

## MOUNTAIN PROTECTED AREAS UPDATE

*Lawrence S. Hamilton, Vice-Chair for Mountains*  
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*World Commission on Protected Areas/IUCN*

Ordinarily we start each UPDATE newsletter with a quotation that extols mountains. Lest we be accused of blind bias for mountains, we start this one with writing of the "rebel" philosopher Henry David Thoreau, the man who left city life to be a "hermit" in the countryside (wilderness) near Concord Massachusetts. This was written about his ascent of Mount Katahdin in Maine (1505 m), whose summit area he called a "cloudworks" and he writes that up here Nature has got man alone, at a disadvantage, and "pilfers him of some of his divine faculty".

*She does not smile on him as in the plains. She seems to say sternly, why came ye here before your time? This ground is not prepared for you. Is it not enough that I smile in the valleys? I have never made this soil for thy feet, this air for thy breathing, these rocks for thy neighbors. I cannot pity nor fondle thee here, but forever relentlessly drive thee hence to where I am kind. ... Shouldst thou freeze or starve, or shudder thy life away, here is no shrine, nor altar, nor any access to my ear.*

*Henry David Thoreau, from his journal 1846.*

Thoreau perchance has something to say about the proposed climb of the sacred Mount Kailas, referred to in our last issue:

*The tops of mountains are amongst the unfinished parts of the globe, whither it is a slight insult to the gods to climb and pry into their secrets, and try their effect on our humanity. Only daring and insolent men, perchance, go there. Simple races, as savages, do not climb mountains, -- their tops are sacred and mysterious tracts never visited by them. "Pomola" is always angry with those who climb to the summit of Ktaadn (Katahdin).*

Thoreau was unfortunately using the language of his times in referring to indigenous people as "savages". Moreover I do not think he is universally correct in his statement. Under pilgrimage conditions of reverence, Mount Fuji's summit area is visited and I believe Kilimanjaro is climbed by pilgrims who regard it as a sacred mountain. Perhaps our sacred mountains expert *Ed Bernbaum* will give us his thoughts on ascents of holy mountains. Do not let the above turn anyone off from reading Thoreau, --one of the earliest and greatest of American nature writers.

### **Follow Up on Proposed Climb of Mount Kailas**

The threat to sacred Mount Kailas (Tibet) published in the last issue has been aborted, and perhaps the threat was slightly overblown by two scary press items. Thanks to *Elizabeth Byers* of The Mountain Institute, we have received a subsequent account, which follows.

International protests by mountaineers have halted what would have been the first ascent of Mount Kailas, a Tibetan mountain held sacred by Hindus and Buddhists. *Jesús Martínez Novas*, a Spanish mountaineer, had planned to "broadcast a message of peace" from the Himalayan peak, which is believed by some to be "the navel of the world" and the abode of a pantheon of deities. In mid-June however, the climber announced that he had called off his project because of "the overwhelmingly negative response".

He had sought permission by the Chinese authorities to climb the mountain, despite a tradition among mountaineers to refrain from tackling Kailas because of its religious significance. In 1985, the celebrated

German mountaineer Reinhold Messner set out to ascend the mountain, but was dissuaded by colleagues, one of whom said: "One should not trample in mountain boots on gods turned to stone."

Fears that Kailas faced a fresh threat of desecration from crampons and pitons provoked protests not only from Buddhists and Hindus but also from other mountaineers, who say they normally avoid sacred peaks in deference to local sentiments. Besides this, they were worried that an ascent might open the floodgates to commercial climbs.

"Not one mountaineer I've spoken to approved of this," said Doug Scott, a British climber and the president of the Alpine Club, who himself stopped short of the summit of another Himalayan peak, Kangchenjunga in 1979 because the local Sikkimese regard it as sacred. Mr. Scott said: "It's something that must never happen. It would open Kailas to all commercial groups and it would be such a kick in the teeth to the Tibetans, not to mention a billion Hindus." At 22,000 ft, Kailas in southwest Tibet, is not considered a particularly challenging climb, but has never been conquered. It is the source of three great rivers and is also the mythical source of the Ganges. The compelling, dome-shaped peak, rising above a desolately beautiful 13,000 ft plateau of rainbow-colored rocks, has long been on of the most important pilgrimage destinations for Buddhists and Hindus, in addition to Jains and the followers of Tibet's pre-Buddhist shamanist religion, Bon Po.

When questioned by a representative from the American Alpine Club about this climb, Novas stated that he had contacted the Dalai Lama and if HHDL was opposed, he would abide by that decision. The Dalai Lama has now spoken against it and Novas has agreed to give up this adventure. Important to note is that he never had a permit from the Chinese. He considered the permit secondary to the support of the Dalai Lama. He had spoken with someone at the Chinese Consulate in Madrid and they had agreed to find out whether it was possible and report back to him in June. Novas now states that even if permission is given, he will not go. The Chinese government has been heavily criticized for giving a permit. In fairness, it should be reported to the public that at this time there is no permit.

Editor's Note: Surely such sacred places should have official protection in place so that any such proposal for impairment does not even get off the ground. A resolution calling on all member governments to protect religious sites has been introduced at the United Nations by the representatives of Austria and Hungary. Mount Kailas is worthy of consideration as a World Heritage Site according to *Jim Thorsell*, who is an IUCN consultant on World Heritage. Hopefully it will be discussed at a UNESCO meeting which takes place this month in Japan.

### **Getting Acquainted with Baxter State Park, USA**

Mount Katahdin (the subject of our opening quotation) is the centerpiece of the State of Maine's Baxter State Park. At 1605 m (5268 ft), it is the highest summit in Maine, and it is the current northern terminus of the famed Appalachian Trail, though plans are being implemented to extend the Trail into an International Trail that goes as far as the Gaspé Peninsula in Québec. Baxter State Park at 82,850 ha (204,730 acres) is one of the largest state parks in the USA. It was created out of private land thanks to a former State Governor, Percival Baxter who made his initial purchase of Mount Katahdin and surrounding 6,000 acres in 1930. He gave this to the State with the condition that it be kept as wild land. The core 61,000 ha (150,560 acres) is a wildlife sanctuary while hunting and trapping are permitted in one large area, and scientifically-based forest management in another.

