

INTERNATIONAL BIOLOGICAL PROGRAM

CONSERVATION SUBCOMMISSION

PACIFIC COAST FIELD STUDY AND SYMPOSIUM JANUARY-MARCH 1.964

1. The International Council of Scientific Unions, ICSU, has entrusted to a Planning Commission under Professor Montalenti of Rome the task of preparing an International Biological Program (IBP) to be carried out within the period 1965-1970. One of the basic requirements is to ensure that the many natural areas on which science must depend for future research in the field are not so damaged or destroyed by being put to other uses that the future advance of biology and the earth sciences is prejudiced. With this object the Planning Commission established a Conservation Subcommission consisting of H.M. Nicholson (London, Convener), M. Acosta-Solis (Quito), F. Bourliere (Paris) G. Dementiev (Moscow) V. Gostel (Graz) & E.H. Graham (Washington). In order to develop a definitive programme this Sub-Commission is carrying out a number of preliminary trials the most important being two international reconnaissances of key areas, the Pacific Coast of the Americas and the Mediterranean from SW Europe through North Africa to SW Asia.

In view of the immense length of the Pacific Coast it is necessary in the first stages to concentrate upon the central sector Ecuador-California, holding over for subsequent treatment the southern, Ecuador-Cape Horn, and northern, California-Aleutians, sectors.

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2. The reasons for this selection include :
 - a) the importance of enlisting the outstanding ecological resources in this region, e.g. the University of California, & the Charles Darwin Institute on Galapagos, with its long experience of management of natural areas such as National Parks and National Forests, in order to serve as a basis for the development of this aspect of the IBP in the Western Hemisphere.

- b) the pressing urgency of the task if areas in this region which are of irreplaceable value to world science are not to be lost for ever by the advance of exploitation.
- c) The helpful readiness of Governments in this region to recognise and cooperate in solving the problem, as has already been demonstrated by the Government of Ecuador over Galapagos, the Government of Mexico over National Parks and other conservation measures and the Government of the USA and the State of California during the past eighty years since the creation of Yosemite National Park.

The presence in the region during the first quarter of 1964 of an exceptional group of visiting biologists in connection with the programme of the Charles Darwin Institute, the dates of which dictate the timetable of the present Symposium.

3. The objects of the Field Study and Symposium may be outlined as:

- a) finding the facts about existing ecological knowledge and progress in conserving important natural areas within the region, extending very roughly 100 miles or 160 kilometres inland from the Pacific Coast between northern California and southern Ecuador, including offshore waters and islands.
- b) Discussing the facts with a number of scientists, agriculturalists, foresters and government leaders and officials within the region, and on this basis evaluating the present situation and the possibilities of progress.
- c) Reviewing the main deficiencies and gaps both at the level of survey and information and of planning and developing projects for conservation of further

natural areas necessary in order that the exceptional biological and physiographic treasures of the region shall be worthily represented in the world series.

- d) Preparing reports and budgets on the money manpower equipment and other resources required to achieve the best results for the International Biological Program within the region.
- e) Offering such help and advice as may be needed and desired by governments of the region on the best approach to fulfilment of their inherent responsibilities to posterity for trusteeship of the natural treasures and resources of the region.
- f) Through these means helping to provide a basis for framing wise and effective plans for the fulfilment of the conservation objectives of the IBP.

4. The program of the Field Study and Symposium includes:

- a) Papers to be invited from leading authorities on the ecological and conservation problems and achievements affecting the safeguarding of significant natural areas within the region . See paragraph 6.
- b) Field studies and a strictly limited number of site visits and demonstrations in order to ensure a minimum background appreciation of the problems and potentialities.
- c) Visits to specialist institutions and scientists and to authorities concerned with land-use, forestry, development etc, including a few discussions, seminars or meetings to explain the IBP in its application to the region.
- d) Discussions wherever possible with government leaders.
- e) Review of the project for an Equatorial National Park.
- f) International discussion of the information and experience gained.

g) Subsequent reports to IBP and international and national organisations concerned.

5 The provisional timetable is:

1964

January Assembly of biologists for Darwin Institute program and journey to Galapagos, where study of the islands begins, continue into March 26th (approx) advance party starts field visits in Colombia

(F. Carlos Lehmann)

February 1 (approx) field visit to area of proposed Equatorial National Park in Ecuador led by M. Acosta-Solis, until Feb. 13 (approx)

" 14 Seminar and discussions in Quito

" 15 To Costa Rica

16 - 18 In Costa Rica (Instituto Interamericano de Ciencias Agrícolas, G. Budowski)

19 To Mexico City and on to site of Symposium, probably Acapulco.

20 - 24 Symposium

25 - 5th March (approx) visits to other areas of interest in Central America

5 (ctd)

Also in March a meeting will take place in Ecuador to report on the work of the Darwin Institute.

Among those intending to participate from outside the region are Sir Julian Huxley, E. M. Nicholson, E.H. Graham, & Peter Scott, representing the various international scientific and conservation bodies concerned. Dr. Starker Leopold and other leading biologists from within the region are also expected to participate, including in particular Dr. Enrique Beltran who has kindly offered to act as host and organiser for the Symposium in Mexico.

Informal most generous offers of hospitality and facilities have already been received in respect of Mexico, Ecuador, Colombia & Costa Rica.

- 6 Since the initiation of the necessary papers is urgent it is suggested that those who are invited or may volunteer documentation should so far as practicable cover the following points:

Known areas of high biological physiographic value with name, location, approximate area, access, special natural features, including flora and fauna, state of protection (if any), dangers of damage or destruction, existing use and ownership, and references to published or unpublished survey or scientific work.

Names, locations and descriptions of interests and activities of bodies or individuals concerned with ecology, conservation, forestry or other subjects relevant to the problem of conserving natural areas.

Background information about past events, current developments or future plans which may bear in the problem.

- 7 The above is a summary of the outcome of discussions at the Nairobi meeting of the International Union for Conservation of Nature & Natural Resources on 12-13 September 1963 between members of IUCN's commissions on Ecology and National Parks, the IBP sub-commission on conservation and others, including H.J. Coolidge & E.H. Graham (Washington, Chairmen of the IUCN Commissions E.M. Nicholson (London, Chairman of the IBP sub commission) Starker Leopold (Berkeley) and Sir Julian Huxley (London) & Peter Scott (Slimbridge) Charles Darwin Foundation, M. Acosta-Solis (Quito) G. Budowski (Turrialba, Costa Rica) and F. Carlos Lehmann (Bogotá)