INTRODUCTION

This is the first issue of CAT NEWS, which is intended to be a forum for:

1. reports on Cat Specialist Group activities.
2. information about IUCN/SSC/WWF activities and those of other organisations relevant to cat conservation.
3. comment and exchanges between CSG members
4. news about cats and cat studies.

The format is economical in cost and effort and the number of pages is flexible. A magazine-type format in due course is not ruled out, but I feel the present format is more suitable as a group working document.

This issue contains a summary report on the Cat Specialist Group's Workshop at Kanha National Park, India, in April. A list of papers is included and copies are available for those who want them. I hope to produce the complete proceedings in due course. There is a request from India for the Cat Group's views on re-introduction of cheetah, and a cry for help in trapping leopards in Oman.

Please send in news and comment for the next and subsequent issues.

Peter Jackson
Chairman
THE PLIGHT OF THE CATS

A Summary Report on the Cat Specialist Group Workshop,
Kanha National Park, India, 9-12 April 1984

The famous tigers of Kanha National Park in Central India provided a fine show for members of the Cat Specialist Group at their meeting and workshop in April. A show place for Project Tiger, Kanha National Park, which has just celebrated its 50th anniversary, was a perfect background for a workshop designed to provide a base for developing an international cat conservation strategy and action plan.

Project Tiger has been in progress since 1973 and the visibility of the tigers, as well as the flourishing state of the other wildlife and the vegetation in Kanha, demonstrated that determined effort, with government backing, can revolutionise a deteriorating conservation situation.

Twenty members of the CSG were present, together with 35 observers and invitees, who included Directors and senior staff of India’s 15 tiger reserves and other conservation areas. Group members also sent in reports and papers.

Colonel Ajay Mushran, Minister of Forests of Madhya Pradesh, in which Kanha is located, provided one of the major themes of the workshop when he declared in his inaugural address: "Preservation of wilderness is as much necessary to human environment as it is to meeting the direct needs and indirect sustenance supports of the rural people. Programmes which, in addition to preservation of wildlife, provide for longterm welfare of the people, will find favour with Governments as well as the people."

This was matched by a message from Dr Kenton Miller, Director General of IUCN, who declared that wild cats were sensitive indicators of the health of the natural environment because they could only subsist on a healthy prey base, which was itself dependent on water and adequate plant life. A strategy and action plan for the world's cats "must also provide guidance for co-existence of cats and human activities," he said.

East Africa

A geographic review of conservation status affecting cats was opened by Dr Brian Bertram, Curator of Mammals at the London Zoological Society, who has carried out several years research on lion and leopard in East Africa. He pointed out that the national parks of Kenya and Uganda were based primarily on tourism, which was a fickle industry and could not be counted upon.
Tanzania, on the other hand, saw its parks as part of the national heritage, a more difficult philosophy to convey to unsophisticated people, but, if accepted, it could provide a stronger base for wildlife protection.

The tremendous human population increase was a major threat to wildlife, he said, and many wildlife areas, being suitable for agriculture or cattle raising, were likely to face pressure to take them over. While there were probably several thousand lions in East Africa, the population was likely to decline in the face of spreading agriculture. Leopards had been heavily poached but were likely to survive because of their adaptability in terms of habitat and prey. Cheetah, however, were estimated to number fewer than 3,000 and declining. Their prospects were poor, although the density found recently in bush country gave hope that the population was higher than thought earlier.

Judith Rudnai, known for her research on lions in Kenya, also drew attention to the danger that a decline in tourism could be a serious threat to the parks, which were regarded locally as "merely playgrounds for rich foreigners."

Dr Alan Rodgers, formerly at the University of Dar es Salaam and now at the Wildlife Institute of India, said that lion, leopard, cheetah, serval, caracal and wild cat were all widely distributed in Tanzania, and the parks, which covered 20 per cent of the country had viable populations of both cheetah and caracal. However, he expressed concern that the deteriorating economic situation was leading to less field work and anti-poaching patrols.

Southern Africa

Vivian Wilson, Director of the Chipangali Wildlife Trust, Zimbabwe, reported that cheetah, which were widely but sparsely distributed, had decreased in the lowveld, but increased in the Midlands, where they were becoming a nuisance on some ranches. Leopard occurred everywhere, probably numbering over 2,000, while some 1,000 lions were limited to border areas, notably Hwange, Mana Pools and Matusadona National Parks. Caracal were everywhere, but were seldom seen, and wild cat were very widely distributed.

Clive Walker, Director of the Endangered Species Trust in South Africa, sent in a report that leopard were commonest in the Transvaal and were also widespread in the Waterberg mountains, where there was some conflict with farmers. While it was protected in Cape Province and Natal, it could be destroyed for stock predation in Transvaal and might disappear in time.