The Park Director "*Buzz*" Caverly has been employed in the Park and then been Director for several decades. He knows practically every square meter of the area and of course, all of the 290 km (180 miles) of trails. There is a lot to be said for long-term tenure. Buzz was a genial and generous host to Larry and Linda on our July visit to Baxter. His dedication and love of the Park are a joy to experience.

Mount Katahdin was revered by the Penobscot Indians, and it is listed in *Ed Bernbaum's* book *Sacred Mountains of the World*. Legends portray the mountain spirit variously as a friendly giant guardian or a

vengeful, winged, storm bird and it was called "Pamola". Most Indians were reluctant to ascend to the dangerous, stormy summit. Buzz gave us a delightful book written by a modern day guide who had a friendly relationship with Pamola and depicts the spirit as having the wings, legs and beak of an eagle, arms and torso of a human and antlers and head of a moose. Buzz is apparently on friendly terms with Pamola, and certainly with the local moose, for he was able to provide us with an up-close and lengthy encounter with one of the Park's big guys. We look forward to returning for another visit.

### **Chinese Snow Mountains Field Report**

*Jim Lassoie, Department of Natural Resources, Cornell University*

We were in the far northwestern part of the province between the Mekong River and the Tibetan border, based out of The Nature Conservancy's office in Deqin. Did some ethnobotany hikes into the alpine around Deqin (beat my 1963 record for elevation, hiking to greater than 14,500 ft (4,420 m) in preparation for a 6-hour climb to the village of Yubeng at the foot of 22,000 ft (6,706 m) Kawagebo (part of the Meili (Snow) Mountain Range that straddles the Yunnan-Tibet border). Kawagebo is the second holiest mountain in Tibetan Buddhism and every year tens of thousands of pilgrims take 2-3 weeks to circle it. Kawagebo itself has never been climbed, and in 1991, 16 Japanese climbers were killed in mass by an avalanche after local monks prayed for some days for a failure. (Take home message: Don't mess with monks!)

Yubeng is actually two villages (Upper and Lower), each with its own leader, that were founded at the same time on the only relatively flat areas around two adjacent valley bottoms; they are separated by a rather tough hike across a deeply cut river gorge. They are traditional Buddhist villages focused on agriculture, non-timber forest products (especially medicinal plants and mushrooms), and grazing (pigs, cows, and yaks). Yubeng has night-time electricity from a mini-hydro plant (Ever try reading by a 15-watt light bulb?), no local schooling opportunities beyond the third grade, no nearby access to "modern" medical facilities, one traditional-medicine "doctor", about 160 inhabitants, and apparently high infant mortality rates. The area is accessible only by foot or horse/mule (a mountain bike could do it, but they are few and far between). Having tried a mule for half an hour in Dominican Republic last year, I opted for sore feet! Yubeng is a wonderful place marked by Buddhist tradition, "sacred geography" (a Nature Conservancy term), thousands of years of human (and animal) impacts, and spectacular sweeping topographically extreme, landscapes. The region is "center of the plate" for TNC's Yunnan Great Rivers Conservation Project owing to its rich biological and cultural diversity.

Timber extraction in the Yubeng region has been minimal owing to the lack of accessibility and appears to be limited to local uses. The province-wide ban on timber harvesting in 1998 has caused major financial hardships at the local level making community development and maintenance of service infrastructures almost impossible. There is widespread hope that by increasing tourism such losses in revenue would be offset. Needless-to-say, Yubeng is "ripe" for expanded ecotourism, but there is wide concern about the ecological and cultural impacts resulting from bringing more outsiders to the region, despite them infusing needed cash into Yubeng's very limited economy. Concern comes from locals as well as TNC staff and other conservation-minded individuals and groups in China and elsewhere. There are currently two modest, but comfortable (beds and a roof), tourist "lodges" (one in each village). Our lodge even added an outhouse recently (the only one I saw in Yubeng)! We used a commercial tourism company from Deqin to arrange our trip owing to the size of the group. I expect there are others arranging trips to Yubeng and other locations throughout the NW Yunnan, including some in Zhongdian, the nearest city with an airport (6 hours from Deqin by car or bus over a winding, dirt road). Deqin itself is in a river valley with no prospect for an airport (except for helicopters?). TNC folks expect this will limit the type and quantity of eco-tourism that can occur in the region.

### **Ecotourism in Russia's Sacrosanct Zapovedniks?**

*Taken from Russian Conservation News, Natalia Maralyova and Elena Ledovskikh.*

Tourism in Russia's zapovedniks has become an important topic of discussion in recent years, particularly as these nature reserves try to subsist on the small budgets the federal governments allots them. Initially, zapovedniks were chartered as strictly protected areas in which nature could flourish untouched by human development. Only scientists were permitted into the reserves to conduct research. The current economic climate in Russia, however, has forced the staff of many zapovedniks to reconsider their strict stance against public access to the nature they are trying to protect. Today zapovedniks receive about 20-40% of the amount of federal funding that they received in Soviet times, not nearly enough to cover basic needs, much less scientific research. In search of new sources of funding, some zapovedniks have considered introducing ecotourism into the regions in and around the protected areas.

Ideally, ecotourism would bring much needed income to the zapovednik system. Such activity could also help to boost local economies, thereby building support for conservation among communities that benefit from the reserves' tourism activities.

Still, Russia is a long way off from attracting large numbers of ecotourists. Political uncertainty and lack of infrastructure is a disincentive for western tourists who like adventure, but with some degree of comfort and security. As a rule, local tourists have little disposable income for tourism. Despite these challenges, zapovednik directors are forging ahead in an era of reserve management, one that requires new methods of building support and generating income. Targetted for ecotourism development in 4 regions, are 3 mountain areas: Caucasus, Altai-Sayan and Kamchatka. For information on one ecotourism activity, try [www.ecotours.ru](http://www.ecotours.ru).

