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Recent stories - December 2001

Brazil combats illegal mahogany trade

December 21, 2001

The Brazilian government on 6 December announced a decree to protect all remaining mahogany trees in three states against illegal logging, making certification mandatory for all management plans which surround indian lands and conservation areas. The magnitude of the illegal logging activities of mahogany trees in the Amazon became public after Greenpeace submitted a report to the federal prosecutor, which revealed illegal practices in the mahogany industry and in the international timber trade authorities. As a result of the report, the Brazilian authorities undertook several investigations and inspections of illegal logging, forest management plans and saw mills. These investigations eventually led to the new decree, which according to Paul Adario from Greenpeace "sends a clear message to the Amazon logging sector and the market place, that they stop illegal logging and go to certification or they are out of business".



[Trade BioRes](#)

[Environment News Service](#)

SSC Specialist Group celebrates success of the First International Tapir Symposium

December 20, 2001

Global efforts toward tapir conservation have received great impetus thanks to the success of the First International Tapir Symposium that took place in Costa Rica recently.



Never before have so many tapir experts and conservationists assembled in one place to share knowledge and address future challenges for these species. Symposium participants included field researchers, husbandry and captive management specialists, NGO and university representatives,

News releases:

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other key players in the development and implementation of tapir conservation programmes, and almost half of the SSC Tapir Specialist Group (TSG) membership. The broad-ranging presentations provided a complete overview of current tapir research (*in situ* and *ex situ*), conservation, education, veterinary, husbandry and management issues.

[Full story](#)

Lince Ibérico among 48 threatened mammals in Andalucía

December 19, 2001

The recently released Red Data list of vertebrates (Libro Rojo de los Vertebrados Amenazados de Andalucía), edited by Andalucía's Consejería de Medio Ambiente, found 180 species under threat in the region. The regional Environment Minister, Fuensanta Coves, and the Director of the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation, Jamie Skinner, stressed the importance of the IUCN red listing process as a framework for planning conservation action programmes for endangered species at the regional level. The book covers all endangered vertebrates, and is a companion volume to that already published on flora.



[Full story](#)

Prestigious award for SSC member

December 18, 2001

Professor Michael Samways, Chair of the IUCN/SSC Southern African Invertebrate Specialist Group and Director of South Africa's Invertebrate Conservation Research Centre, has been awarded the National Research Foundation's (South Africa) highest accolade, an "A-rating." The award is based on scientific merit, with the recipient being internationally peer-judged to be an acknowledged world leader in his or her field. Samways work has been primarily on insect ecology and conservation, especially in sub-tropical and tropical systems. He published *Insect Conservation Biology* (Chapman & Hall) in 1994 and is currently writing a book on insect diversity conservation for Cambridge University Press. Much of his work is devoted to biodiversity conservation at the landscape scale and outside reserves. A member of the SSC Executive



Committee, he has been involved in the SSC Odonata (dragonflies) Specialist Group for many years.

[About Michael Samways](#)

[SSC Specialist Groups](#)

International certification system aims to protect marine environment

December 17, 2001

The Marine Aquarium Council (MAC) has launched an international certification system that aims to protect coral reefs and ensure the quality of organisms in the marine aquarium trade. During the Nov. 27 launch at the 2nd International Marine Ornamentals Conference in Orlando, Florida, MAC challenged aquarium hobbyists and industry operators, public aquariums, conservation organizations and government agencies to support the system they all helped to create.



"MAC certification brings sustainability to your living room!," says Frank Vorhies, head of IUCN's Business & Biodiversity Initiative and vice-president of the MAC Board of Directors. "With MAC certification, the consumer will be able to ensure that the fish in their living room fish tank are harvested sustainably and in ways that conserve the tropical reefs from where they come."

[Full story](#)

[MAC certification](#)

Consortios locales promoverán el desarrollo sostenible de tres sitios binacionales en Centroamérica

December 14, 2001

Tres importantes áreas binacionales entre Guatemala y El Salvador, Nicaragua y Costa Rica, y Costa Rica y Panamá, serán el escenario de un modelo de desarrollo innovador en el área centroamericana: la acción conjunta de



organizaciones locales, que intervendrán a manera de consorcios, para promover el desarrollo económico, social y ambiental en estas zonas.

