

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN ENDANGERED SPECIES WORK

Local currencies, owned by the United States, are now being put to use on behalf of wildlife in Egypt, and soon in at least two other countries, India and Pakistan.

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recently dispatched four American scientists to Egypt to begin discussions on the establishment of joint work on wildlife such as the endangered Nile crocodile and dugong.

The Congress has authorized the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to use U.S.-owned foreign currencies for joint projects aimed at the conservation of endangered or threatened species. The money will come from Public Law 480 funds, and not from the general operating budget of the Service. It represents foreign aid and exchange credits that the host country has with the U.S. Treasury, and which must be spent in the host country.

While in Egypt, the team will visit areas considered as possible sites for parks and preserves, as well as discuss the opening of marine research projects in the Red Sea.

A number of endangered species occur in Egypt. These animals share similar relationships to the environment as do certain American endangered species. A greater knowledge of the Egyptian species that are endangered would be of value to both countries.

Wildlife research also offers many possibilities for mutual U.S.-Egyptian benefit. A study of the effects of the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River fishery resource, suggested by the Egyptians, will be a priority effort.

Lawrence Mason, Deputy Chief of the Service's International Affairs Staff, will be the team leader on this visit. He will be assisted by Dr. Robert Lackey, a habitat specialist; Dr. William Brown, an endangered species specialist; and Kyran D. Thelen, a National Park Service specialist.

Similar meetings are expected to take place with Indian and Pakistani scientists and American scientists as the program develops.

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