### **EUROPARC Consulting**

This year, EUROPARC Federation entered the consulting business with the establishment in April of a limited company, "EUROPARC Consulting GmbH". It can provide expertise from its pan-European network of practitioners who have day-to-day field experience. The services it can provide include: offering solutions to practical management issues relating to protected areas; designing and delivering training opportunities relating to any aspect of protected area management; advising government agencies on protected area systems and structures; developing strategies for varied fields of protected area work including environmental education, interpretation, public relations, ranger services, sustainable tourism, visitor management; and undertaking fact-finding and advisory missions. *Patrizia Rossi* is Vice-Chair of the Advisory Board. Contact Rachel Gray, [r.gray@europarc.org](mailto:r.gray@europarc.org). [www.ecotours.ru](http://www.ecotours.ru)

### **Island Mountain Research - PABITRA**

For lack of current information, mountains in small oceanic islands have been somewhat neglected in UPDATE, so we especially welcome news from researchers and managers in these important mountain areas. Thanks to *Dieter Mueller-Dombois* (Hawai'i) we previously carried an article on PABITRA, the Pacific-Asia Biodiversity Transect. This international research project connects "gateway" high islands having forest mountains or highlands across the Pacific from the Marquesas and Hawai'i west through Fiji to Indonesia. The transects for study range from the summits to the sea.

In June of this year at the 10th Pacific Science Inter-Congress meeting in Guam, a new leading PABITRA topic was formulated, "The Ecology of Landscape Disturbance in Oceania: From Cloud Forest to Coral Reef". The next meeting will occur at the East West Center in Hawai'i September 25-28, at the Global Biodiversity Forum for the Pacific. A field meeting in Fiji is being considered for early November. Mt PA Network member *Jim Juvik* is also involved deeply in PABITRA activities relating to watersheds, especially cloud forest components.

### **Where Can Grizzly Bears Live?**

*Jeff Gailus, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative*

The Yellowstone to Yukon (Y2Y) Conservation Initiative has just finished the first piece of a complex puzzle that will eventually help define and designate adequate habitat for all species of wildlife in the Rocky Mountain ecoregion north of Yellowstone National Park. The Y2Y Grizzly Bear Habitat Suitability Model is a snapshot of the 1.2 million km<sup>2</sup> Y2Y ecoregion as seen through the eyes of a grizzly bear. It was created so scientists, conservationists and land managers could get an idea which places are safe and productive enough to support grizzly bears. Eventually we will be able to identify which specific areas grizzlies need to move from one protected area to another.

"This is cutting edge stuff," says Dr. Troy Merrill, who developed the model along with Dr. David Mattson. "It's the first time we've been able to accurately calculate grizzly bear density over a large area based on the amount and types of food available in a particular area." Using the best available data on grizzly bears, Merrill and Mattson calculated the habitat productivity and the habitat effectiveness of the entire landscape within the Y2Y ecoregion. Habitat productivity minus habitat effectiveness equals habitat suitability, a relative indicator of which areas are best suited to support a viable grizzly bear population.

Habitat productivity is expressed as the number of grizzly bears per 100 km<sup>2</sup> of land, which is based on the abundance and quality of food sources in that area. Because there is a direct link between the quality and abundance of food and the number of cubs that survive long enough to establish their own home ranges, habitat productivity corresponds to birth rate. The more productive an area is, the more bears will be born, and the more will survive into adulthood.

Habitat effectiveness, on the other hand, corresponds to death rate. Most grizzly bears that survive beyond weaning age (2-4 years old) are killed by humans. Each time a bear comes into contact with humans there is some risk the bear will be killed. The likelihood that a bear will be killed increases exponentially with the number of times that bear comes into contact with humans. Habitat effectiveness, therefore, is determined by the distance from population centers (cities and towns), the total resident human population in each area, and the number of roads and trails in the area.

When you subtract effectiveness from habitat productivity you get habitat suitability. Habitat suitability is a value that indicates whether or not a grizzly bear can live safely in a given place. It is important to note that this value is relative, that is, we can say one area is better than another area but we cannot say how many bears a suitable area will produce.

Y2Y commissioned the grizzly bear habitat suitability model as one piece of a complex computer model that will be able to describe the suitability of the Y2Y ecoregion as habitat for carnivores, birds, fish and other aquatic species, and elk. The carnivore component of the model will include habitat assessments for 10 different species, including black bears, wolves, wolverine, cougar, lynx, fisher, and marten. The avian component will assess habitat suitability in the Y2Y ecoregion for a variety of bird species, and the aquatics component will assess the ecological integrity of each major watershed in the same region. Elk habitat will also be included.

The Y2Y Conservation Initiative is a network of over 300 Canadian and US organizations, institutions, foundations, and conservation-minded individuals who value the unique natural heritage of the Yellowstone to Yukon ecoregion and the quality of life it offers to residents and visitors alike. The region is home to some of the world's most spectacular wilderness, a rich diversity of wild habitats and creatures, and a wonderful variety of human communities and cultures. Aware that the Y2Y mountain ecosystem itself is one of the last in the world to retain all of its native species and natural processes, the network's mission is to ensure that it remains intact, functioning as a "web of life" capable of supporting the natural and human communities that live within it. This web will consist of a network of habitat strongholds, movement corridors, and transition zones that will be managed to allow wide-ranging carnivores and other species to persist over the long term. To join the network or get more information about Y2Y Conservation Initiative, or to view the grizzly bear habitat suitability map, please visit the Y2Y website at [www.y2y.net](http://www.y2y.net).

## **Restoration of Wolves to Olympic National Park, USA**

*David Morris, Superintendent, Olympic National Park*

The gray wolf occurred historically throughout the Olympic Peninsula, including the area currently within Olympic NP. As happened throughout most of the western US, by 1930 wolves in what is now Olympic NP were essentially eliminated by trapping and poisoning. We have long acknowledged the need to explore the possibility of wolf restoration in Olympic NP, and in fact, restoration of wolves to the Olympic Peninsula was first proposed in 1935 by noted wildlife biologist Adolph Murie. In 1981, a National Park Service Advisory Board recommended exploring restoration of wolves to 2 national parks, Olympic and Yellowstone.

