Vacant Directorship of Conservation Monitoring Centre

Although it is not our custom in this Journal to give notice of vacancies in the fields of environment and/or conservation, we are pleased to comply with requests to bring this one to the attention of our world-wide readership as it seems particularly important to these interlocking causes (in effect comprising the core of the environmental movement) that the very best person available be recruited on this occasion.

The vacancy concerns the Directorship of the (world) Conservation Monitoring Centre (CMC) in Cambridge, England, which consists of (1) the Protected Areas Data Unit, (2) the Species Conservation Monitoring Unit, and (3) the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Unit, all located in Cambridge, as well as (4) the Threatened Plants Unit, located at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, near London, UK.

The Director of the CMC reports to the IUCN Directorate-General at Gland, near Geneva, Switzerland. The Director will have full responsibility to plan, organize, and manage, the Centre. Consequently a mature and suitably experienced individual with proven management expertise is sought. No particular scientific discipline is prerequisite, but a doctorate or equivalent indication of experience is desired. Fluency in English is essential, and additional language ability would be useful.

It is likely that the successful candidate will come from a scientific or R&D background. Salary in the range of £ 10–15,000 per annum, at a negotiable starting-point commensurate with individual qualifications, experience, and requirements. Letters of application, enclosing up-to-date *curriculum vitae,* should be sent as soon as possible to the Director-General, IUCN, Avenue du Mont-Blanc, 1196 Gland, Switzerland.

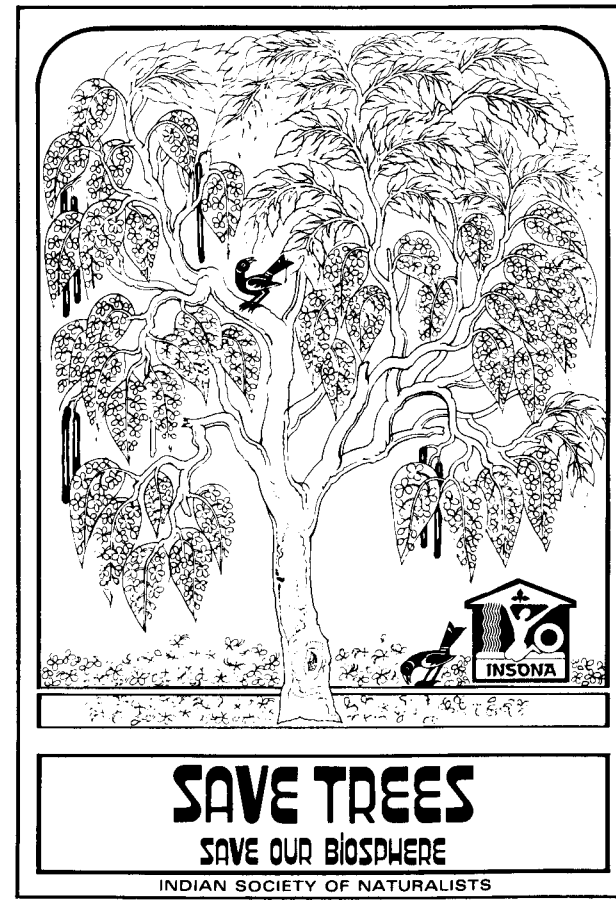

Fig. 1. *Uncoloured version of this INSONA sticker which is in 5 colours, 7¼ × 5 inches = 18.0 × 12.7 cm, and depicts* Cassia fistula.

Save Trees, Save our Biosphere!

For the celebration on June 5th of World Environment Day 1982, the Indian Society of Naturalists (INSONA) brought out another issue of stickers entitled 'Save Trees, Save our Biosphere' (Fig. 1).* This was with a view to strengthening support for, and promoting in every possible way, the World Campaign for The Biosphere (Gaekwad & Oza, 1981; Anon., 1982; Pauling *et al.,* 1982; Polunin, 1982*a*, 1982*b*; Worthington, 1982).

The new sticker (in two forms respectively for inner or outer surfaces—for viewing either through glass to which it is affixed or to be stuck on an opaque surface) is designed by INSONA's Fellow, Vinay Trivedi who, for World Environment Day 1981, had designed a 'Save Our Biosphere' sticker depicting the Indian Blackbuck (*see* Gaekwad & Oza, 1981, and editorial footnote thereto). It is hoped most ardently that these and other, continuing endeavours will go a long way in attracting the attention of the world's population to the fragility of The Biosphere and the paramount requirement of preserving the habitats of the world's most diverse biomes (e.g. Oza, 1981*a*).

