

expressed their willingness to abide by the controls established under the system. The Japanese ivory industry, long criticised as the recipient of vast quantities of illegal ivory, has committed itself to providing partial funding for the new CITES ivory unit through WWF-Japan.

Limited export quota systems were first established by CITES in 1983 at the fourth meeting in Botswana. Under the system, non-commercial leopard skin export quotas in seven African countries were established, although the leopard continues to be listed under the CITES protection category for endangered species which prohibits any international commercial trade (Appendix I).

The inability of some of these countries to provide sound data allowing monitoring implementation of the export quota system has caused concern among some conservationists.

A four-fold increase in export quotas was agreed, bringing the export total to over 1,000 skins annually for the next two years.

Annual quotas were also set for nine African countries exporting the Nile crocodile, which was once given the highest protection under CITES. Quotas have now been agreed to take and export, appropriately tagged, a total of 12,000 crocodiles or their skins. These range from a quota for Cameroon of 20, to 5,000 for Sudan. These quotas do not include Zimbabwe, whose crocodile population was already on Appendix II.

Approval was also given by the parties to utilise the saltwater crocodile in Australia and Indonesia. Crocodile skins made available from these countries must also be tagged before they enter international trade so they can be distinguished from crocodiles taken



David Keith Jones

At the recent CITES meeting in Argentina delegates agreed to a four-fold increase in the export of non-commercial leopard skins.

elsewhere.

CITES parties continued to give the highest category of protection to marine turtles, a group of animals under great pressure because of international demand for their meat, eggs, oil, leather and shell. Some parties hoped to achieve a reduction in the present prohibition CITES places on the turtle product trade, to allow exports of products gained by ranching. Following heated debate, a series of secret ballot votes reconfirmed the absolute protection now accorded to sea turtles.

The decisions to reject all of the proposals involving sea turtles were greatly influenced by non-governmental organisation pressure and there was considerable expression of dissatisfaction from many parties including Surinam, Indonesia, the Seychelles and the United Kingdom.

WWF News

### Poaching in the Central African Republic

Poachers have seriously depleted elephant and rhino populations in the Central African Republic, considered one of the last strongholds for the animals in the region, according to a recent aerial survey.

The statistical survey revealed that there were almost twice as many dead elephants as live animals (estimated, 7,861 carcasses, 4,308 live animals) in the 64,400 km<sup>2</sup> northern area of the country, which includes Bamingui-Bangoran and Manova-Gounda-St Floris National Parks. The report concludes that 'there has been a catastrophic reduction of elephants in both national parks'. The country's elephant population, estimated in 1981 as the second largest in central and west Africa after Zaire, is estimated to have been reduced from 80,000 to 15,000 in the last decade.

Black rhinos in the survey area 'have

been reduced to the point of extinction'—no rhinos were sighted during the survey. Rhinos were relatively plentiful until several years ago. In 1981 the country's rhino population was estimated at 1,500 (including some 30 in the Manovo-Gounda-St Floris National Park) and formed the most important rhino population remaining in central and west Africa.

The aerial survey was carried out in June 1985 by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) at the request of the Centre National pour la Protection et l'Aménagement de la Faune (CNPAF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).



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The report of the survey team recommends that all trade in ivory in the country be stopped, that a co-ordinated government effort to stop poaching should be put into effect immediately and that appropriate organisations and individuals support these efforts.

On a visit to the national parks in May 1985, the head of state, President General Andre Kolingba and his party came under fire as they descended in two helicopters to investigate some elephant carcasses. A counter-attack led to the arrest of 24 poachers and the confiscation of 220 tusks with an average weight of 2.8 kg, indicating that a high percentage of young elephants under the age of ten had been killed.

The report written by I. Douglas-Hamilton, J. M. Froment and G. Doungoube, states that 'the increase in killing of elephants in these areas appears to be related to the reopening of the ivory trade in December 1981', and that 'the poaching is mainly carried out by horsemen from Sudan and Chad' equipped with spears and automatic weapons.

'This is the first quantitative evidence of the collapse of elephant populations in the central African region due to over-exploitation of ivory,' says Douglas-Hamilton. 'This is the endgame of a process happening in

Sudan, Chad, Central African Republic and Zaire.'

Buffalo and giant eland populations were also significantly reduced, the survey found, with a decline of 78 per cent and 84 per cent respectively between 1979 and 1985. These animals are thought to be victims of a rinderpest epidemic introduced in 1983 by the tens of thousands of livestock brought into the region by pastoral nomads from Sudan and Chad, who moved into the Central African Republic when drought destroyed the pastures in their own countries.

### Stoves that save wood

Fuel-saving stoves designed to combat the serious deforestation which faces many Third World countries went on practical display recently in Divonne, France.

More than 250 guests, including WWF President HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, were invited to a 'cook-out' organised by the Geneva-based Bellerive Foundation, which has established stove-making centres and training units in countries suffering from forest over-exploitation and associated problems including land erosion, desertification and drought.