In 1997, the Defenders of Wildlife and US Congressman Norm Dicks initiated the most recent, and most thorough assessment of wolf restoration in Olympic NP. In that effort, Olympic staff worked closely with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Forest Service, State of Washington, and local Indian tribes. The study, released in 1999, concluded that wolf restoration to Olympic NP was biologically feasible. It determined that approximately 56 wolves could be expected to occupy the park, with 125-160 predicted for the entire Olympic Peninsula. It also concluded that most of the wolves would remain in the park and Wilderness portions of the adjacent Olympic National Forest. Finally, the study identified several critical data gaps that must be filled in, most notably information on wolf prey base, road density and access, before an environmental impact assessment and recovery plan can be written.

A poll commissioned by Defenders of Wildlife indicated that over 50% of Olympic Peninsula residents support wolf restoration. However, in several Town Hall meetings around the Peninsula, the majority of respondents opposed wolf reintroduction. Both the study and public involvement clearly illustrates the complex, highly emotional, social, cultural and management challenges associated with the proposal. If any wolf restoration effort is to go forward, a large component of the effort must be geared towards public outreach and education. This is especially critical in the Olympic Peninsula, because the Town Hall meetings stirred up those who are opposed to wolf restoration, and disseminated misleading information about wolf biology, restoration and management.

While there are presently no active initiatives underway to restore wolves to Olympic NP, park biologists continue to work on several questions and issues critical to the wolf restoration process. At present we are conducting research on black-tailed deer to fill in some of the prey base data gaps. That study will be completed in 2002. The park is also beginning the preparation of a new General Management Plan. This 3-4 year process will provide another forum to once again publicly discuss with Peninsula residents the questions and concerns surrounding wolf restoration to the park.

### **A New Corridor in Venezuela**

Fudena (Fundación para la Defensa de la Naturaleza) has just started a project aiming at interlinking 5 national parks on the Sierra de Portuguesa, the northeast extreme of the Venezuelan Andes. Terepaima, Yacambú, Guache, Dinira and Guaramacal are 5 Andean national parks established in different years and under different circumstances. The maximum distance between the parks at both ends of the Sierra is 78 km. Habitat tendency is towards fragmentation but linking possibilities still exist and will be thoroughly assessed. Alternatives to linking parks are open, from wildlife reserves to buffer zones or private reserves. Among expected results are parks enlargements, updated land use policies to avoid fragmentation and incorporation of local people into sustainable forest use practices. Watershed protection will be a key important benefit to regional development. This project has one year financing from World Wildlife Fund, through its Northern Andes Ecoregional Complex Program. For more information, contact *Edgard Yereña*, our active Mt PA Network member who is coordinator of the project ([euзcateg@reacciun.ve](mailto:euзcateg@reacciun.ve)).

### **Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Area Established**

June 11 witnessed an important development in regional cooperation between South Africa and Lesotho as the Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Mr. Valli Moosa, together with his counterpart in Lesotho, Mrs. Mathabiso Lepono, Minister of Environment, Gender and Youth Affairs, signed a historic Memorandum of Understanding between the countries and thus establishing the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Area.

The TFCA is 8,113 km<sup>2</sup>, made up of 5,170 km<sup>2</sup> (64%) in Lesotho and 2,943 km<sup>2</sup> (36%) in South Africa, and is a transboundary initiative that forms an important component of the Millennium Africa Recovery Programme (MAP). The Maloti-Drakensberg TFCA is an integrative program that includes a Transfrontier Conservation Area, a World Heritage Site which was inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List in December 2000, and a tourism-based Spatial Development Initiative. The Memorandum of Understanding establishes a framework for cooperation between the two countries for the purposes of conserving biological diversity, promoting regional economic and sustainable development of the area.

The key to this initiative is to manage the area as an undivided ecosystem for the benefit of biological diversity, cultural heritage, research, tourism and the community of the two countries, and therefore enhance the region's overall development. Mt PA Network member *Trevor Sandwith* has had a leadership role, and devoted a large portion of his time over the past few years to bring this to fruition, as Head of Conservation Planning in the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Service. He is now with Cape Action Plan for the Environment.

### **Air Quality in Mt Protected Area of the USA**

From park to park, the main culprits of air pollution vary. Coal-fired power plants can be among the worst haze-producers. But key pollutants also include vehicle exhaust, dusty particulates thrown up from the road by speeding semi trailers, and pollution drifting from smelters and refineries. "We are having visibility problems across the entire national park system due to pollution," says John Bunyak of the National Park Service's air resources division, in a recent interview in *The Christian Science Monitor*. Park officials say rising pollution is not only taking the visual edge off finely etched escarpments, gliding hawks, and other sights. It also threatens the health of plants and ecosystems. Great Smoky Mountains NP, which attracts 10 million visitors a year, has logged 135 unhealthy air days in the past two years. In fact, Great Smoky Mountains NP and Big Bend NP (Texas) each recently were included on an annual list of the nation's 10 most "endangered" parks, based in good measure on their air-quality problems. The National Parks Conservation Association, a Washington-based non-profit organization released the list earlier this month. While scientists say visibility once averaged about 90 miles in Eastern parks and 140 miles in the West, the averages have now dropped to 18-40 miles and 35-90 miles, respectively. Acadia NP in Maine, has seen rising mercury levels from coal-fired power plants, and ozone levels have exceeded healthy levels 5 times so far in 2001. The NPCA and the Sierra Club have sued the nation's largest utility, the Tennessee Valley Authority, to curb emissions from 11 coal-burning power plants they say affect vistas at Great Smoky Mountains NP. The TVA says it has begun an \$800 million effort to reduce emissions. Network member *Erik Hauge* keeps us posted about all aspects of air quality in PAs. See webpage <http://vista.cira.colostate.edu/improve>, and UPDATE No. 27 for a summary of Erik's activities with the E-Team.