Las alianzas en estos sitios binacionales se están

estableciendo, luego de un estudio que realizó este año la Unión Mundial para la Naturaleza (UICN-Mesoamérica), con el apoyo de la Agencia Noruega para el Desarrollo Internacional (NORAD), durante el cual se reunió a decenas de organizaciones de los países involucrados para identificar las estrategias comunes de desarrollo sostenible que se podían poner en marcha.

[Más información](#)

[UICN Oficina Regional para Mesoamérica](#)

Six natural wonders recognized by the World Heritage Convention

December 13, 2001

Following the advice of IUCN - The World Conservation Union, the World Heritage Committee has inscribed six new natural sites on the prestigious World



Heritage List and added substantial extensions to three others. The new sites include snow-capped Swiss Alps, Brazilian tropical grasslands in the Cerrado ecoregion, the Caribbean's richest mountain forest in Eastern Cuba, and the forests of the Siberian tiger.

Following today's additions, 167 sites have been inscribed on the World Heritage List for their natural values including international icons such as the Serengeti, the Grand Canyon and the Great Barrier Reef.

[Full story \(Français\)\(Español\)](#)

[IUCN's technical evaluations](#)

[IUCN and the World Heritage Convention](#)

[World Heritage Convention](#)

IUCN/Ford Foundation Small Grants Programme - New Guidelines for 2002

December 13, 2001

The IUCN Sustainable Use Team, through a grant from the Ford Foundation, is offering small grants to promote scholarly contributions from individuals from developing countries in the field of sustainable use of biological systems. The aim is to promote the authority of science from developing countries and foster opportunities for scholarly exchange. The programme will run until the end of June 2002.

Priority will be given to proposals that address the complex connections between people and nature, exploring the concept of sustainability. Applications related to activities that employ innovative inter- or multidisciplinary approaches are the most likely to be funded.

[Full story](#)

[Examples of projects funded](#)

IUCN advocates private NGO and government partnerships in management of marine resources

December 12, 2001

Partnerships between government, non-governmental organizations and the private sector can make capitalism pay off for the conservation of marine biodiversity, said Carl Gustaf Lundin, Head of IUCN's Marine Programme, at the Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10 held last week in Paris.



"Government-NGO-private systems can work well," Lundin said, citing the success of Zanzibar's first marine park, a private nature reserve developed and managed by Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd. The park, which includes a gazetted reef sanctuary, is protected by converted fishermen that are now rangers trained and deployed by the private company. The government has worked in partnership with the not for profit company to provide protection of an area previously damaged by destructive fishing methods like dynamite fishing of coral reefs.

[IUCN's Marine Programme](#)

[Global Conference on Oceans and Coasts at Rio+10](#)

[Chumbe Island Coral Park](#)

Samoa stops sand mining permits

December 12, 2001

A first in Samoa: as of this month, commercial sand mining permits will no longer be issued. The decision, taken by the Department of Lands, Survey and Environment of Samoa, comes after more than a year of intense discussions and negotiations promoted by the Safata District Committee through the IUCN Samoa Marine Biodiversity Project.



"This decision demonstrates the traditional strength of the local communities of the Safata District and their interest to maintain the quality of the environment in the areas where they live," says Pedro Rosabal of IUCN's Programme on Protected Areas.

Commercial sand mining was causing severe coastal erosion

and degrading the marine environment with impacts on traditional coastal fisheries. The solution to this problem was identified as a priority by the District Committee as part of the implementation of the IUCN Samoa Project. Once more the IUCN project team, working hand in hand with local people, has taken another important step in substantially contributing to the maintenance of biodiversity and enhancement of the livelihood of local communities.

[WCPA's work on Marine Protected Areas](#)

IUCN helps launch Year of Mountains

December 11, 2001

Today's global launch of the International Year of Mountains marks the first milestone in a road to high public and political awareness of the imperative of sustainable development of mountain regions, said [Yolanda Kakabadse](#), IUCN President.