The simple but effective cookers have already made life easier for hundreds of poor

women in developing countries such as Kenya, which, according to experts, will have not one single tree by the year 2000 if deforestation continues at the present rate.

The Foundation, set up by HH Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan in 1977, is devoted to conserving the world's natural resources while maximising their use for the benefit of mankind. By researching the way in which agricultural and household chores were carried out in developed countries before the invention of tractors, electricity and motor vehicles, the Foundation has been able to develop methods suitable for today's less-privileged communities.

A team from the Bellerive Foundation has researched and developed a range of stoves and ovens which run on a variety of fuels ranging from biogas, which is emitted from decomposing animal dung or vegetation, to kerosene.

By using a stove instead of cooking on an open fire, villagers can dramatically reduce their consumption of wood as well as cut down the amount of time they spend cooking or searching for fuel. Research shows that these stoves, built from locally-found materials, can result in fuel savings of up to 90 per cent.

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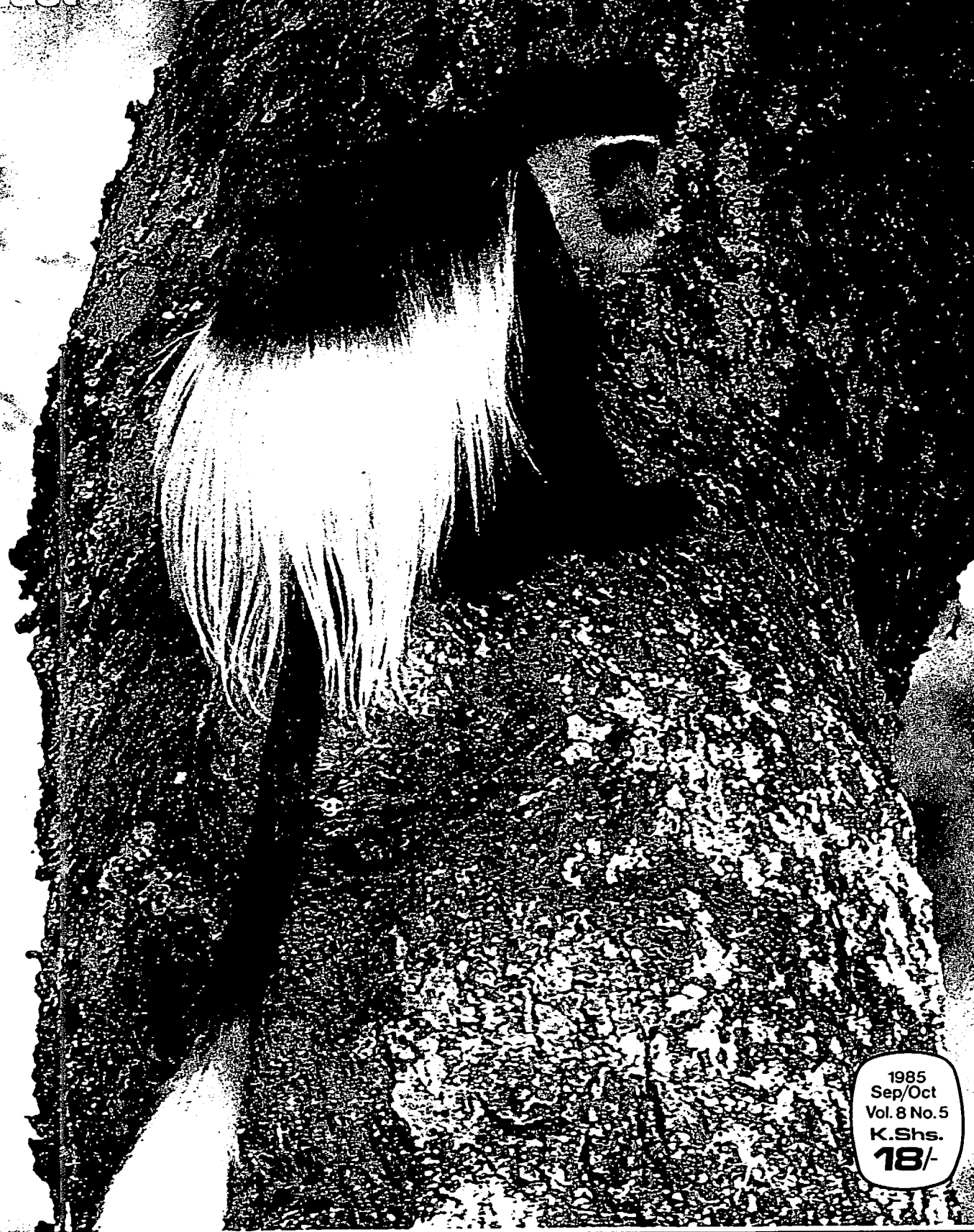
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