter, but it is impossible to isolate them from these other forces and the attempt to do so always risks falling into the neo-Malthusian trap.

Betsy Hartmann is Director of the Population and Development Program at Hampshire College in Amherst, MA, USA, and a co-coordinator of the Committee on Women, Population and the Environment. She is the author of Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control (Boston: South End Press, 1995) and co-author of A Quiet Violence: View from a Bangladesh Village (London: Zed Books, 1983).

¹. See, for example, Betsy Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs: The Global Politics of Population Control*, Boston: South End Press, 1995; and Sonia Correa, *Population and Reproductive Rights: Perspectives from the South*, London: Zed Books, 1994.

². Cecile Jackson, "Gender Analysis and Environmentalisms," in M. Redcliff and T. Benton, eds., *Social Theory and the Global Environment*, London: Routledge, 1994, p. 120.

³. See Hartmann, *Reproductive Rights and Wrongs*.

CEESP working groups

Collaborative Management

Collaborative Management

Information System

The collaborative management information system project proposal that the Social Policy Group has been working on aims to strengthen and stimulate existing networks and set up an efficient information system for organisations and professionals involved in collaborative management of natural resources. By providing the right tools the project aims to support local people's efforts to improve their living conditions through sustainable resource use and more equitable access to natural resources, while contributing to biodiversity conservation.

The field practitioners approached by Gabriella Richardson at an International Workshop on Community-Based Natural Resources Management organised by the World Bank in May, expressed a strong need for the information management facilities and the materials SPG is proposing: communications facilities for networks; Internet resources, including documents, newsletter, on-line database etc; a database on CD ROM or to be downloaded (can be complemented with any sort of data on organisations, projects, documents, persons etc); Internet based tools for tracking of projects/observations sites; and a topical resource centre at IUCN HQ.

SPG is currently looking for partners to open up new avenues for communication and information exchange, to get into contact with interesting field initiatives and other sources of relevant and high quality information, and to secure funding for the collaborative management information system.

Calls for members to let SPG know of any regional networks dealing with co-management of natural resources SPG may not know about e.g. concrete CM initiatives; need to know about potential donors - already dealing with Ford Foundation; World Bank; IDRC; USAID.

Project co-ordinator, Petr Tengler pet@hq.iucn.org

Economic Policy

Meeting of Environmental Economics Networks in early 1999

The Economics Policy Working Group of CEESP plans to convene a meeting of environmental economics networks in early 1999. This is part of a scoping exercise looking at such issues as

- improving links between the networks;
- how environmental economics networks can assist the IUCN membership (and vice versa);
- defining common thematic priorities within the IUCN mission;
- brainstorming new joint initiatives on biodiversity economics, etc.

It is hoped that the meeting will include the co-ordinators of a number of existing or emerging environmental economics networks at regional and perhaps also national levels. For further information contact: Catherine McCloskey, see page 2 for contact details.

“Engendering” CEESP

At the last Steering Committee meeting of CEESP, Bina Agarwal presented a discussion paper on incorporating gender into the work of CEESP. She put forward three possible organisational structures by which gender concerns could be raised in the working groups:

- Have a separate working group on gender;
- Have a gender person within each of the existing working groups;
- Have a combination of the above two, namely have a gender person within each of the working groups; in addition these persons to constitute a separate gender working group.

The steering committee came down in favour of the second option, with the possibility of moving to the third option in the future. Subsequently Bina Agarwal suggested names of individuals who have done work relating to CEESP concerns from a gender perspective to the working group chairs. It is thought that, as the work of the working groups develops, a “gender agenda” for a separate working group might emerge.

Coastal Zone Management

The Conservation of North Atlantic Shores - views of the experts

Paris, May 13-15 1998

Conclusions of a meeting organised by the Coastal Zone working group of CEESP which works in close collaboration with CEM and CEL are to be published in the form of “Guidelines for the political actors”. This will be released in time for IUCN's 50th Anniversary celebrations at the beginning of November. The North Atlantic Zone workshop was one of a series of regional events planned by the working group. Preparations are now underway for the next one which will take place in June 1999 on the island of La Reunion in the Indian Ocean. The Mediterranean Region will be served by a meeting in Barcelona in October 1999, and the last meeting is scheduled for Vietnam in 2000.

