

INSTITUTE OF CURRENT WORLD AFFAIRS

IMW-6
Arusha Wildlife Conference

P.O. Box 5113
Nairobi, Kenya
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Mr. Richard H. Nolte
Institute of Current World Affairs
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New York 17, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Nolte:

I've just returned from a conference in Arusha on the conservation of African wildlife. It lasted a week (September 5-12), and although I was unable to attend the first few days which were devoted to technical subjects, I was present for the last days during which more general topics were discussed. The conference was jointly sponsored by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) which was responsible for the technical aspects such as the preparation of fifty-six background papers, and the Commission for Technical Co-operation in Africa South of the Sahara (CCTA) which, with the Government of Tanganyika, was responsible for the practical arrangements and administrative costs. UNESCO and FAO gave the project encouragement and were associate sponsors. The conference was the second of three stages of IUCN's African Special Project 1960-63 (known as ASP). ASP's motivation is summed up in the following:

The peoples of Africa and their administrations should be induced to look favourably upon their unique inheritance of faunal resources. Their responsibilities to future generations in all parts of the world need to be emphasized by all Governments. If this opportunity to save and make use of the unique African fauna and flora is foregone at this time, it will be lost forever. Humanity will once again have sacrificed the eternal to the expedient.

The conference was attended by 185 experts from 26 countries (22 in Africa), including Sir Julian Huxley, Sir Richard Turnbull (Governor of Tanganyika), Julius Nyerere (Prime Minister of Tanganyika), and Bernhard Grzimek (author of Serengeti Shall Not Die), and also Chief Fundikira (Tanganyika's Minister for Legal Affairs) who was Chairman of the Conference and T.S. Tewa (Minister for Lands and Surveys in Tanganyika). A large proportion of the delegates were in responsible positions both administratively and politically in their own countries. Many feel Kenya made a poor showing for there was neither a representative of any African political party nor was there a Government announcement in favor of conservation. In fact the Government failed to show any active interest at all. The Minister for Tourism in Kenya, however, categorically denied the Government had neglected the conference. He said

five members of the Legislative Council had arranged to be present, including the Minister for Health, the president of KANU and himself, but all had considered it more important to attend the constitutional conference taking place in Nairobi. He had tried to get a statement from Mr. Kenyatta, "but he was patently too busy". However, he expects Kenyatta will make a statement soon.

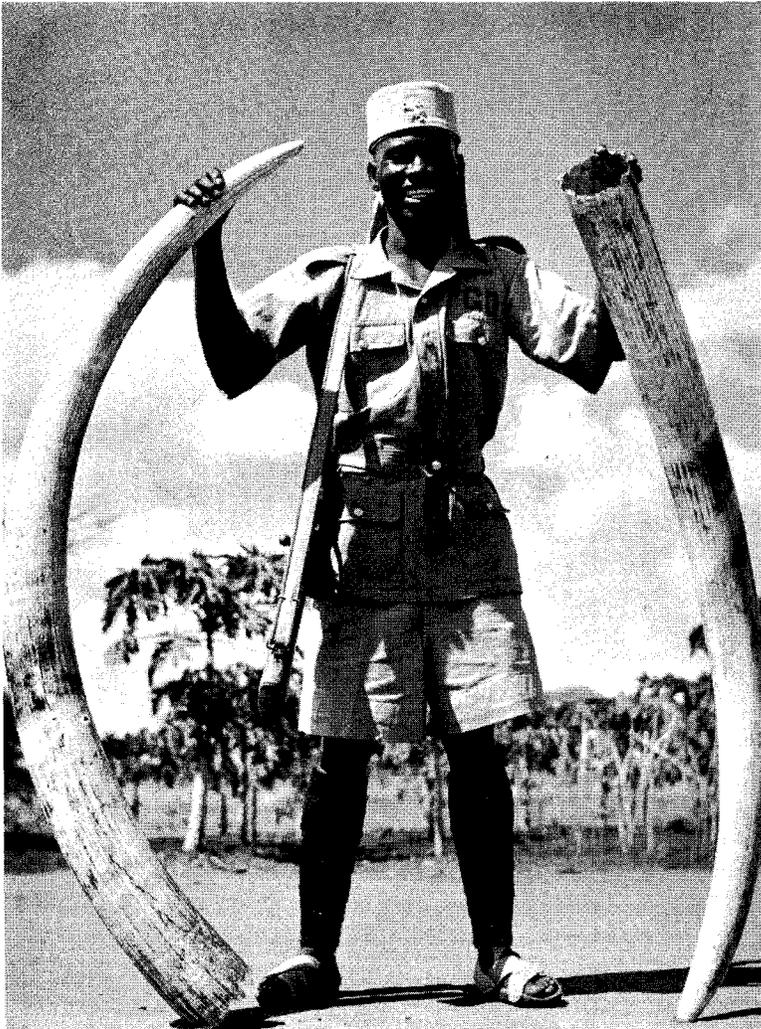
The most exciting moment of the conference came when Chief Fundikira announced from a prepared statement that the Government of Tanganyika accepted responsibility for the preservation of its wildlife. Signed by Nyerere, Fundikira and Tewa and entitled the Arusha Manifesto, it stated:

