

Having emphasized the UN Law of the Sea Conference as a "major theme" in the last number, we now shift over to more particularized topics. Nevertheless, on the international plane, important European developments have focused our attention on the issue of harmonization of environmental law and policy. The Sand essay describes efforts by Mediterranean states to harmonize environmental protection in that threatened region. German State Secretary Hartkopf analyzes issues in the harmonizing of water pollution control standards within the EEC and in the Rhine area. Lutz's article will complete his treatment of principles for national harmonization.

At the national level, we have centered attention on the very current question of the economic impact of environmental regulation. An article by Miki points up the need to consider this issue carefully. Ashford and Heaton report on a study concluding that environmental controls promote innovation and therefore have positive economic impact.

In the interest of a more diverse geographical coverage, our compass shifts to the East with articles touching Japan and China and, halfway again around the world, to Columbia.

Our anticipated interview with Maurice Strong has had to be postponed until he catches his breath at Petro-Canada.

A brief but grateful mention to M. A. Mattes, whose efforts in nurturing this literary enterprise from its embryonic stage to tender youth, have been most appreciated. Mattes will return to law practice and its associated rigors in San Francisco. We wish him well. D. S. Zalob and R. G. Tanguay, lawyers from San Francisco and Ottawa respectively, will take the horse from midstream.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Endangered Species Convention

[Re.: S. Callary, "UK Stalls on Endangered Species Convention", EPL 1:2, at 75.]

Dear Sir,

Stephen Callary's article is so full of errors and misunderstanding that it is difficult to know how to reply to it.

Far from "stalling" on the Convention, the Government introduced the necessary import and export controls in the United Kingdom on 1 January 1976. This greatly extended the United Kingdom's existing controls and complies with all of the Convention's requirements. Indeed, the United Kingdom has gone further in some respects, both as regards the number of species to be protected and the stringency of the controls.

Unusually, we are implementing the Convention before ratifying it. This is because the United Kingdom itself has adequate legislation for the controls required, but our Instrument of Ratification needs to cover our Dependent Territories, many of which do not yet have the necessary powers. It would, of course, be possible for the Territories to be excluded from our ratification but we are advised that, in law, they could not then be added at a later date. I am sure that this is not the result Mr. Callary would like to see.

Discussions about the Convention have been held within the European Community, involving not only the United Kingdom and the Federal Republic of Germany, but all the other Members States. The United Kingdom has shown where it stands by implementing the Convention from 1 January and it will continue to take part in discussions aimed at the earliest and most effective action possible to help the world's endangered wildlife.

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Opinion within the United Kingdom as to the adequacy of the Government's implementation of the Convention already appears divided. Friends of the Earth has criticized the UK's failure to

control a number of animal products, including crocodile-skin handbags and otter skins comprehended under the Convention. Of course, partial implementation is better than nothing. Not having ratified, however, the United Kingdom remains a non-contracting state and will not be entitled to participate in the scheduled meeting of states party to the Convention. [Ed.]

More Conservation and Politics

[Re.: H. Dietrich, Letters, EPL 1:2, at 49.]

Dear legal and environmentalist colleague: I am sorry to see that you have misread my "Note on Conservation and Politics". You state that "Mr. G. Stutzin of Chile tries to show that his country's (present) political system provides as satisfactory a basis for working to protect the environment as any other system". Well, just before reading your letter I had received very severe criticisms from other people who thought that the purpose of my note had been "to whitewash the Allende regime from the conservationist point of view". Funny, isn't it?

I meant to be quite clear in pointing out that, basically, none of the models of government referred to were, as such, satisfactory to the ecologically conscious and that each of them was "supported by, and supports in turn, political and economic interests the aims of which are rarely in accordance with the interests of the environment".

The only purpose of my article was to show, on the basis of practical experience, that conservationist groups must carry out their job to the best of their possibilities under whatever model of government they have the pleasure or displeasure to exist and act. We all agree the defense of the biosphere is of such overriding and overall importance to all species living on this planet, including man, that no group pledged to this cause may abandon or jeopardize its work, even for the best of reasons, without betraying, albeit to a minimal extent, the future of life as we know it.

If it were true that conservation work is only possible under conditions

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