For a copy of the proceedings of the North Atlantic Meeting, contact: Dr Christophe Lefebvre, Conservatoire du Littoral, “Le Riverside”, Quai Girard 62930 Wimereux, France, Tel: +33 321 32 6900; Fax: +33 321 32 6667; email: eurosites@netinfo.fr

Cyberpartnerships

CEESP sponsors workshop

CEESP was one of the sponsors of a workshop on Cyberpartnerships for Sustainable Development hosted by MIT in September 1998, which was held immediately prior to the Symposium on Global Accords for Sustainable Development (see report page 16). One of the outcomes of these events was the proposal to establish the Global System for Sustainable Development (GSSD) Consortium - a collaborative institutional initiative to support knowledge-networking capabilities and bring these to bear more directly on global strategies towards sustainability at all levels and in all contexts.

GSSD, described in detail in issue 2 of Policy Matters, is an electronic knowledge networking and management system developed at MIT through a loose partnership of institutions, including CEESP. The goal of the Consortium is to add value to the existing knowledge on sustainable development available through the use of knowledge meta-networking i.e. networking among networks, technological advances and the close collaboration between researchers, governments, industry and non-governmental organisations. The Consortium, which will be introduced at the COP4 session of the UNFCCC in November, comprises institutional members including national governments, international organisations, and business and industry. As one of the sponsors of GSSD, CEESP is closely involved in the development of the work of the Consortium.

For further information about the GSSD Consortium, contact Nazli Choucri (see CEESP Contacts page 2)

Other news in brief

IUCN starts preparing for 2nd World Conservation Congress

It's official. The next WCC will take place in Amman, Jordan in the year 2000. David McDowell, Director General of IUCN has asked the IUCN Council to think about the nature, shape and objectives of the Congress, to provide a framework for discussions with the Jordanian Cabinet.

A detailed analysis of lessons learned from the 1st Congress in Montreal was prepared and presented to Council at its April 1997 meeting. One of the fundamental decisions identified for the next Congress was whether the Congress should be mainly a members' meeting driven by IUCN members and the technical parts of the Union, including the commissions or whether it should also be a public event along the lines of the Montreal Congress. A decision will also need to be made as to the magnitude of the Congress. It was widely thought that the Montreal Congress offered too much variety of choice in terms of workshops, for example, and that a somewhat more streamlined and prioritised workshop programme would make sense.

IUCN joins programme on reforming perverse subsidies

The Convention on Biological Diversity calls for financial incentives in support of its objectives to conserve biodiversity, use biological resources sustainably and share the benefits of this use equitably. Governments, however, spend billions of dollars annually in subsidies to sectors such as agriculture, energy, forestry, fisheries, mining and transport, many of which threaten or destroy biodiversity. Reforming these perverse subsidies is an obvious cost-effective way to improve the status of biodiversity.

IUCN has joined a consortium of international institutions to develop a programme of work on reforming perverse subsidies which promote unsustainable development. Phase II of the programme will look at several areas, sectors and themes. UCN will take the lead on biodiversity. It plans to adopt an ecosystem approach by assessing the subsidies to multiple industrial sectors impacting on particular ecosystems. The ecosystems currently under consideration include coastal and marine; forests; inland waters; grasslands and savannahs; drylands and mountains.

For more information on perverse subsidies and Phase I of the Programme, please visit: <http://www.ecouncil.ac.cr/econ>

To invest in this programme of work, please contact: Frank Vorhies at fwv@hq.iucn.org

New Policy Network for South Asia

Developments are underway to set up a Regional Policy Network for IUCN members in South Asia. An initiative of IUCN's Asia Regional Directorate (ARD), a network of offices and programmes throughout the South and Southeast Asian Region, the Regional Policy Network is being developed by a design team through consultation with IUCN members in the region, and was discussed at length at the recent Regional Members' Meeting in Sabah, Malaysia.

Comprising leading individuals and institutions drawn both from the IUCN membership and the wider policy constituency in South Asian countries, the network is designed to provide IUCN and other parts of the sustainable development constituency in the region with policy

expertise and policy coherence which can be drawn upon to inform public policy as well as programme and project activities. Once set up, it is hoped that the Network will serve as an effective extension of IUCN's programmes and secretariat capacity, and will provide an advisory service on call, a bouncing board for new ideas, a pool for new recruits to staff and the membership and a means of extending the impact of IUCN's work.

