

ANIMAL NEWS

Glasnost has meant benefits for animals in the Soviet Union. The first National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in Russia was established in 1988 following a meeting in Moscow of more than 400 delegates from the 15 Soviet Republics.

Animals International (WSPA)

A two-year world ban on ivory trading, followed by strict regulation of the trade which would be confined to culling managed herds in African countries, was accepted by a United Nations conference in Switzerland in October 1989. The ban was the result of intense international pressure to protect the elephant. Many countries, including Japan (the world's major importer), the E.E.C., U.S.A., Canada and Switzerland banned the importation of ivory in the period leading up to the conference.

Various sources

The anti-poaching measures of Zambia's national parks and wildlife services are "the most revolutionary and exciting in the world", according to Dr. William Reilly, president of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), after visiting that country recently. The model game management authority at Lupande in the Luangwa valley in eastern Zambia, has reduced elephant poaching by 90%.

Panoscope

At a historic meeting held in Annecy, France in late 1988, the World Council of Churches considered the question of the treatment of animals for the first time. This meeting was followed by one in Moscow. The Annecy participants issued recommendations: that the churches and their members acquire knowledge about how animals are treated and in what ways this treatment departs from respect for the animals "as creatures of God"; that the churches encourage their members to buy "cruelty-free" items, avoid meat or animal products produced on factory farms, avoid patronising forms of entertainment that exploit animals.

Network News (INRA)

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) Costa Rica has recently reached agreement with the Ministry of Education on the introduction of a comprehensive humane education programme to be incorporated into the country's primary school curriculum.

Animals International (WSPA)

An Australian authority, the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation, is using computer marketing of animals which means that the animals do not have to travel the long distance to the saleyard and then wait a couple of days, possibly without food and water, before again being transported a long distance to slaughterhouse or farm. Now the purchaser can move the animals directly from the point of origin to the destination. This new initiative was introduced partly on welfare grounds, as well as for economic advantage.

CALM Computer Aided Livestock Marketing Papers

Muslim leaders held a meeting under the auspices of WHO in 1987 and accepted that electrical pre-stunning could be used in the slaughter of animals for the Muslim community, and that this meat would be *halal*. Pre-stunning is very important because it eliminates the need to cast (pull down) the animal, which often involves dislocation of the neck, twisting and breaking of the tails, horns and ribs if the animal is a large one. Pre-stunning also means that the animal does not experience the pain of the knife. In most third world countries animals are still not pre-stunned, but this Muslim recognition of pre-stunning is an important breakthrough for the welfare of animals.

WHO Report

Over the last seven years the living conditions of people in Southern Sudan have been devastated by civil war and famine. In the midst of this crisis the Mundari, one of the ethnic groups in southern Sudan, have maintained ACCOMPLISH (Action Committee for the Promotion of Local Initiative

and Self Help) in the Mundari Area which they set up in 1985. Their concern was first and foremost for the welfare of their cattle and, with the limited resources available, they have trained 25 people in skills to help sick cattle and prevent various animal diseases.

Panoscope

Responding to legal pressure from the Sierra Club and mounting evidence of declining populations due to clearcutting, the U.S. Forest Service announced its plans to protect the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker throughout its range in the southeastern United States. The new policy, which eliminates the use of clearcutting as a harvest method within three-quarters of a mile of woodpecker colonies will affect proposed timber sales on approximately one million acres of national forests in nine states.

Greenlink

There are frequent tales of dolphins rescuing endangered human beings and other animals. Two examples: A school of dolphins fought off a 12-foot shark that attacked a teenage Australian surfer. The shark bit his right hip and lower abdomen before the dolphins drove it away. The dolphins saved his life. He said the school of about 20 dolphins were catching waves with him. Twenty minutes before the attack the dolphins were swimming next to him as if they were warning off the shark. *Evening Standard*. In the Gulf States a school of dolphins helped save three stranded whales after human rescue efforts failed. The three humpback whales were trapped at low tide behind a sandbank on the island of Masirah off the east coast of the gulf state of Oman. Airmen spotted the whales from a helicopter and sent rescue boats in twice to try to shepherd them out to sea. But the whales remained stuck. Then the dolphins joined in the rescue attempt, and the whales were guided out at high tide.

Fellowship of the Inner Light

The Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, a voluntary organisation educating Kenya's schoolchildren on their wildlife heritage, was one of the first winners of UNEP's Global 5000 award scheme for outstanding environmental achievements launched during the year. Included in the Club's programme are regional rallies, mass tree plantings and tours of their mobile film unit to schools throughout the country to show conservation programmes.

UNEP News

A growing number of vets complement their scientific medicine with "alternative" treatments, using homeopathy for example. Acupuncture is increasingly popular in veterinary medicine and is particularly useful for alleviating chronic pain in animals. Some vets also use acupuncture to produce an anaesthetic for cattle.

New Scientist

Of Special Concern

In 1986 the International Whaling Commission declared a moratorium on all commercial whaling for five years, largely as a result of campaigns by environmentalists. 1991 is fast approaching and it is expected that the pro-whaling nations, such as Japan, will exert great pressure for a resumption of commercial whaling. The moratorium allows taking whales for scientific purposes. This has been exploited by Japan, Iceland and Norway. This year Iceland, facing an international boycott of its fish exports organised by Greenpeace, has stopped its scientific programme. Norway has pledged to cut its kill to five but Japan will kill three hundred. The catch is sold as luxury food in Tokyo's fashionable department stores for £70 a pound.

The Guardian

An issue of vital importance for wildlife is the debate on the future of Antarctica. In 1959 twelve nations signed the Antarctic Treaty dedicating themselves to the peaceful pursuit of scientific exploration of the last unspoiled wilderness on