

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Goes *International*

by Darv Johnson

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), a non-profit conservation organization established in 1984, prefers to base its conservation strategy on the need to protect species before they become Threatened or Endangered. To date, however, the NFWF has supported 143 projects dealing with Threatened and Endangered species, of which 36 are international in scope. The NFWF commitment to species recovery on the international level stems in part from the increasing realization that solutions to natural resource conservation problems must be placed in an international context to ensure their ef-



fectiveness. The decline of neotropical migratory birds, for example, is due not only to impacts on nesting habitats in the United States, but also to the deforestation and fragmentation of

their wintering grounds in Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. Jurisdictions and national borders are meaningless in this situation, and a conservation solution will only be successful if these "Partners in Flight" nations are included as full and equal partners.

This multi-national perspective is essential when examining endangered species recovery. Any effort to address the plight of the North Atlantic humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) on a strictly national scale will meet with little success because the whale's migratory patterns are not governed by

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U.S. Imposes Trade Sanctions

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Wildlife Service (FWS) believes that most of the world's tiger and rhino populations (except the white rhino in South Africa) will become extinct in the next 2 to 5 years if the trade in these species is not eliminated.

Action to protect these animals accelerated in September 1993. Based on a FWS review of the trade, carried out under the Pelly Amendment to the Fisherman's Protection Act of 1967, Interior Secretary Babbitt certified that Taiwan and the People's Republic of China were engaging in trade that promoted the poaching of rhinos and tigers. Such trade undermines the effectiveness of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), an agreement among 122 countries to prohibit trade in endangered wildlife. In November 1993, President Clinton responded by warning Taiwan and the People's Republic that the U.S. may impose sanctions against them unless "measurable, verifiable, and substantial progress" in eliminating the trade was made by March 1994.

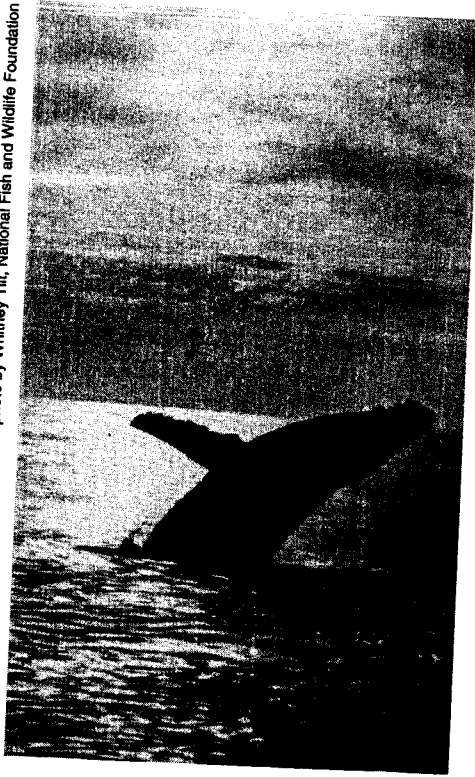
The President's statement suggested a number of actions that Taiwan and the People's Republic could take to demonstrate a commitment to ending the trade in endangered species. These measures, which were based on CITES recommendations, included consolidation and control of stockpiles, formation of a permanent wildlife law enforcement unit with specialized training, development and implementation of a comprehensive law enforcement and education plan, and establishment of regional law enforcement arrangements with neighboring countries. The U.S. offered technical aid to both countries to assist them in their efforts. Additionally, the FWS funded and participated in 3 delegations sent to China and Taiwan over the past 4 months to evaluate the progress in ending the trade.