An obvious question raised by this initiative, is how the RPN will differ from the regional network of CEESP? The design team, which includes two CEESP members, stresses that the RPN is not intended to compete with or take the place of CEESP in the region, but to complement it. While there will be some overlap with the programme of CEESP, this will be only partial, and unlike CEESP, the RPN will be focused primarily on linking the best policy institutions in South Asia with the IUCN programme. While CEESP focuses on global topics, RPN will give priority to regional, national and local issues in the region, and while CEESP's programme in South Asia is research-driven, the intention of the RPN is to be eminently practical: clarifying the issues, setting forth policy options and tools and bringing forward best practice.

Following discussions in Sabah, Malaysia on 28 September and 2 October 1998, a revised proposal has been circulated to the full IUCN membership in South and Southeast Asia, and to selected individuals and institutions in the broader sustainable development policy field. The results of this consultation will be incorporated by the design team in its final meeting in Hanoi, late November 1998. It is hoped that fund-raising for the establishment and initial operations will begin before the end of the year.

IIED to embark on Private Sector Forestry Project

IIED is about to embark on a major two-year project to identify effective market and regulatory instruments for ensuring that the private sector produces social and environmental benefits from forest management.

The private sector is responsible for much high-yield forestry but is also asset stripping forests. However, there is great potential for the private sector to contribute to both social and environmental benefits at global and local levels. New instruments - governmental, market and partnership agreements - show promise, but they need assessing, refining, testing and promoting, and they need a good policy environment.

IIED's Forest and Land Use Programme, in collaboration with the Oxford Forestry Institute and the Overseas Development Institute, and involving a large number of in-country partners, is currently undertaking a global review of private sector participation in sustainable forest management. 73 countries have been profiled, 20 in considerable detail. This is preparing the ground for in-depth research based on collaborative research techniques with multi-disciplinary teams in six focal countries. Thematic research will explore mechanisms/instruments, their impacts, and how to improve them, looking in particular at partnerships between corporations and communities, certification and audit and other innovative instruments affecting public and private lands. The project will also research the potentials and constraints facing typical companies, and will carry out an analysis of six in-country processes to develop options for instruments and policy environment for private sector sustainable forest management.

The six focal countries will be selected at a meeting of the research partners in January.

For further information contact: Jason Ford, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD; Tel: +44 171 388 2117; Fax: +44 171 388 2826; email: jason.ford@iied.org

Reports

Environmental Responsibility and World Trade

London, 6-9 September 1998

Organised by The British Council in collaboration with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre

Nick Robins, *Sustainable Consumption and Trade Initiative, IIED*

This conference brought together over 100 participants from more than 50 countries to explore the prospects for environmentally responsible trade and pinpoint opportunities for international co-operation. For perhaps the first time in the contentious field of trade and environment, there were more delegates from developing than developed countries at a meeting in a industrialised countries. This along with state-of-the-art facilitation and a location situated in the London Zoo gave the conference a liveliness often absent from many international meetings.

Uppermost at the conference was the challenge of bringing the three cultures of trade, environment and development more closely together. It was clear that the world's legal and institutional architecture for managing world trade is far from being in tune with the priorities of sustainable development. Inadequate governance of many international trade flows means that the weakest member in the chain - often producers in developing countries - bears the brunt of new social and environmental requirements. The key to progress is to tackle the often systemic imbalances in political and market power so that more of the financial value generated by trade accrues to poor producers and communities. The conference heard of a number of fair trade initiatives which are using rising consumer concern about social and environmental practices to generate premium prices for disadvantaged producers in the South. Case studies of pioneering producers, using international markets to generate social, economic and environmental benefits, were also presented. Modest additional trade preferences for sustainably produced goods are also becoming available from the EU. While new trade opportunities for developing countries are certainly emerging, workshops at the conference highlighted a number of areas where strategic intervention is required to widen access.