### **Cordillera del Cóndor Peace Transborder Reserve**

*Carlos Ponce, Conservation International*

Work is now under way to create and sustain a large "peace and conservation" reserve on the Perú/Ecuador border. The region in question, --the Cóndor mountain range--had been the subject of a long-running territorial dispute between Perú and Ecuador; in a new era of peace, the idea was to dedicate the area to conservation and to find sustainable livelihood options for the people living there. (See UPDATE March 1999.)

The Ecuadorean part of the proposed reserve covers about 770,000 ha (1.9 million acres) and is inhabited by about 88,000 people comprising 3 ethnic groups (mestizos, Shuar and Saraguro). It includes tracts of slightly disturbed or undisturbed natural forest, particularly in the watersheds of the Coangos and Nagaritza Rivers and the upper reaches of the Cónдор Range. On the Peruvian side, some 1.64 million ha (4.05 million acres), including the watersheds of the Santiago, Cenepa and Comaina Rivers, are dedicated to the new Transboundary conservation reserve. The boundaries encompass the territories of the Aguaruna and Huambisa indigenous communities, which together comprise some 25,000 people. The landscape is mainly mountainous and hilly and strongly dissected, and the climate is characterized by cloudiness and very high rainfall. The area constitutes a key element in the hydro-biological cycle of the region, because it is a merging point for the Andean and Amazon regions and is an important refuge for many taxonomic groups and species.

### **Economic Value of Tourism in the Australian Alps**

This is a joint project of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee (AALC) and the CRC Tourism at the University of Canberra. Its aim is to measure the economic impact of tourism to the entire Australian alpine areas, including the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales and Victoria, over all 4 seasons. La Trobe University is assisting with the data collection in Victoria.

The methodology of data collection will be a questionnaire printed on two sides of a single sheet of paper, which will be distributed through Visitor Centers, and other means. A lottery incentive prize of \$500 will be used to encourage a good response rate. (Editor's Note: This idea may appeal to others conducting surveys?) Reply paid envelopes will be used, as well as return bins to be placed in centers throughout the study area. It is hoped that the cooperation of various business houses can be obtained to assist with the distribution and collection of questionnaires. The data analysis from this project will enable measurement to be made of the economic impact on each of Victoria, NSW, and the ACT of visitation to their respective alpine areas. The analysis will also show what economic value is placed on each of the State/Territory alpine areas by the visitors who use them.

### **More on the Cable Car Project for Machu Picchu**

*From World Heritage News*

The Peruvian press reported on May 21, 2001 that the cable car project for Machu Picchu has been suspended indefinitely by the Minister of Industry, Tourism, Integration and International Trade. The Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1983 as a mixed (cultural and natural) World Heritage Site. The cable car project has been under discussion since the Peruvian government, some 5 years ago, decided to give out a concession for the study and eventual construction of a cable car as a means of access to the ruins of the Inca city at the heart of the Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu. From the beginning, the World Heritage Committee took the position that the access to the Sanctuary and the ruins should be studied in the context of integral planning for the whole of the site and that alternative solutions should be considered. Upon the request of the Committee a joint UNESCO, IUCN and ICOMOS mission was undertaken to the site in October 1999. The mission made specific recommendations on the management and preservation of the site and concluded that any decision on the implementation of means of access to the ruins should be based upon in-depth studies of its carrying capacity and arrangements for the management of tourist flows and facilities.

Over the past years, the Peruvian Government has taken some important steps for the improvement of the management of the site. A Master Plan was prepared and adopted and an inter-institutional management unit was created for the coordination and supervision of all interventions in the site. The decision to suspend the cable car project now opens the way to the undertaking of the necessary studies and a well-considered approach to the management of an ever increasing flow of visitors.

### **Rare Fir in Sicilian Regional Park in Madonie Mountains**

The Madonie Mountains of Sicily rise to a height of 1,979 m. They are home to several endemics, and an important center of plant diversity of the plant rich Tyrrhenian Sea islands including the recently designated World Heritage Aeolian Islands, as well as Corsica and Sardinia. Sicily has a flora of 2,650 taxa, 10% of which are endemic. Between 1,500 and 1,700 of these occur in the Madonie Mountains. In Madonie's hidden valley, Madonna degli Angeli PA, is found the rare fir *Abies nebrodensis*. Once widespread in the mountains, some 30 mature trees and 30 juveniles (each numbered and located by GPS) are restricted to about 100 ha at 1,400-1,650 m in elevation. These are now protected in core zone A, and one of the important threats, --alien conifers-- is being controlled. Each tree has a 200 m exclusion zone to visitors, without appointments. Grazing is restricted in the valley.

Offspring have been raised *ex-situ* and some 30,000 trees have been reintroduced throughout the Madonies, though with a high failure rate. In order to preserve a larger bank of germplasm, "adoption" trees have been distributed to the gardens of nearby summer villas and second homes. These have the proviso that they are available for monitoring and seed collection. "Adoption" is a creative strategy often for rare species, including animals, --see "Wolf adoption" item in Bits and Pieces.

Other efforts at conserving Sicily's mountain flora at Rocca Busambra (1,613 m) are also described in the Akeroyd article entitled "Rare firs and fan-palms lead conservation in Sicily".

### **Proposed Wilderness in New Hampshire, USA**

The White Mountain national Forest located in northern New Hampshire (Vermont's neighbor to the east), encompasses approximately 316,000 ha of public land. The National Forest is visited by 7 million people a year, --more visitors than the National Parks of Yellowstone and Yosemite combined. Today, there are 4 Wilderness areas designated on the forest totaling roughly 48,564 ha. No Wilderness has been designated on the forest since 1984. One key area is the Sandwich Range, home to bobcat, moose, black bear, pine marten, boreal chickadees, spruce grouse and the yellow-bellied sapsucker. Currently Friends of the Sandwich Range are seeking an expansion of the existing Sandwich Range Wilderness Area. The expansion would essentially double the size of the 10,117 ha Wilderness area that lies at the southern end of the forest. The groups have been talking to the State's Congressional delegation and taking slide shows to local communities and other local organizations and working to build broad support for these proposed Wilderness areas.

