

The funds needed to create and maintain the Network will be sought from external sources, so that the limited finances now available for the distribution of scientific literature to developing countries will not be reduced.

*The immediate objectives of the Network will be:*

- 1) To coordinate information on:
  - a) organizations that are active in donation programmes,
  - b) the institutions which they serve, and
  - c) the materials, especially journals, which they provide,
 in order to avoid duplication of efforts and to increase the impact of limited resources;
- 2) To offer information on appropriate programmes and procedures to organizations and individuals wishing to provide books, journals, or related materials;
- 3) To explore additional sources of literature;
- 4) To advise on sources of the funding needed to expand

the scope of existing distribution programmes and to launch new ones; and

- 5) To identify additional needs and opportunities.

*Long-term objectives of the Network include:*

1. Supporting scientific publishing in the South; and
2. Increasing the distribution to other regions of scientific materials produced in the South.

The network will be coordinated through ICTP/TWAS (Trieste), a pioneer in this field. Membership is open to all interested organizations and institutions.

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### Sierra Club's International Activities Directed by Michael McCloskey

One of the Sierra Club's long-time executives has changed his position with the organization. Dr J. Michael McCloskey is now the Club's Chairman and is operating out of the Club's Washington, DC, office, which has recently been relocated at 408 C Street Northeast, Washington, DC 20002, USA.

McCloskey served as the Club's Executive Director for 17 years in its San Francisco offices and before then was its Conservation Director. He turned over the job of running the organization on a day-to-day basis to Douglas Wheeler in 1985, but when Wheeler left unexpectedly in 1986, McCloskey returned to serve a second time in that position until another person, Michael Fischer, could be found to occupy it. Since 1987, McCloskey has been back in Washington in his new capacity.

McCloskey serves as a general spokesman for the Club, maintains wide-ranging contacts with those interested in its work, and is running the Club's Earthcare Network. That Network now embraces over a hundred environmental organizations world-wide which are committed to helping each other on their major campaigns. The Network publishes a newsletter entitled *Earthcare Appeals*.

Also directed by McCloskey is the Sierra Club's Natural Value Mapping Project, which has just completed a global inventory of the world's main *de facto* wilderness areas. We wonder privately whether this could form the basis of a World Wilderness Alliance such as we have long advocated—of established and maintained wilderness areas adherents of which would be sufficiently organized at least to get together in defence of any of their counterparts which might be at all seriously threatened in any way.

Currently Dr McCloskey also serves as the Vice-Chairman of the American Committee for International Conservation and as an Adjunct Professor of Policy at the University of Michigan's School of Natural Resources. He is a member of both the law and parks commissions of IUCN, and altogether is an admirably busy executive operating in a number of important directions—including sponsorship of a much-needed *World Directory of Environmental Organizations and Institutions* which should be usefully complementary to our own planned *World Who's Who in Environment & Conservation: Leading Specialists, Administrators, and Benefactors*.

N.P.

### New Competition Launched for Conservation Expeditions

The International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP) and the Fauna and Flora Preservation Society (FFPS) have established a new competition to stimulate expedition groups to adopt a conservation objective for their work. Expeditions are often in a position to collect useful up-to-date information on many aspects of wildlife conservation in parts of the world that are rarely visited by wildlife professionals. ICBP and FFPS also encourage these expeditions, because of their importance in motivating young scientists to become the 'conservationists of tomorrow'.

The competition is a development and extension of the one run by ICBP since 1985 for ornithological expeditions. Since then seven expeditions have received prizes and carried out successful projects leading to significant conservation action. Thus for example 1987 winners visited Pakistan in search of the rare Western Tragopan (*Tragopan melanocephalus*) which is listed in the *Red Data Book* as endangered. This is the rarest Himalayan pheasant, with no

more than 5,000 individuals left in the wild, and possibly fewer than 1,600. The team located the pheasants in three valleys in Indus Kohistan and were able to identify their key habitat requirements, the main threats (timber extraction and hunting) to their survival, and potential protected areas. As a result of the expedition, a large-scale project is being developed in collaboration with the National Council for Conservation of Wildlife in Pakistan—to establish protected areas, train Pakistani personnel, and conduct educational and publicity work. One of the two 1988 winning expeditions has just returned from a successful trip to Venezuela, where work was carried out in a little-studied National Park which stimulated interest in its continued protection.

