

BOOK REVIEWS

EARTHCARE: Sierra Club Special Publications on the International Environment, 1972-76

The periodic breakup of oil tankers on the high seas, the export of an uncertain nuclear technology to developing nations, and the hounding of the great whales to extinction are only a few examples of the proliferation of international environmental problems. Contemporary ecologists realize that environmental concerns cannot stop at national borders; such issues are transnational, calling for both transnational and international solutions. The modern *Candide* seeking the tranquility of his garden cannot ignore distant activities in foreign lands. Environmental insults are uniquely ambulatory, as wafted with the wind or tossed by the waves, they may cross into and defile the best-guarded retreat. In response, the Sierra Club, a California non-profit corporation founded in 1892 to explore and preserve the scenic resources of the Sierra Nevada and now one of the largest and most active of the United States conservation organizations, has expanded its lobbying and educational programs by opening an office at the United Nations and by launching the *Earthcare* publishing program.

The Sierra Club's special publications on the international environment fill an important need for contemporary and well researched information on current issues. Concentrating on international environmental and resource policies, these publications provide a sound scientific and political data base on questions of great importance to mankind's future, especially those seldom mentioned in the popular press. This *Earthcare* program has made possible the growth of a "grass-roots" movement on international environmental questions, by its publication of directories naming the key players, treatises identifying the priority issues, and a periodic newsletter on international environmental issues.

WORLD DIRECTORY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS By Thaddeus Trzyna and Dr. Eugene Coan. San Francisco: the Sierra Club, 2d ed., 1976. Pp. 288. \$18. The *World Directory*, a unique source book containing valuable information arranged for easy use is divided into four major parts. Part 1, "The Users' Guide" divides the listed organizations into 36 categories of "common concern," grouping together bodies as diverse as United Nations agencies, European hiking clubs, and trade associations. Such concerns include alpine regions, arid lands, chemical contamination, climate and weather modification, forests and forestry, grasslands, and human settlements. Part 2 lists intergovernmental organizations with a description of the component parts of the United Nations system, such as United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), in sufficient detail to identify the scope and nature of each agency's work and the means of contacting it. Part 3,

"International Non-Governmental Organizations," lists organizations of international scope that have no governmental affiliation, such as the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN). Several pages are devoted to a description of the IUCN's work, providing expansive commentary for this important group, which is composed of 104 governmental agencies and 202 nongovernmental organizations. Part 4, "National Organizations," is a listing by country of national and local governmental and regional environmental organizations. A useful appendix gives a key to the hundreds of acronyms which are the hallmark of established official and would-be official bodies. While *World Directory* entries are brief, they do contain essential information: a description of the organization's purposes and activities, date of establishment, number and kind of members, publications, and most importantly, addresses and names for liaison. A special problem for the editors involved selection of the criteria to be used in listing nongovernmental organizations for the developing, socialist, and western countries. In the United States and Europe, the private conservation groups have played a major role in determining the outcome of natural resource issues. However, in the developing world, scientific societies and research institutions have played the leading roles. In listing organizations, the editors sought to include those groups which influence policy on resource decisions or serve as major sources of environmental information in their countries or fields of interest.

EARTHCARE: PROGRAM/JOURNAL. 1975. Pp. 202. \$5. This is an elaborate and extended program for the June 1975 Earthcare Conference which brought together several thousand activists from the United States concerned with international environmental questions and some 55 scientific and governmental leaders from around the world to address the problem of saving crucial environmental areas. *Earthcare* consists of 20 background papers by recognized experts, such as René Dubos, Roderick Nash, and Barbara Ward, on key ecological and legal concepts. The theme of *Earthcare* is the interdependence of nature and people which calls for the stewardship of natural areas. Case histories of a supertanker oil spill, management of Kenya's national parks, overfishing of North Atlantic lobsters, and the U.S.-Mexican Colorado River salinity dispute demonstrate the variety of problems and approaches used by officials in different parts of the world.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT. This is a biweekly two-page newsletter from the Sierra Club Office of International Environmental Affairs. New York City. 1972 to date. The *International Report* is a current and accurate source of information on selected international environmental issues. The editors focus on those questions currently in the political arena which have become the subject of lobbying efforts by the Sierra Club and its allies. While major developments in the United Nations General Assembly sessions are reported, the *International Report* is not, and does not seek to be, a journal of record for U.N. environmental activities. Rather, continued detailed

information is provided on priority items for citizen action: stronger tanker regulation, preservation of tropical forest ecosystems, protection of the dwindling whale populations, and control over the export of nuclear technology. While other periodicals such as the *UNEP Newsletter* and the *IUCN Bulletin* provide more comprehensive records of contemporary international environmental affairs, the *International Report* is valuable to a particular audience interested in political action to protect threatened natural resources within the framework of the United Nations system.

Intensive coverage of selected topics is given in occasional white papers. *Air, Water, Earth, Fire: The Impact of the Military on World Environmental Order*. Edited by Ruth B. Russell. San Francisco: Sierra Club Special Publications, 1974. Pp. 71. \$2. This paper reviews the use of ecological weapons in Vietnam, arms control initiatives, nuclear explosives developments, environmental effects of chemical weapons and weather modification. *Ocean Resources and the Ocean Environment*. Edited by Patricia Rambach. San Francisco: Sierra Club Special Publications, 1974. Pp. 90. \$3. (out of print). This is a compendium of background papers prepared for briefings for the Caracas, Venezuela, Law of the Sea Conference, and written by scientists and officials concerned with protection of the marine environment. Three main topics, oil and gas, seabed minerals, and fisheries, are further divided into subtopics dealing with technical management problems, case histories, and projected future consequences flowing from Law of the Sea negotiations. *Tropical Rain Forest Use and Preservation*. By Lawrence S. Hamilton. San Francisco: Sierra Club Special Publications, 1976. Pp. 111. \$4. This is a study of rain forest ecology and management undertaken under Sierra Club sponsorship by Dr. Hamilton, of the Cornell University Department of Natural Resources, and the Government of Venezuela. After explaining the ecological value and unique attributes of tropical rain forests and reviewing the rapid depletion of this resource in other countries of the developing world, Dr. Hamilton presents a survey of Venezuela's tropical rain forest and submits recommendations on how the resource might best be managed.

In 1976, two short position papers *Vessel Source Pollution: Is There a Single Negotiable Solution* by Patricia Birnie and *Supertankers and the Law of the Sea* by Noel Mostert were issued.

The Sierra Club's international environmental publications program fills a special need for accurate and current information on basic resource policy questions. While other more specialized publications provide a record for the international agencies, they do not supply concerned business, academic, and public interest groups with the necessary information on current events. These Sierra Club special publications serve as a basis for

effective environmental advocacy in the international community and for grass-roots support of an *Earthcare* program.

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