

Birdlife in exotic forests could be increased by planting suitable broad-leaved species along compartment margins, but this action would not provide a valid argument for those wishing to clear-fell and replace native bush with pines.

Native forests have their own intrinsic values and notwithstanding any reduced worth as

habitat for indigenous fauna, their floristic character alone justifies their preservation. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that exotic forests at present supporting high populations of kiwis and other birds will remain immune from the large numbers of vermin that have contributed to the decline in birdlife in many bush lands.

Photos by Rogan Colbourne. ■

UN adopts World Charter for Nature

By resolution of 28 October 1982 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the World Charter for Nature by a vote of 111 to 1, with 18 abstentions.

This decision marks the culmination of a 7-year effort by IUCN (the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, based in Gland, Switzerland) to gain world acceptance of a code of conduct for managing nature and natural resources. In 1975, on the occasion of the 12th General Assembly of IUCN, held in Kinshasa, President Mobutu Sese Seko, of Zaire, had issued the call for a global charter to draw attention to man's stewardship of nature.

The World Charter for Nature lays down universal principles of conservation by which all human conduct affecting nature is to be guided and judged. It thus provides an important complement to the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, also developed by IUCN with the advice, co-operation, and financial assistance of the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The director-general of IUCN, Dr Lee M. Talbot, welcomed the official adoption of the charter, which, he said, "finally raises the international recognition of environmental principles to the same level as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It reflects a global consensus on the responsibility of man to maintain, for his own survival, the essential ecological processes and life support system of our planet."

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