### **The Danger of a Bonfire**

*Léo Nascimento, Director, Itatiaia National Park, Brasil*

The National Park of Itatiaia, the first one created in Brasil, has 12,150 ha. Two hundred and forty-five of its High Lands, with specific and peculiar fauna and flora, were burned by a fire started on Wednesday July 18, around 4:30 pm, when two tourists from São Paulo, 14 and 22 years of age, lost in the Prateleiras, decided to make a bonfire. Ironically, they lit the fire using a Park's Environment Education Program pamphlet that states as its first warning: "*Do not make a bonfire in the conservation unit!*"

At nightfall, we began one of the largest firefighting mobilizations the Park has ever seen. Already on the next morning, several branches left for an encirclement of the fire with boldness, technique, courage, and love for Nature. The Meteorology Department of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro guided the forecasts with bad news, --low humidity (10%), strong winds, and no rains. We set up 3 bases of operations: a land base where 200 men took shifts, an air base with 5 helicopters in operation, and a third base in the Park's headquarters for coordination of supplies, transportation, communication weather forecasts, and general support. Fire suppression activities continued for 3 days.

The scorched 245 ha at the Campos de Altitude are irreversible for the already suffering Nature. The research lost by several universities working on the plateau has no price. And I regret having to close the High Lands for up to 3 months for an evaluation, by technicians and by mountaineers, of the environmental damage. Although unfortunate, we got a few lessons from the accident, like the need to be annoying when necessary and vigorously controlling visitor access.

Note: Mid-2001 has also been a bad fire season in North America, and many serious fires are burning in the American West Coast States as of this writing. PA managers for whom fires are a problem may benefit from the soon to be published proceedings of a WWF/IUCN Project Fire Fight Conference held in Indonesia in late July.

### **Palm Trees in the Swiss Alps?**

Global warming could give the Swiss Alps a Mediterranean climate within decades and boost the number of severe storms, Reuters News Service reported in March. Greenhouse gases trapped in the atmosphere are expected to warm up the entire world's climate over the 50-100 years. But the Alps stand to be more acutely affected than elsewhere, with potentially dire consequences for low-lying ski resorts. Computers simulating climate trends suggest that the temperature in the Alps could rise by 5 degrees centigrade over the next century. At the same time precipitation should increase in winter and tend to decline in summer. In other words, the climate in Switzerland could in future be similar to the current Mediterranean climate. A Swiss member of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change said that the number and severity of extreme storms, downpours and hailstorms would increase. Temperatures in the mountain chain rose one degree between 1961 and 1990, above the global average of 0.6 degree points since the start of the 20th Century, the Swiss Federal Environmental Office noted. Amounts of precipitation also rose by above-average levels. That same office said ski resorts below 1,200-1,800 m would have less snow. Global warming could also disrupt hydroelectric power plants, reservoirs and agriculture. Switzerland last year adopted legislation aimed at reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 10% compared to 1990 levels. It is now negotiating with companies on how to achieve this goal by 2010. Meanwhile in the USA, we have an obdurate Administration that will not sign the Kyoto Protocol, because of the "deleterious effect on the US economy". We are ashamed and furious!

### **Bits and Pieces**

Good news! At the June meeting of the World Heritage Bureau, the **Jungfrau/Aletsch/Beitschorn** nomination was recommended to the full 21 country WH Committee for inscription when it meets in December in Finland. The IUCN evaluation of the site was accepted in full. Our good friend *Bruno Messerli* from Berne provided much critical information and guidance to the IUCN team, which was led by *Jim Thorsell* with *Martin Price* as principal "offsider".

UPDATE will continue to be reproduced and sent around to all of the parks professionals in the 8 units of the **Australian Alps National Parks** (4 agencies) thanks to *Virginia Logan*, the new Project Coordinator, who has replaced *Brett McNamara* (now District Manager with the Australian Capital Territories). WCPA Deputy Chair *Lee Thomas* has passed on the baton of Convener of the Australian Alps Liaison Committee, to another Network member, *Chris Rose* of the Parks Victoria Alpine District. What a fine group of colleagues and collaborators, as is *Paul Stevenson*, the Secretary to AALC, and in the Parks Policy and Management Section of Parks Australia.

UNEP/WCMC has produced **global maps of mountain areas and mountain forests** which may be seen at [http://www.unep-wcmc.org/habitats/mountains/1/global\\_regions.gif](http://www.unep-wcmc.org/habitats/mountains/1/global_regions.gif). Paper maps are available from UNEP world Conservation Monitoring Centre, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK.

The **International Year of Mountains 2002** will be officially launched at the United Nations in New York City on December 11, and there will be ancillary doings on December 12 and perhaps other days of that week. The Mountain Institute is helping to coordinate the informal activities through CEO *Jane Pratt*, and Jason Espie.

Women from around the world gathered in Kathmandu May 8-11 to plan and prepare a major IYM 2002 event, the **Global Meeting of Mountain Women**, scheduled to take place in Kathmandu in May 2002. This event, organized by the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) and the Mountain Forum, will bring together 300 participants including mountain women, journalists, policymakers and planners from about 70 countries. It should be one of the major IYM events of 2002 and is expected to provide a platform for mountain women to articulate their concerns, share ideas and experiences and build networks. Women members of the Mt PA Network are encouraged to check this out at [dits@icimod.org.np](mailto:dits@icimod.org.np).

The tricky question of **standards and monitoring of forest management (and harvesting)** activities in protected areas (many designated as National Parks) has been addressed by a Working Group in the Alpine Research in Protected Areas Network (European Alps), chaired by *Bernard Schön* of Kalkalpen NP in Austria. He has recently reported in their Bulletin No. 10 on the preliminary conclusions of their colloquium ([wald@kalkalpen.at](mailto:wald@kalkalpen.at)). This is also a key question in the National Forests of the USA (Category VI PAs). While the philosophy is now "ecosystem management", many environmental NGOs still maintain that the wood production function is too dominant and should be reined in, or even discontinued (at least in all old-growth forests). The fate of a large number of new "roadless areas" designated by the Clinton Administration is up in the air under President George Bush.