Before and during the Rio Earth Summit of 1992, IUCN played a significant role in getting mountain sustainable development onto the political agenda. Work has continued through the implementation of a mountain initiative and ongoing projects around the world.

Next year, IUCN will publish a special issue of [World Conservation](#) magazine dedicated to mountains, and will carry this emphasis through to the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In 2003, mountains will figure as a cross-cutting theme at the World Parks Congress, organized by IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas.

[WCPA's work on mountains](#) [International Year of Mountains 2002](#)

New study reveals underreporting of fish catch decline

December 11, 2001

Contrary to statistics by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), a new study, published in the 29 November edition of the science journal *Nature*, shows that fish catches have actually been



declining by 800 million pounds since the late '80s rather than increasing by 700 million pounds as previously thought. Nevertheless, at the current rate, by 2015, global fish stocks will have fallen by half. The world is "playing with the food

supply of the planet," said Reg Watson, one of the authors. "These earthshaking findings are the most significant fishery and food security results in decades, said Jane Lubchenco from Oregon State University. "They call into question the very basis of international fisheries management."

[Full story](#)

New Programme Coordinator for Asia

December 10, 2001

Aban Marker Kabraji, Regional Director, Asia, announced the appointment of long-time IUCN contributor, Alejandro Imbach, to the position of Programme Coordinator, IUCN Asia.



A native of Argentina, Imbach will coordinate the overall IUCN Asia Programme at the regional level to ensure effective and timely planning, delivery, monitoring, and evaluation of an integrated and coherent programme for IUCN Asia. He will lead a programming team from across the Region, comprised of the Heads of Programme Development Units in the region. In addition, he will be working in synergy with the Global Programme to ensure that the Conservation Policy System for IUCN is strengthened in order to deliver more effective programme results.

[About Alejandro Imbach](#)

[IUCN Asia](#)

Nueva estrategia forestal para Centroamérica

December 7, 2001

Centroamérica recibirá el año 2002 con una nueva "Estrategia Forestal Centroamericana", conocida con las siglas de EFCA, que marcará la pauta política para el desarrollo forestal del istmo en los próximos 25 años.



Los últimos detalles a la propuesta inicial de la Estrategia se están afinando y estará impresa en diciembre, para ser aprobada luego por las autoridades forestales de los países centroamericanos, durante una reunión que se realizará del 23 al 25 de enero del 2002 en Managua, Nicaragua.

[Full story](#)

[IUCN Oficina Regional para Mesoamérica](#)

Kenyan journalist awarded global environmental journalism prize

December 6, 2001

Her Majesty Queen Noor of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan awarded the 2001 Reuters-IUCN Global Media Award for excellence in environmental journalism to Dee Raymer, of the Ecoforum magazine in Kenya, at a ceremony held in Berlin yesterday evening. Raymer received the award for her article "[Water, Water, Everywhere](#)" -an inspiring article about how constructed wetlands may transform wastelands into oases of vegetation, aquatic and bird life, whilst serving as an effective and low-cost means of water recycling.



[Full story](#)

[Reuters-IUCN Environmental Media Awards 2001](#)

Un pas de plus pour les aires protégées en Suisse

December 5, 2001

Une première en Suisse: la Commission mondiale des aires protégées ([CMAP](#)) s'est réunie avant-hier à [Champ-Pittet](#) pour débattre la création d'un nouveau parc national en Suisse et présenter le [Vème Congrès Mondial des Parcs](#) aux



représentants de l'Office fédéral de l'environnement, des forêts et du paysage ([OFEFP](#)) et de [Pro Natura](#).

Pour l'heure, la Suisse ne compte qu'un seul [parc national](#) créé il y a bientôt 100 ans par Pro Natura. Ce territoire de 169 km² se situe dans l'Engadine et la Vallée de Münster, dans le canton des Grisons, et est classé comme réserve naturelle de catégorie 1 selon les [critères de protection établis par l'IUCN](#).