The survival of our wildlife is a matter of grave concern to all of us in Africa. These wild creatures amid the wild places they inhabit are not only important as a source of wonder and inspiration but are an integral part of our natural resources and of our future livelihood and well-being.

In accepting the trusteeship of our wildlife we solemnly declare that we will do everything in our power to make sure that our children's grandchildren will be able to enjoy this rich and precious heritage.

Delegates greeted the Manifesto with tumultuous applause, and Sir Julian Huxley declared, "This is a landmark for Africa, a landmark for the world at large, and indeed a landmark for the conservation of nature." Fundikira also announced that Tanganyika, in its first budget since achieving self-government, "increased the annual provision of the

A Kamba game scout photographed with two tusks from an African poacher (courtesy Kenya Information Services).



Game Department by some 40%, and further made provision for basic facilities in National Parks which the Trustees may sponsor in the future". He also told the delegates that the title for the responsible ministry will be changed from the "Ministry of Lands and Surveys" to the "Ministry of Lands, Forests, and Wildlife".

Unfortunately, soon afterwards Dr. Grzimek declared that Masai had killed one of the last four rhinos in Ngorongoro Crater the day after the Arusha Manifesto was announced. "It was as if to show how little they cared."

The most dramatic speech of the conference was made by Mervyn Cowie, director of Kenya's Royal National Parks, who bitterly attacked the Kenya Government for betraying the cause of game. "On behalf of the animals I have spent most of my life trying to protect, I put this forward as an S.O.S.--- and an urgent S.O.S.---from the dying plains of Kenya... I feel compelled to inform all delegates of the disastrous situation in regard to preservation of wildlife and its habitat which has now been reached in Kenya. In my opinion, for the past few years the Kenya government has betrayed the cause of conservation. It amounts to a gigantic hoax. On the one hand there have been government statements of game policy, approved by the Legislature, confirming the government's intention to preserve wildlife and to recognise its full value to the economy of the country in a pattern of proper land-use planning. But on the other hand there have been no effective steps taken to implement this policy, or to find the money necessary to do so. It amounts to lip service merely to beguile the architects of the policy and future governments." Mr. Cowie then gave the following examples of the crisis:

- 1) Poaching is worse than ever and a disastrous toll is being taken, especially of rhinos;
- 2) The Game Department has been forced by financial stringency to withdraw three field stations and has had its vote cut by 30%;
- 3) The National Parks' annual Government grant for maintenance has been cut by £10,000;
- 4) The Kenya government has not contributed one penny to the Water for Wild Animals Fund, although in the last few months 54 rhinos and many other animals have died of starvation and thirst; and
- 5) No assistance in kind has been granted, such as the exemption of Customs duty, as in Tanganyika or the free employment of prison labour.

"This is just a glimpse of my catalogue of woe and when delegates visit Tsavo National Park I hope they will not be surprised to see cattle instead of game. There is therefore a crying need for the incoming African government of Kenya to take steps to adopt a more effective wildlife preservation policy, for unless they do so immediately, it may be too late."