Cheetah had recently been estimated at over 6,000 in Namibia. Captive breeding had been so successful that he did not think that capture from the wild was necessary. He declared that introduction of captive-bred cheetah in the wild had failed, but there had been successes in translocation of wild specimens.

Walker considered that Botswana's parks provided excellent prospects for all cats because of their large size, although outside the parks lion, leopard and cheetah were treated as no more than vermin.

Latin America

Wayne Melquist of the Idaho Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit presented his report on a status survey of spotted cats and otters in Latin America. He said that knowledge of the status of the 10 cat species was "extremely meagre". Uncontrolled harvesting and habitat destruction had jeopardized the welfare of many cat populations. He found a general consensus that, although some cat populations were now considered stable or perhaps increasing, there was continued decline. Protection by CITES and national laws had reduced the
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impact of over-harvesting, despite the frequent failure to implement them properly. He pointed out that Latin American countries needed the cooperation of the international community, and especially of consumer nations. Harvest data were no longer available because of the trade bans, but there was evidence everywhere of illegal trade, although on a small scale.

Melquist said that Jaguar and Andean cat required full protection. In particular, most protected areas were not large enough for jaguar, which was hunted and killed as a trophy and a nuisance. The problem of livestock predation by jaguar had to be solved, preferably by live trapping and removal. He considered that most species were resilient enough to respond to protection if there was sufficient habitat available and, given a sound scientific basis, a controlled harvest of ocelot, Geoffroy’s cat and margay was probably feasible, and possibly of kodkod and oncilla. But he stressed that baseline data from biological inventories were needed for proper management and should form the basis for establishing research and conservation priorities.

Alan Rabinowitz wrote from Belize that more was becoming known about the life of the jaguar as a result of his studies, and those by Howard Quigley and Peter Crawshaw in Brazil and of a team led by John Terborgh in Peru.

**China**

Professor Tan Bangjie, Adviser to Beijing Zoo, provided a comprehensive review of the status of China's 12 cat species. He said that all the big cats, plus golden cat, Pallas's cat and lynx were on the list of protected species, but hunting continued without much effective intervention because the list had no legal status yet and had not been officially announced.

The Amur leopard was the rarest species, in his opinion, while the South China tiger was the most endangered and was currently estimated at fewer than 40. It was sparsely distributed in several provinces and protected only on paper, despite two reserves in Guangdong and Hunan. The sub-species was in urgent need of conservation.

Tiger bones, especially thigh bones, were wanted for medicine, and, because they were more difficult to get now, leopard and golden cat bones were used instead. The demand for tiger bones led to poaching of the Manchurian tiger, whose reported number of 150 might be an over-estimate. He estimated about 50 tigers in Yunnan, which might be of either Indian or Indo-Chinese subspecies.

Jungle cat, leopard cat, marbled cat, Chinese desert cat and wild cat were not on the protected list, and were harvested for furs, and pelts of big cats also appeared in shops and rural markets. Leopard, of which there were at least three sub-species in China, were also hunted for fur and as pests. They had been wiped out in many localities, and were very rare everywhere else. Leopard cat fur was widely used, but the species was not currently endangered.

Tan said that snow leopard, while rare, was less so than had been thought. Its fur was not highly regarded in China and it lived in remote mountain areas. The greatest number had been taken in Xinjian and Chinghai.

The clouded leopard had a wider range than suggested earlier and was comparatively common in Jiangxi and Anhui. But pelts and bones were sold openly, even though it had protected status.

Of other cats he said that the golden cat was considered a kind of leopard in China. Only one Chinese desert cat was in captivity - at Beijing zoo - but it was not so rare in the wild. Pallas’s cat was much more numerous and there
were furs in the markets, although it was on the protected list because it fed on rodents. Lynx too was listed, but its fur was in great demand. Jungle cat was uncommon in China and little was known of marbled cat and wild cat.

Iriomote

Dr Shigeto Yasuma of World Wildlife Fund Japan estimated that the Iriomote cat might now number only 50-80, although the population appeared to have been stable since 1979. He was concerned that one in five suffered from eye disease and many went blind. This rare cat was threatened by competition from feral cats, and the Japanese Environment Agency's feeding programme had turned out to be harmful - since chickens have been put out for the cats, they had taken to attacking domestic chickens.

Bangladesh

Dr Reza Khan of Bangladesh, currently Curator at the Al-Ain Zoo in Abu Dhabi, said that his country's eight cat species had been isolated in small pockets and very rarely occurred outside the eight per cent forest coverage, although jungle cat and fishing cat might still be found in thickets. All cat populations had legal protection but were declining, mainly because of poaching and poisoning, as well as habitat destruction. The tiger survived only in the Sunderbans, where the Forest Department put the number at 425. Clouded leopard were still to be found in the evergreen forests of Chittagong and the Hill Tracts, but the Chittagong market was flooded with skins, many possibly coming from Burma.