At a recent meeting, the CITES Standing Committee found that the minimum requirements have not been met by the government of Taiwan, leaving in place the committee's previous recommendation that CITES member countries prohibit the importation of all wildlife (including parts and products) from Taiwan. The President's April 4 action follows this

recommendation. On the other hand, the CITES Standing Committee noted that the People's Republic of China has made progress in controlling the trade in endangered wildlife. However, the committee said further actions were needed from China as well as Taiwan to adequately combat the endangered wildlife trade. Therefore, the Pelly Amendment certifications will remain in effect for both countries. Their progress will be evaluated again in December 1994, at which time sanctions against Taiwan could be lifted or strengthened, and the decision not to sanction China will be reassessed.

A notice was published in the April 28, 1994, *Federal Register* to solicit public comments on the range of otherwise legal wildlife specimens and products to be covered by the import prohibitions. Examples of items that could be targeted include jewelry made from coral and mollusk shells, and leather products fashioned from snake, lizard, and crocodile hides.

Additional information is available from the U.S. Office of CITES Management Authority, Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 420-C, Arlington, Virginia 22203.



The Endangered humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*) is a perfect example of a species that will benefit from a coordinated, multi-nation conservation effort. This humpback is shown enjoying the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary in the Gulf of Maine, three miles off the northern end of Cape Cod, Massachusetts.

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national boundaries. Similarly, North America's stocks of Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*), petitioned for listing in the United States, cannot be restored without the cooperation of the Greenland fishermen who catch 235 tons of the salmon each year. In the Gulf of California, efforts to conserve the Gulf of California harbor porpoise (*Phocoena sinus*) and a fish, the totoaba (*Cynoscion macdonaldi*), depend on the cooperation of Mexican conservation interests.

The NFWF strategy in these instances is to work cooperatively with multi-national partners to develop the best possible management solution. To address the pressures facing the humpback whale, NFWF is supporting a three-year research project guided by the Center for Coastal Studies in which scientists from seven nations

will pool data gathered at sea, thereby creating a solid scientific foundation for future understanding and management of this species. In the case of the Atlantic salmon, the result was a two-year buyout of the West Greenland commercial salmon quota, enabling large percentages of these fish (more than 120,000 annually) to return to their native North American rivers and spawning grounds.

With a population roughly four times that of the United States in an area one-third the size, India's natural resources are under enormous pressure. Any conservation initiative in India, therefore, is that much more difficult to undertake. The first NFWF venture in that region comes through a fund established in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support conservation activities in the Near East and South Asia regions. Through our partnership with the Wildlife Institute of India and other conservation organizations in the area, NFWF will reap the benefits of their experience with recovery efforts for such endangered species as the tiger (*Panthera tigris*), snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), and Indian wolf (*Canis lupus pallipes*) in a climate of intense population pressure.

Similarly, NFWF's support of Siberian tiger (*Panthera tigris altaica*) research in the former Soviet Union has proven to be a rare chance for a US/Russia team to study and develop a conservation plan for the world's largest cat. These cooperative efforts represent an enormous opportunity for nations to exchange scientific data and management techniques, and may prove to be of value in directing our conservation efforts on the domestic front.

The NFWF has also offered support for international wildlife law enforcement efforts, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the World Wildlife Fund's "Buyer Beware" programs. NFWF has provided three grants in support of CITES, including training

for Chinese scientists on implementation of CITES programs. The "Buyer Beware" campaign promotes awareness of priority international wildlife trade issues through public service announcements, publications, brochures, and other projects.

Unfortunately, the need for the protection of endangered species on an international level continues to grow. This fall, the biennial CITES conference will be held in the United States for the first time in 20 years, presenting a tremendous opportunity for U.S. involvement in these conservation and enforcement efforts to increase. Through this conference, and through support of international endangered species work, NFWF will continue to encourage the exchange of scientific data management techniques and approaches. With this exchange, individual countries and communities can begin to implement increasingly effective endangered species programs, and shift gears from reactive to proactive species management.

For more information, write to the NFWF at 1120 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Suite 900, Washington D.C. 20036, or call (202) 857-0166.

Daru Johnson recently joined the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, where he works on the development and marketing staff. His article is the first the Bulletin has received via Internet.

Siberian Tiger Project

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