

## CONFERENCES & MEETINGS

INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON PLANNING AND MAINTENANCE OF EUROPEAN HERITAGE LANDSCAPES, HELD AT LOSEHILL HALL, CASTLETON, DERBYSHIRE, IN THE PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK, NORTH-WEST ENGLAND, 26–30 SEPTEMBER 1977

Immediately following the 4th General Assembly of the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe, which took place in the Lake District National Park in northern England, a Seminar was held on the problems of planning and maintenance of European protected areas. Fifty-two participants from 17 countries were present, and there were also representatives from Canada, the United States, and Australia.

This was not the usual sort of international conference with government delegations and representatives of state or private institutions, but was intended primarily as an informal working session for personnel immediately concerned with work in protected areas. The aim was not so much the treatment of nature reserves or national parks of international standard, as a deliberate discussion on those areas whose protection is often limited and largely linked with measures for introducing recreational facilities. As a consequence their protection often depends on the management and conservation of traditional cultivated areas, i.e. on the maintenance of such protected areas as the Council of Europe, in its first attempt at classification in its 1973 'Terminology for Protected Areas in Europe', designated as Category C and Category D areas.

*Category C:* 'Areas would be assigned to this category mainly on account of their cultural and aesthetic value, protection of the landscape and the ecological balance being taken into consideration. Traditional human activities are allowed, subject to certain rules; some non-traditional human activities are tolerated but strictly controlled. As this category is often of relevance to human recreation, some recreational provisions as well as non-motorized public movement are permitted in clearly defined zones on condition that they are in accordance with the area's aims.'

*Category D:* 'The areas in this category are usually large tracts of land which are primarily intended for recreation but where the principles of nature conservation are observed. They may include natural monuments, private estates, villages, etc. Such areas are therefore primarily of recreational value (rest and relaxation) and also of cultural, aesthetic, and natural, value. Planning an area for recreational purposes will entail some amenity provisions (for cultural, sporting, and recreational, pursuits). Traditional and/or new human activities are normally permitted on condition that they are compatible with the area's aims. Non-motorized public access is generally unrestricted but may be controlled in certain zones of particular interest (natural monuments, flora, fauna, etc.). Motorized traffic is controlled in accordance with the aims of protection.'

During the preparatory stages of the Seminar, where the main bulk of the work was done by the British but with appreciable support from both the German and Dutch sides, the general opinion was that such landscapes in Europe had in the past enjoyed too little recognition at both national and international levels, and that in their case an exchange of information and ideas, and increased cooperation within Europe, seemed to be particularly promising. Such landscapes include the 10 national parks in England and Wales (Category C), which have never ceased to be a matter of international controversy, the almost 60 nature parks and the far greater number of protected landscapes in the Federal Republic of Germany (Categories C and D), and the *Parcs Naturels Régionaux*

in France (Category D) as well as numerous other protected areas in several European countries. As a rule—in contrast to the mostly rather small total reserves—they occupy a considerable amount of territory in the countries involved.

The Seminar was designed to offer a foretaste of the work which in future will be supported and encouraged by the Federation of Nature and National Parks of Europe. After introductory papers had been read by six from the UK and one each from FRG, Netherlands, and France, the following themes were discussed in 7 working groups:

1. European Heritage Landscapes (H. Köpp);
2. National Parks, Naturparks, *Parcs Naturels* (P. Leonard);
3. 'Category C Landscapes' and the European Communities (A. F. Holford-Walker);
4. Strategy (T. Burrell);
5. Tactics (E. C. M. Roderkerk);
6. Environmental Education (P. Townsend); and
7. Local Population (M. Calder).

After detailed discussions involving prepared questions and the presentation of conflict situations and possible solutions, etc., the results were finally expressed in the form of concrete practical recommendations.

No more suitable place could have been found for this Seminar than the well-known Peak National Park Study Centre in the Peak District National Park, which currently holds the European Diploma of the Council of Europe.

Further seminars of this type are being planned, again in Great Britain and in the Federal Republic of Germany. The results of this 'Peak Park Seminar' have been published in English.

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### THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, HELD IN TBILISI, USSR, 14–26 OCTOBER 1977

This Conference, which had been organized by UNESCO in cooperation with UNEP, was attended by 340 participants, made up of representatives from 66 member States of UNESCO and observers from 2 non-member states, 7 UN organizations (apart from UNESCO and UNEP), 3 intergovernmental organizations, and 20 nongovernmental organizations.\* The opening ceremony, as well as all other sessions of the Conference, took place in the Conference Hall of the Supreme Soviet of the Georgian SSR.

The Vice-Chairman of the State Committee of Science and Technology of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, D. M. Gvishiani, was elected President of the Conference. The first two-and-a-half days of the Conference were taken up by statements from delegates of Member States, UN organizations, intergovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations, relating to the following numbered points on the Agenda:

- (7) Major environmental problems in contemporary society;
- (8) Role of education in facing the challenges of environmental problems; and
- (9) Current efforts at the national and international levels for the development of environmental education.