Bhutan

S. Deb Roy, Field Director of India's Manas Tiger Reserve adjoining Bhutan, and B.D. Kharabanda, Field Director of Periyar Reserve, who earlier served in Bhutan, reported that there was excellent habitat there in the lower hills, and clouded leopard, golden cat, leopard cat, and probably marbled cat existed. At higher levels forest working parties reported more sightings of snow leopard than any other species. The Bhutanese government was providing good protection and the Buddhist population did not indulge much in poaching, but poachers did enter from India.

India

As might be expected there was a large number of contributions from India, led by a general review by Hemendra Panwar, Director of Project Tiger. He noted that India had 15 species of cats - a 16th, the cheetah, became extinct about 30 years ago. Except for tiger and Asiatic lion knowledge of the status of felid species was low, but this year's tiger census would include leopard and lesser cats for the first time. Project Tiger had led to a big increase in the tiger population, censused at 3,015 in 1979 and expected to be more this year, and the programme had led to a significant improvement in the status of most other endangered species of fauna and flora. While the Asiatic lion, which numbered 205 in 1979, was confined to the Gir forest, the leopard was the commonest Indian cat and was widely distributed. It had benefitted from general conservation measures and had the highest protection. He deplored the "uncalled-for relaxation" of CITES by the 1983 Botswana conference which approved export quotas of leopard skins for some African countries.

Panwar said that the clouded leopard was in fair status in Arunachal Pradesh in northeast India, bordering Tibet, but rare or endangered elsewhere in the northeast. There was a need for more reserves. Snow leopard had been persecuted for its pelt and because of its attacks on domestic sheep. Little was known of its status but it was reported doing well in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh and was found in sanctuaries in Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh.
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Several species were still heavily hunted, including leopard cat, which appeared to be holding its own but needed improved protection and control on trade. Lynx in northern Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh were taken for the Kashmir fur trade, and the poachers needed to be brought under control. Caracal suffered from nomadic tribal hunters in northwestern India who also supplied the Kashmir trade. Pallas's cat, found only in Ladakh, needed reserves protected from sheep grazing. Fishing cat and jungle cat were still widely distributed and protected in a number of reserves.

Among the highlights of papers on Indian cats, Anne Wright of WWF India pointed out that Indian zoos were still allowed to collect lesser cats under the Wildlife Protection Act. They did not treat them well and this was a drain on wild populations. Dr Biswamoy Biswas, Emeritus Scientist of the Zoological Survey of India, reporting on a lesser cats survey, said there was large-scale denudation of forests in Sikkim and North Bengal. Forest plantations of exotics lacked undergrowth and there were extensive tea gardens. Poaching for furs and, in some cases, for meat continued virtually unchecked. Vishnu Sharma, Chief Conservator (Wildlife) of Rajasthan and Kailash Sankhala, retired Chief Wildlife Warden, and Founder-Director of Project Tiger, reported an alarming decline in fishing cat, caracal, desert cat and jungle cat in Rajasthan because of a "roaring trade in cat skins". Unless full protection was given the wild cats were in danger of extinction.

Nepal

Nepal has five tiger populations, including about 130 breeding animals, according to Dr Charles MacDougal of Tiger Tops Jungle Lodge and David Smith of the University of Minnesota, who carried out research on dispersing tigers in the Royal Chitwan National Park. They said tigers had high recovery potential and Chitwan was near saturation level. Dispersing tigers attacked livestock around the park and were frequently poisoned by villagers. If this did not happen, man-eating might occur, although it had been rare in Nepal.

Leopard were common wherever there was suitable habitat, except in areas of high tiger density. Jungle cat and fishing cat were common in Chitwan but leopard cat was the most infrequently sighted cat.

Pakistan

Tom Roberts, author of Mammals of Pakistan, said that snow leopard survived very precariously in the northern mountain regions, but it was severely threatened by hunting, despite legal protection. Hunters were still admired and snow leopards were shot by villagers and defence personnel. Sand cat was extremely rare, but populations might exist in adjoining Pars Province of Iran and Seistan in Afghanistan. Caracal were widespread and occasionally took ibex fawns in Kirthar National Park and blackbuck fawns in Lal Suhanra. Park managers wanted to kill the caracal, and it was difficult to persuade the provincial governments that even predators should be preserved in national parks. Fishing cat were shot and trapped whenever possible, and the species was on the verge of extinction in Pakistan because of demand from overseas. Pallas's cat was apparently the rarest cat in Pakistan. One had been captured in Baluchistan in 1977.

