

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEW INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO CONSERVE ENDANGERED SPECIES

Foreign currencies owned by the United States are now being put to use on behalf of threatened and endangered wildlife in India and Pakistan.

The Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in conjunction with the National Park Service dispatched a special study team to India for 2 weeks in January and will send a second team to Pakistan for a smaller period in early February in order to open talks of joint work projects on threatened and endangered wildlife species such as the dugong, tiger, snow leopard, Marco Polo sheep, crocodile, and marine turtles.

The Congress has authorized the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service to use U.S.-owned foreign currencies for joint projects aimed at the conservation of threatened and endangered species. This money will come from U.S.-held foreign currencies and not from the general operating budget of the Services. 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 India and Pakistan, teams will visit areas considered as possible sites for parks and reserves and will develop contract proposals with the two countries dealing with research, management techniques, training, and public awareness. Large numbers of threatened and endangered species occur in both India and Pakistan. Often they share similar relationships to the environment as do similar American species. A greater knowledge of Indian and Pakistani endangered species can be of value to both countries.

Dr. Gerard Bertrand, Jr., Chief of the Fish and Wildlife Service's International Affairs Staff, leads the team to India. He is accompanied by Dr. Howard Campbell, Chief of the Service's Gainesville Research Station, Florida; Philip Agee, Wildlife Research Specialist, Federal Aid; Robert Milne, Chief, Division of International Park Affairs, National Park Service; and Boyd Evison, Superintendent of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, N.C.-Tenn. The study team to Pakistan will be led by David Ferguson, Foreign Currency Program Coordinator for the Fish and Wildlife Service's International Affairs Staff. He will be accompanied by Dr. Howard Campbell; Eugene Kridler, Endangered Species Coordinator for Central and Western Pacific Ocean; Wayne Cone, Associate Regional Director for the Southwest Region of the National Park Service; and Linda Van Keuren, International Specialist with the National Park Service's International Park Affairs Staff.

These missions will complete the exploratory state of this endangered species study program initiated in May 1977 when a similar joint Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service group study team visited Egypt.