Network member *Bill Jackson*, formerly Head of the Forest Conservation Program at IUCN headquarters, has become the **Global Program Director/IUCN**, The fledgling Mountain Program under *David Hinchley* comes under this umbrella. Congratulations and happy aspirin bottle to Bill. Just as we were printing this, we learned that David will leave IUCN in September to go with The Nature Conservancy in Palau. Mountain matters will now be handled by *Ed Wilson*. More later...

As an indication of **country IYI action**, *Bob Aitken* reports that an ad hoc coalition of mountaineering and hiking NGOs together with Scottish Natural Heritage have raised money to fund a Project Officer for IYM. This person will be based at Perth College in order to coordinate with *Martin Price*. For information on country and international activities see FAO's website at <http://www.mountains2002.org>, and if you are organizing IYM events, please inform the Coordinator Unit at [info@mountains2002.org](mailto:info@mountains2002.org).

Our active Network member *Kathy Martin* of the University of British Columbia has founded an online research forum "**Centre for Alpine Studies**" through the Environmental Centre for Applied Conservation Biology. Kathy conducts wildlife research in BC mountain PAs. She says she has 400 references in the bibliography on alpine vertebrates and plants. See <http://www.forestry.ubc.ca/alpine/index.htm>.

The Mountain Forum, at The Mountain Institute, courtesy of *Elizabeth Byers*, archives Mountain Protected Areas UPDATE and it is accessible through the **Mountain Forum online library**. Network members wishing to refer to previous issues, may get them at <http://www.mountainforum.org/resources/library/mpaup.htm>. Thanks, Elizabeth.

Wolf restoration efforts in the western USA are being aided by a program of "**wolf adoption**" promoted by the NGO Defenders of Wildlife. For a minimum fee of US\$15, donors get a photograph of a wolf, a certificate of adoption, a soft plush toy wolf and a few other goodies including the quarterly publication *Defenders*. Wolf reintroduction is being widely discussed in the Northeastern USA, where the recovered forest now provides suitable prey and habitat in several areas. The largest farm organization, The American Farm Bureau Federation, is strongly opposed, and lobbying consistently against wolf reintroduction. See article in this issue on Olympic NP and wolves.

All 130,000 ha of **New Zealand's remaining coast-to-mountain native forests** of the West Coast-Southern Alps area will be transferred to the Department of Conservation. This ends all logging of indigenous old-growth forests and puts them in the protected area estate. "Rimu" (a native tree species) will continue to be harvested in a few areas until April 2002 under the State-owned logging corporation Timberlands West Coast.

**Hohe Tauern NP** in Austria is composed of 3 highly cooperating Transboundary units in Carinthia, Salzburg and Tyrol States. Following an IUCN assessment in May, the Carinthian division will be classified as a Category 3 park in the next official UN List. *Peter Rupitsch*, the Director of this sector has been working for this recognition for 10 years and is very happy. *Harald Kremser*, the Salzburg Director, hopes that Salzburg and Tyrol will also soon be given this status.

To the **raucous Mt PA Network members** who met for dinner at the June HUMMA Conference in Banff, the wine was not provided by your Editor, but by that rascal *Jim Thorsell*. Thanks Jim, for trying to make me look like "the last of the big spenders".

**Turkey's Kure Mountains** will be afforded protection in that 34,000 ha have been declared a National park as a "Gift to the Earth" in that WWF program.

Our good friend and mountain guru *Jack Ives* with his ever-present Haselblad camera captured a photographic award from the Banff Centre for Mountain Culture competition. He will produce for UNU a beautiful 2002 calendar using 12 of his fine photographs and instructive text.

*Stephan Doempke* reports that the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) has allocated funds for a feasibility study on the **Altai Mountains Transboundary Biosphere Reserve**, to be done next year. The next intergovernmental preparatory conference will be held in the beginning of September in Gorno-Altai. Unfortunately, the Chinese side has not yet entered the process. However, the project is now making the step from potential to manifest reality!

*David Cassells* has just returned to the World Bank as Senior Environmental Specialist for Forest Resources after serving for 4 years as Director General of the **Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation** in Guyana. He is replaced by Dr. Kathryn Monk.

### Some Publications of Interest

**Mountain Biodiversity Matters, 2001.** A synthesis of principles and facts by the Global Mountain Biodiversity Assessment in the form of an Executive Summary of a September 2000 Conference. Swiss Academy of Science and UN University. Eds. Christian Koerner, Eva Spehn and *Bruno Messerli*. Available from [gmba@ubaclj.unibas.ch](mailto:gmba@ubaclj.unibas.ch) or GMBA Office, Institute of Botany, University of Basel, Schönbernstrasse 6, 4056 Basel, Switzerland.

**Transboundary Protected Areas for Peace and Cooperation, 2001.** By *Trevor Sandwith*, Clare Shine, *Lawrence Hamilton* and *David Sheppard*; Edited by *Adrian Phillips*. IUCN/Cardiff University Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series, No. 7. Many mountain PAs are on country or state borders and this will be of interest. IUCN Publications Services Unit, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK; [info@books.iucn.org](mailto:info@books.iucn.org).

**The Mountain World: A Literary Journey, 2000.** Ed. Gregory McNamee. Compilation of writings from the Americas, Africa, Asia, Europe, Oceania and the mythical Erehwon (Nowhere spelled backwards). Includes poetry, chants, legends. Sierra Club Books, 85 Second Street, San Francisco, California 94105 USA.

**Changing Agriculture and Landscape: Ecology, Management and Biodiversity Decline in Anthropogenous Mountain Grasslands, 2000.** F. Ehrendorfer, H. Palme and G. Schrammel. Proceedings of a mountain grassland symposium of Euro MAB. A common situation in many Category V PAs. Enquiries to [gerlinde.schrammel@oeaw.ac.at](mailto:gerlinde.schrammel@oeaw.ac.at); fax 43 1 51 58 12 75.