Snow Leopard

Rodney Jackson, who is engaged on a snow leopard study in Nepal, sent a report on the species in Asia, in which he declared that knowledge of the status is very sketchy and a range-wide assessment was necessary. Fair populations seemed to exist in Bhutan, West Nepal and parts of Ladakh and the USSR. The situation appeared very grave in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Kashmir. A habitat
suitability index model for snow leopard, which could be used by persons with basic natural history knowledge, was to be tested in Zanskar this summer. Few existing reserves were large enough to support viable populations. More large reserves were needed, as well as protection of native ungulates, creation of buffer zones around reserves and corridors between reserves. Many questions needed to be asked before reintroduction was attempted. He said he was opposed to reintroduction of captive stock.

Indonesia

Dr Raleigh Blouch, working on a large mammal survey in Sumatra, sent a report that tigers were still fairly widespread, and found almost everywhere there was sufficient habitat. They were still killed illegally, but more often as problem animals than for skins. Skins were, however, smuggled to Singapore by ships.

Oman

Jeremy Ussher-Smith and Ayoub Rajah of Oman reported that the Arabian leopard was still found in the north of the country and in Dhofar in the south, but numbers were unknown. The leopard was shot by pastoralists for taking sheep and goats, and must be considered endangered. Caracal were widely distributed in small numbers and seldom seen. A cheetah had been shot in Dhofar in 1977, but there had been no further reports of the species and it was probably extinct.

Europe

Dr Ulrich Wotchikovsky, on behalf of the European Lynx Group, contributed a paper reviewing the status of the lynx in Europe. There was a good population in Pennoscrandia, with 150-700 in Norway, 700 in Sweden (compared with 400 20 years ago) and 200-300 in Finland. The Carpathian forests of Eastern Europe were fully inhabited with about 600 in Poland and 400 in Czechoslovakia.

Lynx had been reintroduced in Yugoslavia, West Germany, Austria and Switzerland with considerable success, although there had been opposition from hunters and a number had been shot, especially in Austria and Yugoslavia. There had been some problems of sheep killing, and lynx had also taken introduced moufflon. In general knowledge of the ecology of the lynx was weak. The main threat to re-introduced lynx was the hunter.

Trade

John Caldwell of IUCN's Wildlife Trade Monitoring Unit said that the Federal Republic of Germany was the world's largest consumer of wild cat skins, and, according to Customs data, imports between 1976 and 1979 increased from 227,000 to 373,000. The number had fallen to 137,000 in 1982. South America provided most of the skins. In 1976 Brazil was the most important source, with smaller numbers of skins coming from Argentina, Paraguay and Colombia. Imports from these countries decreased gradually, ending from Argentina in 1978 and from Brazil and Colombia by 1980. However, imports from Paraguay dramatically increased from 29,000 skins in 1976 to over 230,000 in 1979. Skins from other countries were probably included. Since 1979 imports from Paraguay had declined to 95,000 in 1982. An export ban had been in force in Paraguay since 1981. Caldwell said that analysis of CITES data showed that ocelot, margay, tiger cat and Geoffroy's cat had been heavily exploited in Paraguay.

Tom Milliken of TRAFFIC Japan said that Japan had had a cat skin boom some six to seven years ago, but today imports had diminished. The trade involved
mainly leopard cat, bobcat and North American lynx, but there was also evidence of Geoffroy's cat and oncilla. There was no longer promotion of cat skins and trade seemed to be turning to farmed species. Japan's CITIES reports showed imports mainly from China and South Korea, the latter importing raw skins from Scandinavia, Europe and North America for fashioning into finished products. As far as China was concerned, tiger, leopard, snow leopard and clouded leopard skins had vanished from the trade since China ratified CITIES. Japanese trade probably represented between 20,000 and 30,000 leopard cat skins.

Panwar said that in India several species were still heavily hunted, including leopard cat, which, however, appeared to be holding its own, snow leopard in the Himalayas; lynx in northern Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh; and caracal in northwestern India. He explained that although export of wild cat pelts was banned, stocks declared by Kashmiri traders in 1979 could still be exported. So long as these stocks existed it was difficult to stop the drain on wild populations and he called for a once-and-for-all liquidation of stocks followed by a complete export ban.

Boonlerd Angsirijinda of Thailand's Royal Forest Department said that there was concern about the large number of cat teeth and claws in jewellery shops in Thailand. The Department had difficulty in identifying them, which was important in order to obtain convictions in court. He hoped the CSG could send a specialist to help train staff in identification. (Professor Paul Leyhausen subsequently visited Bangkok).

Project Tiger

Hemendra Panwar, Director of Project Tiger, reviewed ten years of the programme, stressing the "ecosystem approach" adopted. Not only had the tiger population increased markedly, but other wildlife populations had also responded and vegetation had recovered. Panwar pointed to the need to maintain forest corridors between reserves to maintain the genetic health of the tiger population. He also spoke strongly of the need to combine community development and welfare activity to improve the conditions of life of people living in the vicinity of wildlife reserves, this being the only way to gain their support for conservation.