As the international community gears up for the opening of a new round of trade negotiations in 1999, when trade and environment will be high on the agenda, the British Council is keen to follow-up this event and local Council offices are open to suggestions for initiatives to promote dialogue and exchange on this often controversial issue.

A workbook containing background information and case studies, along with further information is available on the British Council website: <http://www.britcoun.org/seminars/erwt/index.htm>

Global Accords for Sustainable Development

Boston, Massachusetts, 16-17 September 1998

Organised by MIT

From a report by Andrea Bagri

Innovative mechanisms and enabling technologies for sustainable development provided the focus for discussion at a meeting on Global Accords for Sustainable Development at MIT in September. Nazli Choucri of MIT who opened the meeting said the time had come to move beyond the post-Rio outcomes and into implementation stages of sustainable development. Speakers stressed the need for a mixture of appropriate technologies to meet sustainable development objectives, and for financial mechanisms to complement innovative technologies.

Mohammed El Ashry (GEF) proposed the GEF as just such a tool, outlining how the GEF is spurring the development of new technologies which raise energy efficiency and work for conservation. He placed the private sector in the role of driver for technological innovation and transfer, and the public sector in a supporting role to the private sector innovations.

Mario Molina of MIT then highlighted the major environmental challenges: depletion of natural resources (biodiversity loss); disposal of solid waste; water pollution; air pollution; and global changes in chemical composition of the atmosphere.

In a panel discussion on the impact of the Rio Conventions on social, economic and ecosystem structures, Ian Johnson of the World Bank spoke of the impact of globalisation, as revealed in the financial crisis in Asia, and the explosion of information technology as key factors in determining the impact of the Conventions. Gerhard Wahlers of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation spoke about the European response to Kyoto in the form of investments for setting and meeting environmental standards and innovations in technology. Ashok Khosla of Development Alternatives carried this thread forward with several examples of developing country technological innovations which are locally applicable. He emphasised the link between sustainable development, sustainable livelihoods and sustainable enterprises and stressed that all three were needed to achieve a new path of development. Mustafa Tolba then outlined some of the work which has been done in moving private direct investment into sustainable development and highlighted some of the points of friction between developed and developing nations.

The final session started with a presentation from H.E. Jian Zhenghua of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress in China. Mr Zhenghua spoke of the need to manage barriers to change. He quoted Ghandi in saying that "Nature can meet the needs of the people but not the greed of the people". Britt Bertilsson of the MISTRA Foundation in Sweden discussed the need to achieve a factor 4 society in which a circular relationship links consumers, business and the environment. Allen Hammond of WRI then proposed a 'Global Development Fund' which would be created out of a 0.1% tax on global trade and managed by the private sector. He picked up on Mr Ashry's point that the private sector networks around the world should be used by governments to implement the environment and development agendas.

Andrea Bagri works at the Economics Policy Unit of IUCN.

The African Sahel: 25 years after the great drought

Assessing progress, setting a new agenda

From a report by Dr Simon Batterbury

A conference held in May at the Royal Geographical Society, and sponsored by the Department of International Development, UK, and the International Institute for Environment and Development, reflected on the last 25 years in the Sahel and assessed the challenges facing the region in the next century. The conference brought together a wealth of expertise on the Sahel Region from both South and North.

Opening the conference, Gaoussou Traoré, of the Institut du Sahel in Bamako, Mali, assessed the changes experienced in the nine countries that comprise CILSS (the Permanent Interstate Committee for the Fight against Drought in Sahelian Countries). He outlined a progressive shift in national and international policy from the early support to modernised

MEETINGS

food production systems in the "dying Sahel", through to the current concern with measured economic reforms, respect for cultural tradition and ethnic pluralism, better-targeted aid, and support to local institutions through resource management and political decentralisation programmes.

Subsequent speakers went on to stress the diversity of the Sahelian landscape and its peoples, and the enormous climatic variability to which they were subjected. There was a call for better science, coupled with increased support for Sahelian peoples' own adaptive strategies.

Two papers assessed the record of agriculture in the region. One explored the significant "resource limitations" faced by Sahelian farmers, underlining how the increasing gap between total food production and population numbers had grown since the 1970s. Coping mechanisms, it was argued, had been unable to respond rapidly enough, and soil fertility decline was an invisible "time bomb" for Sahelian agriculture. This was in disagreement with another speaker who argued that farmers' coping strategies were rational, while international relief and development efforts were unreliable and sometimes inappropriate.