[Suite...](#)

Action for sustainable management of the Perfume River in Vietnam

December 5, 2001

The Government of Vietnam announced its partnership with the IUCN Water & Nature Initiative in a project to establish sustainable water management in the Perfume River.



"The new Water Law of Vietnam calls for the establishment of river basin management boards," says Mr. Nuygen Hong Toan, Secretary General of the Vietnam National Mekong Committee. "In our efforts to develop such a framework, we are looking to the IUCN Water and Nature Initiative to help identify the best options for managing our natural resources."

[Full story](#)

[IUCN's Water and Nature Initiative](#)

International experts meet on WSSD

December 4, 2001

IUCN today concluded a two-day meeting of its International Advisory Group on the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The International Advisory Group was established to support IUCN's activities in preparation for the WSSD in Johannesburg next September.



Today's workshop - the first of three planned meetings - was chaired by Sir Martin Holdgate and elaborated on IUCN's participation in the Summit and its strategy for the next nine months. Director General Achim Steiner said "the Summit is a milestone on our path towards sustainable development and it provides organizations and individuals with a significant opportunity to take stock of our achievements and to prioritize our efforts for the next 10 years. IUCN's experience since Río can illustrate the close relationships between sustainable livelihoods and natural resource management".

IUCN's input to the Summit is firmly rooted in its [Programme](#), and will focus on three core issues: governance in a globalized world; promotion of sustainable livelihoods strategies; and financing for sustainable development to contribute toward poverty alleviation objectives.

[Task force meeting participants](#)

[Task force terms of reference](#)

The Red Book: The Extinction Crisis Face to Face

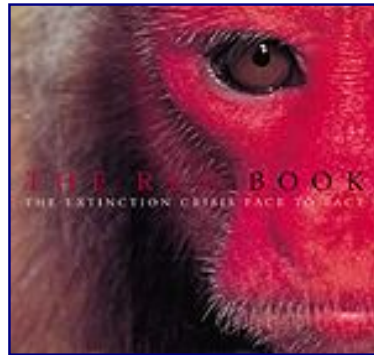
December 4, 2001

The launch of a new book highlights a collaboration between industry and science that is working to reverse the extinction crisis by raising awareness of the spectacular and important species the Earth is rapidly losing.

The Red Book: The Extinction Crisis Face to Face produced

by CEMEX, one of the world's largest cement companies, in partnership with IUCN - The World Conservation Union, the largest international conservation network, and Agrupación Sierra Madre, a Mexican conservation organization, is a dramatic new tool to communicate the issues surrounding extinction and conservation to broad audiences.

[Red Book launch kit](#)



New publication on trade and biological resources

December 4, 2001

BRIDGES Trade BioRes - Trade and Biological Resources News Digest is a new product to the trade and sustainable development communities. This new publication is produced by the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) in collaboration with IUCN's Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) in an effort to complement the activities of both organizations in the increasingly important intersection of trade and biological resources.

In order to receive this publication on a regular bi-weekly basis, please send a blank email to subscribe_biores@ictsd.ch.

[BRIDGES Trade BioRes](#)

[CEESP website](#)

Wide range of organizations set up national and basin dialogues to manage conflicts between irrigation and nature

December 3, 2001

Experts and water managers from around the world have agreed to set up and promote dialogues to reduce water conflict and find innovative approaches to water management. In many countries and basins around the world, stakeholders will work together to find solutions for the conflict about water between irrigation and environment. This is the outcome of a workshop of international, national and local organisations, held in Bonn, Germany on 1 and 2 December, prior to the International Conference on Freshwater (3 – 7 December).



[Full story](#)

Norway seeks assistance from IUCN in effort to strengthen national biodiversity laws

December 3, 2001

IUCN's Environmental Law Centre in Bonn last week hosted the secretariat for an expert panel established by the norwegian government to review and find ways of improving Norway's legislation for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.



The purpose of the visit included taking advantage of the Centre's offer to provide preliminary research on existing legislation dealing with issues such as: access to genetic resources; implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity; conservation of species and habitats; establishment of natural reserves; regulation of alien species; and liability for damage to biodiversity.

[About the Norwegian project](#)

[IUCN's Law Centre](#)

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