S.P. Shahi, former Chief Conservator of Forests of Bihar, provided a case study of the Simlipal Tiger Reserve in Orissa, where a major irrigation project is under way. He declared that the impoverished villagers living in the tiger reserve should be given priority to land in newly irrigated areas. He also drew attention to the destructive practices of the Simlipal Forest Development Corporation, which had built 10 metre wide two-lane forest roads with permanent bridges and culverts to pursue its objective of replacing mixed miscellaneous forests of poor and medium quality by plantations of economic species, including horticultural crops.

Asiatic Lion Conservation Programme

M. A. Rashid, retired Chief Conservator (Wildlife) of Gujarat, who was responsible for implementing the Asiatic lion conservation project inaugurated in 1972, noted that the 1979 census figure of 205 lions represented a net increase of 25 over the 1974 census, which he attributed to the spectacular recovery of the degraded Gir habitat under the project. Measures taken included exclusion of outside cattle by a peripheral rubble wall round the 1,412 square kilometre sanctuary; resettlement of 845 families of Maldhari graziers and their livestock outside the Gir; suspension of commercial forestry operations; wildlife orientation of the Forest Working Plan; only plantations of browse species permitted; and installation of a wireless network to combat fire and poaching.
Rashid said that the Gir Lion Sanctuary was being upgraded to National Park status, which had covered only a fraction of the area up to now. He recommended establishment of alternative homes for the lions, not only in Barda sanctuary in Gujarat, which was already being prepared, but also in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Dr Paul Joslin of Brookfield Zoo, USA, a leading specialist on the Gir lions, reported on a trend survey that he had carried out recently after an interval of 13 years. He believed that the lion population had probably increased. Habitat had greatly improved and wild ungulates had benefitted substantially.

**Management**

Discussion of management of wild cats turned mainly on handling man-eaters and stock raiders. Panwar declared that these situations were the result of human incursions in wildlife habitat multiplied and some tigers took to man-eating in extreme cases. Stressing that he did not defend proven man-eaters, Panwar pointed out that tigers that had mauled or killed people in accidental encounters need not be eliminated. Careful assessment of each case was required and monitoring could help in planning remedial action. He distributed the guidelines developed by Project Tiger for declaring tigers and leopards man-eaters.

Arjan Singh, a leading Indian conservationist who has introduced a tigress and two leopards to the wild, spoke strongly on behalf of the tiger. He described how man-eater tigers could be created by decimation of prey animals and by the planting of agricultural crops like sugar cane that attracted tigers which start to prey on domestic stock and lose their natural fear of man. He opposed the removal of man-eaters to zoos, and said it would be better for them to be destroyed than sentenced to life imprisonment. He considered that the man-eating that had occurred in Kheri District of Uttar Pradesh, near the Dudhwa National Park and his home farm, was the precursor of a future problem. Like Panwar he stressed the importance of providing for the economic well-being of people living near reserves if conservation was to have a chance.

Wayne Melquist drew attention to the problems of jaquars attacking livestock in Brazil and suggested that the Manifesto on Wolf Conservation prepared by the SSC Wolf Specialist Group contained some good ideas, especially in setting out the conditions necessary if non-endangered wolf populations had to be reduced. The Wolf Manifesto was viewed favourably but the meeting unanimously decided that a Manifesto on Cat Conservation was required. David Smith was asked to prepare the first draft.

IUCN's draft policy on Culling was criticised by Arjan Singh who considered that IUCN should not adopt it as a management tool because, he said, it would be misused as an excuse for sport killing. Sub-optimal populations might be converted to surpluses by constriction of habitat and thereby opened to culling. He declared that control of populations should be left to Nature.

**Introductions**

The IUCN draft policy on Introductions, Re-introductions and Restocking was examined and generally approved. Panwar pointed out that most threatened populations had dwindled over a short space of time and the few survivors retained much of the gene pool. Such populations were capable of quick recovery as had happened with tiger, swamp deer, rhino and hangul in India. Introductions were not necessary in these circumstances.
Dealing with introduction of captive-bred animals, Panwar said hand-rearing from early cubhood had to be in complete isolation from people except a couple of project executants, and in an area selected for the release. In big cats hand-rearing was sure to cause loss of fear of man, which could later be a potential hazard to human life and give rise to extremely adverse social and administrative implications. Introduction should not be carried out where there was any possibility of hazard to human life.

There has long been a proposal in India to re-introduce cheetah. Three shot together in 1948 were the last definitely known. Divyabhanusinh provided a paper reviewing the history of the cheetah in India, in which he rejected suggestions that it had been introduced originally from Africa. He recalled the large number of cheetah kept by the Moghul emperors for hunting, and recorded in detail without any suggestion that the animals were imported.