Another paper considered the increasingly precarious situation of pastoralists in the 'northern' Sahel and Saharan fringe where mobility is vital to maintain access to water and fodder, and conflict over resources is growing. Accusations of degradation caused by pastoralist activity, had clouded understanding of the importance of herd mobility and thus freedom of movement across patchy landscapes. It was emphasised that ongoing discussion about land tenure rules and laws in the Sahel should recognise the dynamism of common property regimes based on mobility.

A speaker from the OECD's Club du Sahel provided a challenge to doom-laden predictions of economic and environmental crisis. He said it was vital to see the Sahel in its regional context, as part of the West African economy, increasingly linked to the global economic marketplace. Cities, not rural areas, were absorbing the largest percentage of West Africa's population growth at present, because of their job and market opportunities, with some 40% of the region's inhabitants now living away from the birthplaces of their parents. He spoke of a "silent Sahelian agricultural revolution" of increased cash crop production, particularly for specialised markets near to urban centres.

The meeting provided realistic assessments of the challenges facing Sahelian peoples in the next century. Economic pessimism may be justified, but the adaptability of Sahelian ecologies and peoples was affirmed.

Papers from the meeting will appear in *Global Environmental Change*, and in much more detail, including a report on the associated one-day workshop involving fifty leading experts on the Sahel zone, may be found at: <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/depts/geo/sahel.html>

Dr Simon Batterbury is based at the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences at Brunel University, UK.

Forthcoming

12th Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum in December **Dakar, Senegal, 4-6 December 1998**

To be held during the 2nd meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, GBF 12 will focus on synergies between the CCD and the various biodiversity-related conventions.

The IUCN Economics Service Unit will be organising a workshop on Financial Innovations to Combat Desertification, building on discussions for financial innovations with respect to biodiversity. Opportunities from small community funds to the role of the GEF will be discussed.

Visit the website: <http://economics.iucn.org/esu-news.htm>

World Bank Workshop on Public-Private Sector Collaboration for Cost-effective Pollution Management **Washington, October 26 1998**

Working with the industry sectors can be a more cost-effective alternative to pollution control than traditional regulation and enforcement mechanisms. This is the starting point for a global policy dialogue between the public and private sectors at a workshop hosted by the World Bank's Economic Development Institute.

For more information contact:
<http://www.worldbank.org/edi/pubpriv/ni.htm>

Trade, Investment and the Environment **A two-day conference organised by The Royal Institute of International Affairs** **Thursday 29 and Friday 30 October 1998**

The rapid liberalisation of international trade and investment, and the growing importance of environmental protection are two of the key elements of international relations in the modern world. Yet these two regimes may sometimes clash, and the 'trade and environment' debate is steadily growing in importance. European Trade Commissioner Sir Leon Brittan and US President Bill Clinton have called for a High Level Meeting of trade and environment ministers next year, to help set the agenda for the forthcoming Millennium Round of trade negotiations.

This conference is designed to explore the future of the trade, investment and environment debate.

Workshop on Market Based Instruments for Environmental Protection **Harvard, US, July 18-20 1999**

A workshop hosted by Harvard University next July will provide an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to engage in a series of sessions that will analyse a full range of market based environmental policy instruments. These will include retrospective assessments of previous and current use of market-based instruments and prospective investigations of potential new applications.

Contact: Robert Stavins, Workshop Chairman, Albert Pratt Professor of Business and Government, John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, 79 John F Kennedy Street, Cambridge, Mass 02138, USA; Tel: +1 617 495 1820; Fax: 617 496 3783; email: robert_stavins@harvard.edu; Internet: <http://www.ecu.edu/econ/aere>

Mechanisms for financing wise use of wetlands **A workshop at the 2nd International Conference on Wetlands and Development** **Dakar, Senegal, November 13, 1998**

Organised by the Economics Service Unit and the Wetlands Programme of IUCN in collaboration with Wetlands International and WWF

Following the workshop on financial innovations for biodiversity held in May at the 10th Global Biodiversity Forum, this workshop will review current aid policies and needs with regard to wetland conservation, using regional examples and/or case studies. It will explore potential innovations in both public and private finance which could generate new investments in support of biodiversity (and wetland) conservation.

