

science systems; mechanisms determining the distribution of benefits from science and technology; the relationship between aid, trade, technology, and development; and the costs and likelihood, from a North point of view, of selective North-South delinking.

A full Report of the Conference is available from the Research Policy Program, University of Lund, Sweden, entitled 'Science, Technology, and Basic Human Needs'.

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MEETING ON MAN AND THE BIOSPHERE PROGRAMME IN THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION, HELD AT SIDE ON THE SOUTH COAST OF TURKEY, 5-11 JUNE 1977

This important UNESCO meeting was convened at the invitation of the Turkish MAB Committee who are to be congratulated on their initiative and its outcome. It was the third in a series for countries in the Mediterranean region, the first being at Potenza, Italy, and the second at Montpellier, France. Largely because of the careful thought and preparatory work stemming from the earlier meetings, this one bore abundant fruit on two main fronts. First there was growing interest and indeed action in choosing and establishing biosphere reserves in the region (Turkey proposed the names of 14 new areas as biosphere reserves), together with a realistic appraisal of what still remained to be done in that respect; secondly, there was an advance in the very concept of the biosphere reserve and what it should be and do.

Basic papers were prepared on these two issues by Professors V. Giacomini of Rome and Quezel of Marseille, respectively, with the latter presenting a survey of the main forest types of the region. When examined against national programmes, this survey showed, rather surprisingly, that nearly two-thirds of the forests of the region and the highly characteristic maquis and garigue communities into which they have been modified by Man, are already contained in biosphere reserves or other protected areas that could become biosphere reserves. The greatest gap is in north-west Africa, though there are others in Spain, the south of France, and the northeastern Mediterranean region. Azonal formations (wetlands, salt-marshes, and riverain forests) should also be included; except in the case of wetlands, information on these tends to be poor. In addition to affording encouragement towards remedying this situation, the Meeting gave special attention to the habitats of threatened species and areas containing concentrations of endemics.

Because it emphasizes both the safeguarding of intact ecosystems and the works of Man, the biosphere reserve idea is particularly appropriate in the Mediterranean region, where there is evidence of past cultures almost everywhere and so much of the landscape, the vegetation, and the animal life, has been shaped by human occupation or at least intervention. In these circumstances it is vital to safeguard the remaining fragments of the original forest which show what it was once like, and to reconstitute vegetation and soils to restore the natural capital that has been dissipated through the ages.

The participants at the Meeting displayed a welcome degree of flexibility in their open approach to conservation, supporting measures ranging from complete protection to guided change in different instances but all taken with the active participation of local communities. What is re-

quired is sensitive and firm land-use planning and competent management applied with due caution. Such a flexible approach requires great skill to apply and maintain, but flexibility must not be a reason for license.

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'GROWTH WITHOUT ECODISASTERS': THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL FUTURE, HELD IN THE HOTEL LOFTLEIDIR, REYKJAVIK, ICELAND, 5-11 JUNE 1977

Public interest in any issue ebbs and flows and always has done. Environment had its time in the early 1970s, perhaps reaching its summit with the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972. That dramatic general view was subsequently replaced on the U.N. scene by more specific concerns—population, food, human habitat, water, desertification, etc. However, to scientists with due environmental appreciation, the environment is so fundamentally 'different' and all-pervading an issue as to be beyond the tides of international fashion. Displaying the necessary special obduracy, scientists eminent in the environmental disciplines gathered together at the invitation of the Government of Iceland to review in general the world environment again five years to the day after the Stockholm Conference began.

They met in Reykjavik, Iceland, which was, as their Prime Minister Geir Hallgrímsson remarked in his welcoming address as Patron of the Conference, an appropriate place as it is on the edge of the normally habitable world and is specially sensitive to environmental changes. The Conference was organized by your Editor, in his capacity as Secretary-General and Editor of the series, on behalf of the primary sponsors, the Foundation for Environmental Conservation, and the intensive programme lasted a week at the Hotel Loftleidir. The general title was 'Growth Without Ecodisasters', and participation was solely by invitation—chiefly of individuals but also of some carefully chosen international organizations. Participants were adjured to speak quite freely in their personal capacities as, commonly, leading specialists.

The agenda were grouped so that the various manifestations of economic growth could be matched with the corresponding possibility of disaster. Energy, scarcities, urbanization, agriculture, fresh and salt waters, and devegetation, together with industrial alternatives, the predominance of Man, the ethics of viability, environmental law, and yet other propitious themes, were all examined by prominent world experts, who had contributed prepared papers each of which was then considered by at least three panellists from different angles before an hour or so of open discussion. The papers were generally of an unusually high standard and it is understood that they will be published, together with the cream of the often lively discussions, in book form on both sides of the Atlantic.*

Maurice Strong, who was Secretary-General of the UN 'Stockholm' Conference on the Human Environment and then first Executive Director of the resulting United Nations Environment Programme, gave the Baer-Huxley Memorial Lecture and found himself agreeing with the

* By Macmillan, of London & Basingstoke, England, and Halsted-Wiley, New York, N.Y., it is hoped already in the Autumn of 1978.—Ed.