Dealing with the reintroduction proposal he said the cheetah should preferably be from Iran, but if this was not possible he saw no objection to bringing in African cheetah. If reintroduction were to take place new areas would have to be set aside and stocked with prey — in other words, the conditions which had disappeared and thus led to be demise of the cheetah would have to be recreated.

S.M. Hasan, Director of Bandhavgarh National Park in Madhya Pradesh, described a proposal to reintroduce white tiger genes into the wild, where they seemed to have disappeared. Specimens from captive collections could be used to provide semen for artificial insemination of wild normal-coloured tigresses. But he favoured inducing wild tigresses to mate with a captive white tiger in a specially-designed enclosure in the forest, after which they would be released to give birth and bring up their cubs in the wild.

**Cat Conservation Measures**

V.B. Saharia, Director of the Wildlife Institute of India, pointed out that presentations at the workshop had shown the vagueness of information about the status of cats in different regions of the world. He proposed that identification manuals should be prepared to assist field workers studying lesser cats; and that methodology should be developed for surveys of species or groups of species. He welcomed the attention paid to socio-economic factors in conservation as well as the need to involve local communities and to improve their living conditions. He also noted the agreement that cats were at the apex of the biotic pyramid and thus their conservation was synonymous with conservation of whole ecosystems.

Wilson put forward proposals for a cat conservation strategy and action plan in Africa, declaring that it was necessary to know the species of cats in each region or country, their distribution, and present-day status. It would take many years to achieve this in some countries, but, once established, research, establishment of a conservation strategy and action plans and captive breeding could be undertaken. Check lists for some African countries were very much out of date and new detailed information was urgently required. He proposed that a Regional Representative be appointed who would recruit field workers from among Game Wardens, Wildlife Biologists and Forestry Officers to carry out the necessary work.

He also declared that research on captive cats was required as many aspects could not be satisfactorily studied, if at all, in the wild. Proposing that the Chipangali Wildlife Trust, of which he was Director and which had considerable experience already in breeding and handling several African species, could carry out this type of work, he invited those interested to
cooperate by helping in the acquisition of black-footed cat, golden cat, sand cat, and swamp cat - emphasizing that they must be captive-bred and not taken from the wild.

Panwar drew attention to the broad status survey of all cats being carried out in India this year and said suitable study areas for each species of lesser cat should be identified. Some specimens should be trapped so that local personnel could familiarise themselves with the animals and their characteristics, such as pugmarks. They should subsequently be released. Faecal samples from these specimens would help identify prey species. Relative abundance could be assessed from faeces and pugmarks to provide a basis for better definition of conservation areas and management measures.

Based on his experience with Project Tiger, Panwar declared that any conservation strategy and action plan for cats had to have an ecosystem approach, and sound multiple land use had to be encouraged in areas around reserves for the benefit of the local people, so that they did not press on the reserves.

Rodgers declared that management planning and recovery plans must be directed towards governments at all levels to enlist their support for conservation programmes to declare reserves, publicise problems and educate people. He said that other vertebrates had equal claims to attention and therefore cat conservation programmes should be developed in conjunction with conservation planning for all biological values of an area.

He expressed the Wildlife Institute of India's interest in helping research and monitoring of cats in India. A tiger ecology study in Corbett National Park and a lion study in the Gir had been approved. He suggested that Project Tiger should have a population specialist to guide field staff in building the data base on tiger to assist in making management decisions.

During discussions on proposed Recovery Plans proposed by the SSC Secretariat it was agreed that "Conservation Plan" would be a better title in many cases. Detailed plans were drawn up by the relevant specialists for Irionote cat, Arabian leopard, and Asiatic lion. In these cases the plans covered specific areas and populations. In the case of most species it was clear that conservation plans would tend to be like Chinese boxes with an overall or umbrella plan embracing detailed plans at more concentrated levels. For example, a plan for the tiger involved 14 countries and therefore had to be in general terms. Each country, and probably areas within countries, would need detailed plans of their own.

Draft Recommendations

The Workshop ended with a series of 16 draft recommendations, summarized as follows:

1. Status surveys should be undertaken as a priority to provide an information base for research priorities and conservation needs involve felids. Regional cat monitoring systems should be established and Regional Coordinators identified.

2. Existing protected areas should be enlarged and new ones established to protect cat populations. In border areas there should be international cooperation. Precautions should be taken in forestry operations outside protected areas so as to safeguard crucial life-stage and habitat requirements of lesser cats.
3. Reserves for large felids should represent habitats across the geographic distribution. They should have core and buffer zones to provide insulation in both directions. Reasonable extents of multiple-use areas should be recognized as special areas for ecodevelopment to meet the needs of the local population.

4. National governments, and state governments in federations, should be encouraged to undertake conservation of one or at most two species of lesser cats.