### A Selection of the Many Meetings of Interest

**Research and Management Concerns for Alpine Ecosystems: Conflicts, Connectivity and Climate**

**Change**, September 25. A one day Symposium within the 2001 Wildlife Society Meeting in Reno, Nevada, USA. Organized by *Kathy Martin* and Clait Braun and co-sponsored by the Canadian Wildlife Service. Contact: [Kmartin@interchange.ubc.ca](mailto:Kmartin@interchange.ubc.ca).

**Interdisciplinary Mountain Research, Young Scientists Conference**, September 26-28, in Stelvio NP, Italy. Convened by Consorzio Parco Nazionale dello Stelvio, European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano and Leader Venschgau in Val Venosta. The objective is to present the scientific work of young researchers in: ecology and protection in mountains, economic activity in mountains, and life in mountain regions. Emphasis is on interdisciplinary approaches. <http://www.eurac.edu/youngconference> or International Conference for Young researchers c/o European Academy, Weggensteinstrasse 12/A, 1-39100, Bozen/Bolzano, Italy. No indication of maximum age, but I presume that "young at heart" (like your Editor), is not sufficient.

**Natural Areas Association Annual Conference: Searching for a Natural Balance**, October 3-6, in Cape Canaveral, Florida, USA. See <http://naturalareas.org/frame.htm>.

**Mountains of the World, Community development between subsidence, subsidiarity and sustainability**, September 30 - October 4, in Interlaken, Switzerland. No particular theme on Mt PAs, but many related topics. Sponsored by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation <http://www.cde.unibe.ch>; [cde@giub.unibe.ch](mailto:cde@giub.unibe.ch); fax 41 31 631 85 44.

**EUROPARC 2001: Protected Areas and the Challenge of Tourism**, October 3-7, in Matri, Hohe Tauern NP in the Tyrol Division, Austria. Director of Tyrol *Hermann Stotter* will be deeply involved. Information from [hohetauern@europarc2001.at](mailto:hohetauern@europarc2001.at) or <http://www.europarc2001.at>. Other Network members involved: Patrizia Rossi, Paul Eagles, Peter Rupitsch.

**Comparative Geographical Issues of the Andes and the Appalachians**, October 19-20 in Athens, Georgia, USA. Organized and implemented by *Fausto Sarmiento* and sponsored by Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Georgia. Contact [mountainconference@hotmail.com](mailto:mountainconference@hotmail.com).

**26th Annual Banff Mountain Film Festival**, October 29-30 and November 2-4. The world's best films, videos, speakers. One of the sessions will focus on mountain peace parks and tensions in mountain areas. *Larry Hamilton* will be one of the panelists. Organized by *Leslie Taylor* of the Banff Centre for Mountain Culture. [http://www.banffcentre.ca/cmc/current\\_festivals/film/default.asp](http://www.banffcentre.ca/cmc/current_festivals/film/default.asp).

**World Wilderness Congress**, November 2-8 in Port Elizabeth, South Africa. This recommended Congress will start with a 2-day World Wilderness Summit, and will conclude with a 4-day Wilderness Working Session, according to *Vance Martin*, President of the Wild Foundation. [www.worldwilderness.org](http://www.worldwilderness.org) or [info@worldwilderness.org](mailto:info@worldwilderness.org) or fax 805 640 0230.

**The Andean Challenge for the XXI Century**, November 25 - December 2 in Mérida, Venezuela. Fourth symposium of the Andean Mountain Association. Coordinated by Máxima Monasterio, [amamrd@ciens.ula.ve](mailto:amamrd@ciens.ula.ve). Sections on Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Tourism, Water Resources, Andean Cultures etc.

**Some IYM 2002 Meetings**

**Benefits Beyond Boundary in East Asia**, March 18-24 in Yangminshan NP near Taipei, Taiwan. Organized by WCPA-East Asia Steering Committee. One of 4 themes is Conserving Mountain Biomes. Papers invited; abstracts due by November 10. Early registration by September 30. Secretariat: Dr. Shen Wang, [hmtsai@cc.ntnu.edu.tw](mailto:hmtsai@cc.ntnu.edu.tw) or [yuri@staff.pccu.edu.tw](mailto:yuri@staff.pccu.edu.tw). This should be an excellent meeting, held in a fine national park which Larry and Linda have visited.

**Mountain Forests in 2002: Lessons learned, societal challenges, and a vision beyond 2002**, June 26-28 in Comunidad Foral de Navarre, Pyrenees, Spain. Organized largely by *Pier Carlo Zingari*, European Observatory of Mountain Forests. [Zingari.oefm@wanadoo.fr](mailto:Zingari.oefm@wanadoo.fr) or <http://www.eomf.org> or fax 33 4 79 28 40 58.

**UIAA General Assembly**, October 3-5, 2002 in Flagstaff Arizona, USA. Hosted by American Alpine Association. Contact William Putnam, [Putnam@lowell.edu](mailto:Putnam@lowell.edu) or fax 520 774 6296; c/o Lowell Observatory, 1400 West Mars Hill Road, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001 USA.

**Summit 2002, Extreme Landscapes: Challenges and Celebration**, October 27 - November 3 at Banff Centre for Mountain Culture, Banff Alberta, Canada. Combining Banff Mountain Film and Book Festival with a conference, exhibits and readings by outstanding mountain writers. Spark plugged by *Bernadette McDonald*. Endorsed by IUCN/WCPA and its Mountain Theme. A one day version will subsequently be implemented at the Royal Geographical Society in London. *Jim Thorsell and Larry Hamilton* both assure that this will be a winner. <http://www.banffcentre.ab.ca/cm/c/>.

**Bishkek Global Mountain Summit**, October 28 - November 1 in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. This one is very appropriate because it was Kyrgyzstan that initiated the push for IYM in the UN. The Issyk-Köl Biosphere Territory will be a prominent feature. Proposing 4 plenary sessions, 28 section topic meetings, 1,000 participants. Contact Andrew Fesenko, [andrewvf@mail.ru](mailto:andrewvf@mail.ru).

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