(leopard cub)



(dik-dik)

"To acquiesce in its destruction would be a crime; to conserve it in perpetuity is a duty"-----Sir Julian Huxley

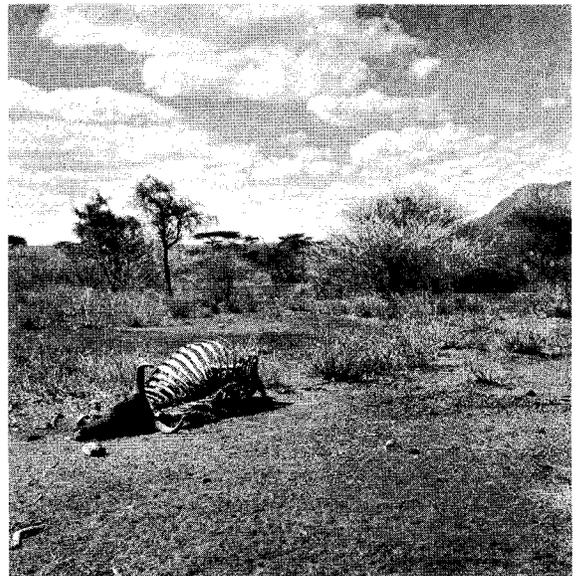
(lion)



Much of the conference was devoted to the problem of developing an appreciation for the need of conservation of nature and natural resources. Most delegates felt that governments had to be shown concrete benefits resulting from conservation before they could reasonably be asked to implement such a policy. Many delegates, however, recognize that certain social factors militate against conservation. I refer specifically to the pressures of an increasing population on government to open up reserved areas for agriculture or cattle. This pressure must be resisted, but in a democratic society the resistance must be positive, not negative. (Poaching is largely a physical problem that has little to do with this problem, the solution of which lies in providing alternative forms of livelihood to the poachers, and in education.) Therefore the electorate must be convinced of the value of game reserves.

The Masai are among those who aren't convinced, and they encountered severe criticism as well as a spirited defence. Sir Richard Turnbull felt the problem was not so much destruction of game as destruction of the habitat, and he said, "One has only to study the barren remnants of those areas to which the Masai have unimpeded access, to recognize the appalling state of affairs that can result from the feckless attitude towards land-use by the nomadic pastoralist." Mr. H.A. Fosbrooke, Chairman of the Ngorongoro Conservation Authority, defended "the much maligned Masai". Where the Masai retained land against European and African encroachment, game had remained, but where Masai had lost their land, wildlife had also disappeared. He considered the tsetse fly an equally good friend of game, for it keeps cattle out of an area, whereas wildlife is immune to its bite. Dr. I. Mann of the Kenya Veterinary Department pointed out that the Masai regarded game as God's children who should not be destroyed, and he risked the wrath of other delegates by suggesting they were neglecting the needs of man. Chief Edward Mbaroti, Paramount Chief of the Tanganyika Masai, reminded everyone that Masai were human beings. "We want to live as other tribes live,... but generally we are ignorant and we need help." He said his tribe was now quite willing to reduce the number of its cattle. "This drought has taught a lot of Masai a lesson."

The drought has been
severe in Masai-land



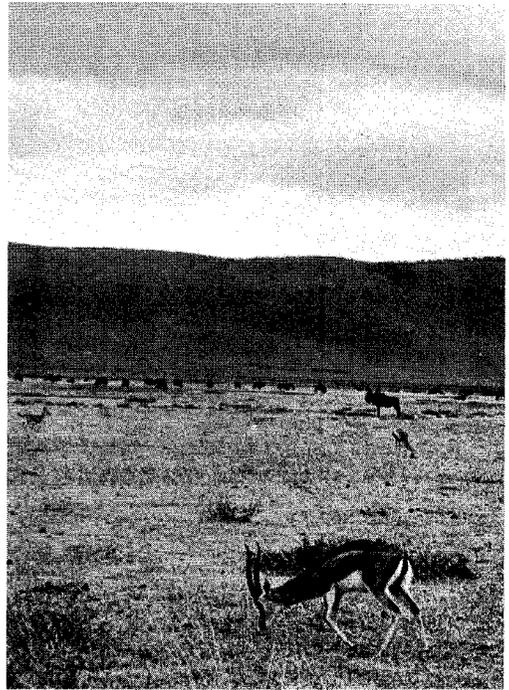
There are, nevertheless, imperative economic reasons for the conservation of game. Tourists provide the main economic return, both directly (entry fees, licences) and indirectly (contributions to the general economy). In Africa the major attraction is naturally

wild animals. Wildlife management (discussed briefly in IMW-5) presents another reason for conserving existing levels of game. Game cropping is practiced in several African states. John Blower, Uganda's Chief Game Warden, described four types of cropping scheme in a background paper: 1) about 700 hippos a year are culled from Queen Elizabeth National Park; 2) 200 male Uganda kob from the Semliki flats have been cropped yielding a profit of 90 shillings per animal (about \$12.50); 3) up to 1000 elephants a year are taken from the Bunyoro District; and 4) controlled hunting schemes. So far all the schemes have worked well and no major difficulties have been encountered.