5. Considering the importance of the Iriomote cat there should be an immediate investigation of the effects of the unmonitored feeding programme; critical habitat should be upgraded in conservation status; and the eye disease affecting the cats should be identified.

6. Guidelines should be developed to deal with cat depredation on domestic livestock in a manner acceptable to livestock owners, conservation authorities and other interested parties.

8. Centres should be established for captive breeding and further study of rare or endangered cats. Study books should be maintained, and IUCN should sponsor a manual providing guidelines for captive breeding.

9. All zoos having Asiatic lions should be encouraged to join the captive breeding programme to help in avoiding inbreeding. IUCN should recommend that the Government of Gujarat drop its plan to established a lion safari park at the Gir.

10. There should be no commercial exploitation of lesser cats without an assessment of their status and distribution. CITES should be informed of countries which consistently fail to enforce trade restrictions and requested to take strong measures.

11. Illustrated literature should be prepared to inculcate interest and enthusiasm for lesser cats. IUCN should play a catalytic role in encouraging institutions and individuals to publish data on cats which is essential to long-term management.

12. The possibility of reintroducing species such as Asiatic lion and cheetah should be ascertained. Re-introduction should only be carried out in consonance with the IUCN position statement on the subject.

13. Relaxation of controls on trade on felid species, such as leopard, should be vigorously opposed.

14. Trade in live wild felids should conform to CITES and should not endanger their survival. Zoos and scientific institutions should obtain only captive-bred felids unless the survival of the taxa is dependent upon captive breeding from wild-caught specimens.

15. Caracal and Siberian tiger should be included in Appendix I of CITES in view of the scanty and often precarious status of the species in the wild.

16. IUCN should express its appreciation to the Government of India of its National Wildlife Action Plan, and urge the Government to give highest priority to its implementation.
DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

1. Message from Dr Kenton Miller, Director General, IUCN
2. Inaugural Speech by Colonel Ajay Mushran, Minister of Forests, Madhya Pradesh.
3. Address by Peter Jackson, Chairman, Cat Specialist Group.
4. The Distribution and Present-day Status of the Felids of Zimbabwe by Vivian Wilson.
7. The Status of Felids in China by Tan Bangjie.
8. The Irionote Cat by Shigeki Yosuma.
9. The Status and Distribution of the Cats of Bangladesh by Reza Khan.
11. A Note on the Wild Cats of the Northeastern Region of India by Anne Wright.
14. Lesser Cats of Madhya Pradesh (India) by P.D. Gupta et al.
15. Lesser Wild Cats of Madhya Pradesh (India) by P.C. Kotwal.
16. Caracal Habitat in Panna District of Madhya Pradesh (India) by H.S. Pabla.
18. Vanishing Cats of Rajasthan (India) by Vishnu Sharma and Kailash Sankhala.
19. Behavioural Observations of Leopard and Jungle Cat in Ranthambhor Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan (India) by Fateh Singh Rathore and Valmik Thapar.
21. The Status of Cats in Pakistan by Tom Roberts.
22. South American Cats in Trade - the German Connection by John Caldwell.
23. Japan's Trade in Cat Skins by Tom Milliken.
24. What to do when you have succeeded - Project Tiger Ten Years Later by Hemendra Panwar.
26. The Origin, Range and Status of the Asiatic Cheetah by Divyabhanusinh.
27. The Situation of the Lynx in Europe by Ulrich Wotschikovsky.
28. Incidences of Intraspecific Fights and Cannibalism among Tigers in Kanha National Park, Madhya Pradesh (India).
30. IUCN Position Statement on Translocation of Living Organisms.
31. IUCN Policy Statement on Culling (3rd draft).
32. Views on Culling by Arjan Singh.
33. IUCN Principles and Recommendations for the Keeping of Wild Animals in Captivity.
34. IUCN Manifesto on Wolf Conservation.
35. Draft Conservation Plan for the Irionote Cat.
38. Draft Conservation Plan for the Asiatic Lion.
41. Draft Conservation Plan for the Bornean Cat.
42. Draft Resolutions of the Cat Specialist Group Workshop, Kanha, April 1984.
INDIA'S INTEREST IN RE-INTRODUCING CHEETAH

The Deputy Minister for the Environment in the Government of India, Mr Digvijay Sinh, has asked for the advice of the Cat Specialist Group on a proposal to re-introduce the cheetah in India.

In 1948 three cheetah were shot at the same time by the Maharajah of Korea. They were the last definitely-known specimens in India. The main prey of the cheetah was the blackbuck Antilope cervicapra, which now survives only in a handful of reserves, totalling a few thousand animals. It has been argued in India that a project to re-introduce the cheetah could spearhead the rehabilitation of degraded areas.