The sticker (Fig. 1), multicoloured, depicts the tropical and warm-temperate genus *Cassia* (the Indian Laburnums, very showy trees with large ovate leaves and bright-yellow flowers). *Cassia fistula* (Purging Cassia or Pudding-pipe Tree), distributed also in China and Indo-malaysia, and reaching a height of about 18 metres, has been chosen for our 1982 campaign, which is dedicated to tropical forests and their animal denizens, whereas the 1983 campaign will concentrate on conserving plants. The INSONA Symbol, which the sticker carries below on the right, stands for the Society's motto: *The Lord in His Grace created this beauteous Universe; the bounden duty to preserve it rests heavily on us.*

We have an urgent need to curb the present alarming rate of disappearance of the world's tropical moist forests if we wish to preserve (as of course we do) our most vital species of plants and animals for the allevia-

* Somewhat similarly this year, UNEP planned a campaign entitled 'For Every Child a Tree', which was furthered in Nairobi in May as we saw by across-street banners, impressive tree-planting ceremonies, and a procession led by a massive brass band.—Ed.

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tion of human suffering and indeed our very survival (Oza, 1981*b*).

The Governments 'owning' the tropical rain-forests owe an obligation for their conservation to the peoples of the world. Consequently, their actions should judiciously pave the way for sound resource-conservation strategies. Deliberate destruction of these forests, for immediate economic gain, will make the younger generations witness in increasing array the evils of soil erosion, desertification, human miseries, floods, food hunger, wood hunger, and unpredictable global climatic conditions (Oza, 1981*c*). Do we really seek to be deprived of vital forest products, life-saving drugs, fruits and timber, for ever? Ironically enough, the very forests which provided peace and prosperity to the world communities are in a helpless state before the destructive hands of Man, and one can almost hear them pleading to be left alone.

It is sadly overdue that, despite the adverse calamities now widely faced by human beings, Man has not yet come to realize at all widely that he is an integral part of Nature, and that human survival is dependent upon the conservation of forest trees and the rational use of the living resources of the Earth. If only Man would realize these fundamental truths and act accordingly, sustainable development should follow.

By the year 2000, the world's human population is projected to increase to around 6,000 millions from the present estimated 4,500 millions. If the population count is to grow by another third in that time, tragically most of the remaining tropical forests will be greedily axed down. Nor will the lost forest wealth be brought back to life overnight; it will take decades and perhaps centuries. Saving The Biosphere, we can hope to slow down the degrading trend of the living resources, which undisputably are the basis of human well-being.

Having now released the present set of stickers, linking trees with The Biosphere, we feel just a little more optimistic about getting a positive response towards saving some of the remaining tropical forests for posterity and, with them, habitats for our animal wildlife and of course human survival. Moreover, the thirsty populations seeking potable water should benefit from the water catchment areas.

The stickers are available, against a donation, to serve the cause of the *World Campaign for The Biosphere*. Please extend your generous support to the Conservation Movement through communicating with such a 'Save our Biosphere' sticker distributor as Dr J.R. Vallentyne, President, Canadian Society of Environmental Biologists, c/o Canada Centre for Inland Waters, P.O. Box 5050, Burlington, Ontario, L7R 4A6, Canada (Vallentyne, 1982), or with the General Secretary of INSONA (address below).

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Acid Precipitation: Can Europe Use the Answer?

Why are some 20,000 Scandinavian lakes devoid of fish? Why are trains in some areas of Poland limited to a speed of 40 km an hour? Why have 1,500 hectares of evergreen forest in Bavaria died—and why are another 80,000 ha threatened? And why are the Parthenon, the Acropolis, and Cologne Cathedral, slowly 'dissolving away'?

The answer seems to lie in acid rain—a pollution problem which has been growing in Europe since the early 1960s*, and may become a major source of international dispute in the 1980s. Rain, snow and other forms of atmospheric precipitation, are rendered acidic by oxides of sulphur and nitrogen, which are released to the open air particularly when fossil fuels — such as oil, coal, and natural gas—are burnt e. g. in power-stations and other industrial plants without due control.

Efforts to disperse local pollution from factories have made the acid deposition problem increasingly international—chimneys 200–300 metres high disperse pollutants into the atmosphere in which the gases may then be carried for thousands of kilometres by the prevailing winds in only a few days.

The oxides combine with water molecules in the atmosphere to form acids, and ultimately fall to the ground or water surface in rain, snow, or hail, etc.

The effects on lakes and other water-bodies are the best-documented; as lakes acidify, more-and-more forms of life in them find survival difficult and ultimately impossible. Some lakes—in particular those situated over limestone or other basic rocks—can 'buffer' the acidic deposition, so reducing its effect. But other lakes, etc., such as many in Scandinavia and parts of North America, turn into something resembling dilute vinegar.

*It has also long been increasingly serious in eastern North America—and latterly in western North America, according to a paper which we now have under consideration for early publication.—Ed.

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