Contact: Frank Vorhies, Economics Service Unit, IUCN HQ.

New Resources

Water and Population Dynamics: Case Studies and Policy Implications

Edited by Alex de Sherbinin and Victoria Domka, published by the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) in collaboration with IUCN, PRB, USAID and The Population-Environment Fellows Program.

The rates and types of human-induced changes which are being made to the planet's natural systems are faster and more acute than ever before. Two of the most important variables in this context are human population growth and consumption, and their effect on water resources worldwide. In order to adequately address water and population issues in the light of fast paced global changes, we need to better understand the relationship between the two in scientific and policy terms.

Water and Population Dynamics represents a significant step in that direction. The publication is the result of several years of work carried out by the Social Policy Group of IUCN and the Population Reference Bureau with funding from USAID. It includes detailed reports of nine case studies produced by country teams on the population variables and water resources in a community, project area or river basin in their country. The findings of the country teams were presented at a workshop at the IUCN's World Conservation Congress in Montreal, Canada in October 1996, and proceedings from the workshop, as well as two experts' overview papers are also included in the publication. By taking a close look at community based initiatives for managing water resources, as well as initiatives at regional, national, sub-regional and sub-national levels, and examining conservation problems, approaches and lessons learned, the case studies help to throw light on water and population dynamics from a range of different perspectives.

Copies can be obtained from: 1988 American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), International Directorate, Program on Population and Sustainable Development (PSD), 1200 New York Avenue, NW, Washington, DC, 20005, USA; Tel: +1 202 326 6495; Fax: +1 202 289 4958; EMAIL: lbromley@aaas.org

Policy that works for forests and people - Overview report

James Mayers and Stephen Bass, IIED

Over the past three years, the Forestry and Land Use Programme of IIED has been involved in a series of country studies aimed at reaching a better understanding of the forces at play in contests over forest policy, the winners and losers, and the factors that affect policy outcomes.

To be published in the New Year, the Overview Report draws together findings from the country studies with those from a wide review of other countries and from particular thematic studies. General conclusions are then drawn about policy that works. Whilst specific issues vary from place to place, a pattern of forest problems is common to many countries, and policy is the cause of many of these forest problems. Contents include: *Forest Problems - is policy really to blame? *Understanding policy in practice; *Lessons learned from country studies in Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, India, Ghana, Zimbabwe and Costa Rica; *Key policy developments in Portugal, Scotland, China, Australia, Scandinavia, West Africa; *Corporate influences on policy for forests; *Certification and buyers groups; *Global change and international games; *Factors that affect forest decision-making and policy outcomes; *Policy processes that work; *Policy instruments that work; *What can be done.

The Overview Report will be available in the New Year. To place an order, contact: Publications, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD, UK; Tel: +44 171 388 2117; Fax: 4 171 388 2826; email: bookshop@iied.org

DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, and DAC Source Book on Concepts and Approaches Linked to Gender Equality

Endorsed by the Development Ministers and Heads of Aid Agencies in April 1998 have now been published.

These are available at the OECD Internet site at: <http://www.oecd.org/dac>

Switch to Green Taxes and Cut overall Tax Load

Switching to a green tax approach will solve many of the current resource management problems, clean up the environment and help economics actually achieve sustainability, according to a new study released by the Worldwatch Institute. The Natural Wealth of Nations: Harnessing the Market for Environment claims that ending unnecessary subsidies to the energy, forestry and fisheries industries would save US\$ 650 billion in taxes. It reports that adding a modest levy for pollutant releases and resource depletion would add \$1.5 trillion to the tax income. As a result, a US family of four could have tax cuts of \$2,000 per year. The study quotes examples from China, which cut subsidies for fossil fuel consumption from \$26 billion to \$111 billion a year in the 1990s; from the UK which cut subsidies for coal production by 91% in the first half of the 1990s; Germany which used taxes to cut the production of toxic wastes by 15% in three years; and Australia, Denmark and the US which used taxes on CFCs to help phase out these chemicals.