It appears that cheetah survive in Iran - CSG member M.A. Rashid recently received an inventory report from the National Museum in Teheran, which did not specify numbers but declared that cheetah still existed in several reserves. However, the Minister says that it is "an uphill task" to procure cheetah from Iran, and he asks whether cheetah from southern Africa could be introduced in India.

The project was the subject of a draft recommendation at the CSG meeting in Kanha in April, as follows:

13. Reintroduction of Asiatic lion and cheetah

Recognising that reintroduction of endangered felids into former parts of their range may be essential to the long-term survival of taxa, such as the Asiatic lion and the Asiatic Cheetah,

that such reintroductions would stimulate public interest in the preservation of these species and in conservation in general,

that such an endeavour would result in effective conservation of the remnant habitats of these species, which have been severely degraded,

that the detailed investigation with regard to the status, distribution and ecology of the relict populations of these endangered taxa in their present habitat, which would be an essential precursor to any programme of re-introduction of such species, would lead to better conservation of these relict populations in their existing habitats,

Declaring that such re-introductions should only be carried in consonance with the IUCN position statement on Introductions, Reintroductions and Restocking,

the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group recommends:

that efforts be made to ascertain the possibilities of the reintroduction of species such as the Asiatic lion and the Asiatic Cheetah in former habitats from which they have disappeared.
The relevant portions of the IUCN policy on re-introductions reads as follows:

**INTRODUCTIONS, RE-INTRODUCTIONS AND RE-STOCKING**

**PART II**

**THE RE-INTRODUCTION OF SPECIES**

1. Re-introduction is the release of a species of animal or plant into an area in which it was indigenous before extermination by human activities or natural catastrophe. Re-introduction is a particularly useful tool for restoring a species to an original habitat where it has become extinct due to human persecution, over-collecting, over-harvesting or habitat deterioration, but where these factors can now be controlled.

2. Re-introductions should only take place where the original causes of extinction have been removed.

3. Re-introductions should only take place where the habitat requirements of the species are satisfied. There should be no re-introduction if a species became extinct because of habitat change which remains unremedied, or where significant habitat deterioration has occurred since the extinction.

   The species should only be re-introduced if measures have been taken to reconstitute the habitat to a state suitable for the species.

4. The basic programme for re-introduction should consist of:
   - a feasibility study
   - a preparation phase
   - release or introduction phase
   - follow-up phase.

**The Feasibility Study**

a) An ecological study should assess the previous relationship of the species to the habitat into which the re-introduction is to take place, and the extent that the habitat has changed since the local extinction of the species. If individuals to be re-introduced have been captive-bred or cultivated, changes in the species should also be taken into account and allowances made for new features liable to affect the ability of the animal or plant to re-adapt to its traditional habitat.

b) The attitudes of local people must be taken into account especially if the re-introduction of a species that was persecuted, over-hunted or over collected is proposed. If the attitude of local people is unfavourable an education and interpretive programme emphasizing the benefits to them of the re-introduction, or other inducement, should be used to improve their attitude before re-introduction takes place.

c) The animals or plants involved in the re-introduction must be of the closest available race or type to the original stock and preferably be the same race as that previously occurring in the area.
The Preparation and Release or Introductory Phases

The successful re-introduction of an animal or plant requires that the biological needs of the species be fulfilled in the area where the release is planned. This requires a detailed knowledge of both the needs of the animal or plant and the ecological dynamics of the area of re-introduction. For this reason the best available scientific advice should be taken at all stages of a species re-introduction. This need for clear analysis of a number of factors can be clearly seen with reference to introductions of ungulates such as ibex, antelope and deer where re-introduction involves understanding and applying the significance of factors such as the ideal age for re-introducing individuals, ideal sex ratio, season, specifying capture techniques and mode of transport to re-introduction site, freedom from disease and parasites, acclimatisation, helping animals to learn to forage in the wild, adjustment of the gut flora to deal with new forage, "imprinting" on the home range, prevention of wandering of individuals from the site or re-introduction, and on site breeding in enclosures before release to expand the released population and acclimatise the animals to the site. The re-introduction of other taxa of plants and animals can be expected to be similarly complex.

Follow-Up Phase

a) Monitoring of released animals must be an integral part of any re-introduction programme. Where possible there should be long term research to determine the rate of adaptation and dispersal, the need for further releases and identification of the reasons for success or failure of the programme.

b) The species impact on the habitat should be monitored and any action needed to improve conditions identified and taken.

IUCN Responsibilities

12. International organisations, such as UNEP, Unesco and FAO, as well as states planning to introduce, re-introduce or restock taxa in their territories, should provide sufficient funds, so that IUCN as an international independent body, can do the work set out below and accept the accompanying responsibilities.

13 IUCN will encourage collection of information on all aspects of introductions, re-introductions and restocking, but especially on the case histories of re-introductions; on habitats especially vulnerable to invasion; and notable aggressive invasive species of plants and animals.

Please send your comments to:

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