The IUCN statement was well received by the Plenary because of its brevity and concise nature. It was subsequently distributed by the UNESCO Secretariat to all participants. The Plenary was then changed into a committee under the chairmanship of Mrs Madhuri Shah, of India, in order to discuss the strategies for the development of environmental education at the national level. Most of the time of this Committee was spent on prepared statements in which Member States elaborated on their achievements in developing environmental education.

Regional and international cooperation for the development of environmental education, as well as needs and modalities, were then discussed again in Plenary, which also considered other efforts such as cooperation in the Nordic countries, in Latin America, and in the Arab States. The Chairman of the IUCN Commission on Education, Lev K. Shaposhnikov, gave a brief summary of the Commission's past achievements.†

In all over 200 recommendations were received by the Conference Secretariat on one or another of the chosen topics: 'the Role of Environmental Education', 'Strategies for the Development of Environmental Education at the National Level', and 'International and Regional Cooperation'. These were brought to the Plenary for approval and then referred to a special Committee composed of representatives from all regions, which reduced the number to some 40 on the above three themes. Together with the draft final report, the recommendations were then again presented to the Plenary for final approval, which was given fairly quickly because of the detailed discussions that had already taken place. In the final session, a 'Declaration of the Tbilisi Intergovernmental Conference on Environmental Education' was approved with acclamation.\*\*

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\* As indicated in the Sierra Club's *International Report* of 6 November 1977, 'NGO participation was minimal because only those with consultative status to UNESCO could attend the Conference.'—Ed.

† According to the Sierra Club (*ibid.*), 'The only discordant note was an open conflict between UNEP and UNESCO over UNESCO's desire to retain an exclusive role in environmental education.'—Ed.

\*\* See page 63-4 of our last issue.—Ed.

CONFERENCE ON WATER-RELATED PROBLEMS IN LESS-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF UPPSALA, UPPSALA, SWEDEN, 24-26 OCTOBER 1977

Convened by the Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, this Conference discussed the many facets of water development problems in developing countries. Professor Torgny Segerstedt, Rector of the University of Uppsala, in his welcoming address, made a strong case for the need of new knowledge which can be applied to solve the world's problems. Roots of human knowledge should be international, and the results and applications of modern science should be similarly international.

In his keynote speech, the undersigned, Director of Biswas & Associates, Ottawa, Canada, analysed the inter-relationships between water development and environment as they affect the developing countries. He discussed the environmental problems, both due to water developments

and to the lack of them. The absence of a supply of potable water to the rural communities of the developing world has undoubtedly contributed to the problems of environmental health. Latest information indicates that less than 1% of the rural population have access to safe water in Burundi, Gabon, Madagascar, and Sierra Leone, less than 2% in Kenya, and much less than 5% in the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Lesotho, Togo, and Zaire. Provision of safe drinking water can reduce many diseases—some, such as sleeping-sickness, due to *Trypanosoma gambiense*, by about 80%—simply by reducing the exposure of human beings to tsetse-flies during water-collection journeys.

Environmental costs of water developments in many developing countries have been substantial. For example, the Aswan Dam in Egypt has contributed to the erosion of downstream river-beds and -banks, to severe erosion of the Nile Delta, to decrease in the productive capacity of the Nile Valley due to lack of silt, and to significant reduction in plankton populations and organic carbon contents—which in turn has reduced the sardine and some other fish and crustacean populations of the Eastern Mediterranean. It has also led to an increase in the incidence of schistosomiasis. Several similar examples of creation of major environmental problems due to water developments were cited in various parts of Africa, Asia, and South America.

Other speakers making important points included Ian Carruthers, from the University of London, who indicated that the gap between potential and realized benefits of irrigation has increased in recent years. He suggested that most planners have a paternalistic view of their role and an unhealthy regard for the possible value of farmer participation in the planning process, which can engender problems later on. He predicted that social cost-benefit analysis will fail in the less-developed countries—for the same basic reasons that taxation has been a failure.

Gunnar Schultzberg, of WHO, gave an interesting example of the problems of introducing appropriate technology in certain countries. In Tanzania, a WHO engineer had recommended shallow wells with hand-pumps, but his proposal was not acceptable to the villagers, and he was actually asked to leave, even though the solution proposed was the most appropriate and lowest-cost one. The villagers had seen a deep borehole, having a diesel engine—so that they would not have to do the pumping themselves. They wanted a more sophisticated solution—especially as they would not have to pay anything for the improvement!

Richard Feachem, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, claimed that in some countries, including Bangladesh and Lesotho, provision of potable water had not reduced the incidence of many water-related diseases to any appreciable extent. However, the study which he referred to, on cholera in Bangladesh, has recently been severely criticized by some scientists.

The proceedings of the Seminar will be published by the Pergamon Press, Oxford, England, in the Book Series *Water Supply, Management, and Development*, which is being edited by the undersigned.

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