The ICBP/FFPS competition will be open annually henceforth to expeditions consisting of young people—preferably undergraduate students—and taking place in a country outside Europe and North America. The project must

clearly address a conservation issue of international importance, and should preferably be derived from the priorities identified by ICBP, IUCN, or similar organizations—for example, focusing on species that are listed in the *Red Data Books*. Each expedition should involve local students or counterparts, and must have clearance from the host government.

The hope is to have each year four prizes in two categories: (a) Birds (£1,000 and £800), and (b) all other wild animals or plants (£1,000 and £800). The category of 'Highly Commended' will be awarded to expeditions that are not winners but are considered of high organizational merit and conservational potentiality. Clearly the prize will only cover a proportion of the total cost of an expedition; but it is anticipated that any project in receipt of this prize or an 'endorsement', will be able to present a strong case for further funding from national or international grant-awarding bodies. The closing date for entries each year is 31 January and the results will be announced on 31 March.

Although many expeditions may have missed the deadline for this year's competition, we hope that those whose

activators are starting to think about projects for 1990 will consider applying. The guide for applicants provides advice on the type of project to consider, how to submit applications for funding, and reference sources. Successful applicants are sent a guide to preparing the final report of their expeditions. The Royal Geographical Society attributes the vast increase in top-quality ornithological expeditions to the guidelines issued for the ICBP award, and welcomes the expansion of the competition. For further information please contact either ICBP, 32 Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0PJ, England, UK, or FFPS, 79-83 North Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 1ZA, England, UK.

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### BTCV for Practical Action in Conservation

Britain has a long history of voluntary involvement in Nature conservation, which has become enshrined in a firm partnership between governmental and non-governmental agencies. The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) is the United Kingdom's largest organization involving volunteers in such practical work. The particular philosophy behind this organization stems from an urge to put something back into the countryside, through practical work, and this has, over BTCV's 30-years'-history, been turned into a successful recipe for introducing young people to Nature conservation.

This approach of putting something back has appealed to other countries. Thus staff at the Icelandic counterpart of the British Nature Conservancy Council were familiar with the work of BTCV and shared the philosophy that conservation volunteering is more than just a means of getting things done when money is in short supply. Environmental education through practical involvement was accordingly adopted to try and arouse a new feeling of understanding and care for the very sensitive Icelandic environment. To this end a group of staff and volunteers from BTCV were invited to Iceland in 1983, with the objectives of helping to initiate some practical projects and explaining their organization's structure and activities in Britain. Since then an expedition to Iceland has become an annual feature of BTCV's summer programme.

In 1984 an ambitious two-months' project was undertaken in Iceland's Skaftafell National Park, continuing the work done in the previous year. Over an 8 weeks' period, a total of 520 m of c. 15-cm-wide permeable drainpipe was fitted, 18 culverts were built, and 15 stone steps and 1,100 m of path were constructed or reconstructed. Many Icelandic volunteers turned up for their first experience of practical conservation work, and since then smaller groups of British volunteers have worked with the Icelandic group which is now independent of their Nature Conservancy Council and, being run by volunteers, is going from strength to strength (Fig. 1).

BTCV is now taking these experiences further, having put forward a resolution at the IUCN 16th General Assembly that personal practical involvement in conservation projects is an important way of implementing the philos-



FIG. 1. *Volunteers in Skaftafell National Park, Iceland, building a board-walk—their first experience of volunteering.*

ophy of the World Conservation Strategy. Moreover, BTCV is taking the lead in seeking international cooperation for training and development of the necessary skills pertaining to such work.

In 1988 and 1989, BTCV is developing a network of groups and organizations involved in volunteering for conservation good-works in much the same way as they did in Iceland, helping to purvey the philosophy and spirit of volunteering along with practical help in skills of leadership and motivating volunteers. BTCV is looking for partners in further countries, and would be willing to help anybody who wishes to develop a volunteer group. For information please contact the undersigned:

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