Many delegates strongly encouraged governments to share the benefits of tourism and cropping with the local authorities, for it is only in this way that Africans will learn the economic value of conservation. In Uganda all fees from controlled hunting schemes revert to local authorities. Some suggested the establishment of more tribal parks after the pattern of Amboseli, which has recently been transferred from the Royal National Parks to the Kajiado African District Council and is now known as the Masai Amboseli Game Reserve. Unfortunately too often in the past the cash benefits of tourism and cropping have only indirectly found their way into local coffers.

There are also other incentives. R.M. Bere, former Director and Chief Warden of Uganda National Parks, feels "Economic interest (except in its simplest form relating to pecuniary advantage of the individual) is a sophisticated interest still largely undeveloped in Africa." He considers the most powerful incentives to be "pride in reputation and status as well as what may best be described as culture". The heritage of wildlife is part of this background, and here clearly is a point from which to develop an interest in conservation.

In order to carry out successfully the plans suggested at the conference, three things are needed: further research, trained personnel and money. The need for research is obvious. Unless governments have the results of research in a wide variety of fields, they will not have the information necessary to implement policies such as game cropping. These policies must be based upon precise factual detail or much harm can be done.



This Thomson's Gazelle has tender and succulent meat.

Another obvious need is for properly trained and qualified staff, particularly Africans. There are a number of qualified European wardens and many African scouts, but the middle ranks are almost entirely missing. Strangely enough the position is aggravated by the rapid Africanization of the civil service, because the career doesn't offer the same advancement as others, and also because there are no sources from which Africans suited to higher posts in wildlife departments can be drawn. Bruce Kinloch, Chief Game Warden of Tanganyika, feels there are two urgent problems. The first is that educated Africans suitable for senior posts should be selected and sent abroad for extensive training. For the middle ranks the obvious answer is to establish wildlife management training schools. One is planned for East Africa which will be based at Arusha, but finances seem to be a major stumbling block.

But the number of African graduates who want to do this type of work and are suitable is very small indeed. Professor Beadle of Makerere College suggested that since the father is an overriding factor in the choice of a career, a diploma in tropical ecology would give increased status to the field, and thus it might be easier to attract qualified workers.

Finally, financial need permeated the whole meeting. Money, or the lack of it, precludes the implementation of most new policies. Unless sizable sums are immediately forthcoming for a variety of projects, there may be no game for Africans or anyone to be proud about. During the conference there were several indications that more money will become available in the near future.

Few conferences worth their salt, adjourn without resolutions, and this one passed a number of them. Among others, the conference:

- 1) notes the earnest desire of modern African states to protect wildlife;
- 2) urges governments to consider IUCN as the organization responsible for advising them on how best to proceed in their overall plans for land-use and development;
- 3) urges governments to increase facilities for education and training in conservation;
- 4) recommends research and planning in wildlife management;
- 5) recommends that the contribution which economists can make to the principles and techniques of development of natural resources should be thoroughly reviewed;
- 6) congratulates the Republic of Congo (Leopoldville) for its admirable attitude toward the National Parks, an example without precedent in Africa; and
- 7) recognizes the need to create throughout Africa a type collection of natural habitats assured of

definite preservation and constituting a representative sample of as many varied environments as possible.

On the last day Mervyn Cowie said, "This conference is the last stand in a rearguard action we have all been fighting in Africa for a long time and it is an effective one." John Owen added, "In this action what I want are bullets and shells, and all I get is experts. I want money that I can deploy in the fastest possible time."

The meeting ended on a note of hope, and its conclusion marked the beginning of the third stage of IUCN's African Special Project. IUCN has hired two consultants (a wildlife management specialist and an education officer) who will be available on request to advise African governments on wildlife problems and integrating wildlife policies.

Theodore Monod, in a background paper, theoretically suggested three chronological stages in the relationship between man and nature: submission, aggression and responsibility. One of the urgent reasons for calling the meeting was to impress upon newly emergent and emerging nations of Africa the values of establishing and maintaining a system of national parks and game reserves. Several new African governments have shown themselves more conservation-minded than their colonial predecessors. If indeed we are entering into an age of responsibility toward natural resources, as Monod contends, conservationists can face the future with confidence.

Very sincerely yours,



Ian Michael Wright

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