For a copy of the report, contact: mcaron@worldwatch.org; website: <http://www.worldwatch.org>

CALENDAR

Sustainability in Agriculture - tensions between ecology, economics and social sciences

Stuttgart, Germany 28-30 October 1998

Organised by the Institute of Energy Economics and the Rational Use of Energy, University of Stuttgart, Germany, Institute for Crop Production and Grassland Research, University of Hohenheim, Germany
Contact: mh@ier.uni-stuttgart.de; <http://www.ier.uni-stuttgart.de/public/b06.htm>

COP 4 on Climate Change

2-13 November 1998, Buenos Aires, Argentina

11th Session of the Global Biodiversity Forum

6-8 November 1998, Buenos Aires, Argentina

see page 12 for details

Bio-partnerships for Sustainable Development: commercialism and the bio-industry challenge

UNCTAD (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) and IBC (International Business Communications)

Organised in the Framework of UNCTAD's "Partners for Development" Summit, November 9-12, 1998 Lyon, France

<http://www.ibcusa.com/conf/u.n.trade>

Open-ended Working Group on the Montreal Protocol

18-20 November, 1998

Cairo, Egypt

MOP-10 on the Montreal Protocol

23-25 November, 1998

Cairo, Egypt

2nd Session of the Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee

Geneva, 7-12 February 1999 (tentative)

Contact: UNEP Chemicals (IRPTC); Tel: +41 22 979 9190;

Fax: +41 22 797 3460; email: dogden@unep.ch;

Internet: <http://irptc.unep.ch/pops/>

International Conference on Natural Resources Management

Harare, Zimbabwe, 21-29 January 1999

The Centre for Applied Social Studies, the University of Zimbabwe

Contact: The Senior Secretary, CASS, The University of Zimbabwe, PO Box M.P. 167 Mount Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe; Tel:+263 4 303211;

Fax: +263 4 333407; email: cass@esonet.zw

5th Annual International Sustainable Development Research Conference

Leeds, UK, 25-26 March 1999

Contact: Conference Manager, ERP Environment, PO Box 75, Shipley, West Yorkshire, BD176EZ, UK; Tel: +44 1274 530 408; Fax:+44 1274 530 409

Southeast Asia into the 21st Century: Critical Transitions, Continuity and Change

ASEAN Inter-University Seminar on Social Development

Pattani, Thailand, 16-18 June 1999

Contact: ASEAN Seminar Secretariat, Department of Sociology, National University of Singapore, 10 Kent Ridge Crescent, Singapore 119260; Tel: (65) 874-6408 Fax: (65) 777 9579

1999 Open Meeting of the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change Community

The International Scientific Planning Committee

Japan, June 24-26 1999

Contact: Dr Jill Jaeger, Birneckergrasse 10, A-1210 Vienna; email:

fuj.jaeger@magnet.at

Letter to the Editor

I have read the latest number of Policy Matters (no. 2) with great interest and must compliment all those concerned in putting together a thought provoking number. I was especially interested in the emphasis on trade which is a mechanism for determining price, one of the two prime forces, with proprietorship, for guiding resource allocation and management. My only concern is that by emphasising trade and cutting into the debate at this level we do not neglect to address the many economic and policy issues affecting price and proprietorship.

If we accept that conservation is the socio-economic process by which society is attempting to address intensifying renewable resource scarcities, it becomes necessary only when these scarcities reach the threshold at which abuses commence. Many of these thresholds have become apparent only within the relatively recent past, with the result that we still do not have appropriate systems for proprietorship for many of the "global commons". Because there is no proper accountability for protecting the resource base, there are many price distortions which in turn have a profound effect on how particular resource products are valued and traded. While we might encourage environmentally friendly trade, it is a second level issue which is responsive to flawed first level considerations which need to be addressed first, if we are to achieve "sustainable trade".

Dr Graham Child

Next Issue

The next issue of Policy Matters will feature Sustainable Livelihoods. If you would like to contribute an article on this theme, or have news or comments you would like to flag up, please contact the Editor, Catherine McCloskey, IIED, 3 Endsleigh Street, London WC1H 0DD; fax: +44 171 388 2117;

email: catherine.mccloskey@iied.org.

The deadline for contributions to Issue 4 is December 31 1998.