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Negotiating for nature: Conservation diplomacy and the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, 1929--1976

Keri Lewis
University of New Hampshire, Durham

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Negotiating for nature: Conservation diplomacy and the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, 1929--1976

Abstract
In 1941, as the United States entered the Second World War, leaders from twenty American nations signed into effect a broad-based treaty for the protection of migratory wildlife at the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. This dissertation examines the unique set of questions, problems, and concerns framers of the Convention dealt with in the development of a conservation program to ensure the protection of migratory wildlife as it crossed political borders. Although it provided no solid system of enforcement, the provisions of the Convention opened the door for new, more specific conservation treaties between the United States and other Pan American Union nations as well as fostered a collective effort at conservation between all nations in the hemisphere. This treaty came together as the result of the confluence of the devastating droughts in the 1930s, the severe decline of migratory birds throughout the Americas, and the prevailing policy of isolationism spreading in tandem with the concerns over the tensions in Europe. These stimuli generated enormous concern on the local, state, and federal levels of most governments in the Pan American Union, but nowhere more so than in the United States. This concern encouraged the development of a migratory wildlife treaty that would extend from the northern border of the U.S. to the southern tip of Argentina, and was then also used to establish parks, refuges, and forests to protect habitat, and to promote preservation of natural resources. This Convention marks the first real multi-lateral attempt to forge a coherent conservation plan with the Southern hemisphere and is one of the most long-lasting and successful efforts at conservation diplomacy to date.

Keywords
History, United States, Political Science, International Law and Relations

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NEGOTIATING FOR NATURE:
CONSERVATION DIPLOMACY AND THE CONVENTION ON NATURE
PROTECTION AND WILDLIFE PRESERVATION IN THE WESTERN
HEMISPHERE, 1929–1976

BY

KERI LEWIS
Baccalaureate of Arts, University of Montana, 1996
Master of Arts, University of New Hampshire, 2002

DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

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in
History

May 2008
This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Kurkpatrick Dorsey, Associate Professor of History
Julia Rodriguez, Associate Professor of History and Women's Studies
Lucy Salyer, Associate Professor of History
Stacy VanDeveer, Associate Professor of Political Science
Mark Lytle, Professor of History, Bard College

Date 26 April 2005
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents and to my sister, all of whom were an unending supply of support and encouragement throughout this process.
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The process of researching and writing this dissertation could not have happened without the support and assistance of so many people. I would like to thank the following for their part in seeing this project through to fruition. Thank you first and foremost to Kurkpatrick Dorsey, who for nearly 8 years has offered steady guidance and practical advice. Thank you also to Julia Rodriguez who offered critical and extraordinarily helpful commentary on the Latin American chapters and to Lucy Salyer, Stacy Vandeveer, and Mark Lytle for their insightful recommendations on possible avenues to pursue with the project.

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ABSTRACT

NEGOTIATING FOR NATURE: CONSERVATION DIPLOMACY AND THE CONVENTION ON NATURE PROTECTION AND WILDLIFE PRESERVATION IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, 1929–1976

by

Keri Lewis

University of New Hampshire, May, 2008

In 1941, as the United States entered the Second World War, leaders from twenty American nations signed into effect a broad-based treaty for the protection of migratory wildlife at the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. This dissertation examines the unique set of questions, problems, and concerns framers of the Convention dealt with in the development of a conservation program to ensure the protection of migratory wildlife as it crossed political borders. Although it provided no solid system of enforcement, the provisions of the Convention opened the door for new, more specific conservation treaties between the United States and other Pan American Union nations as well as fostered a collective effort at conservation between all nations in the hemisphere. This treaty came together as the result of the confluence of the devastating droughts in the 1930s, the severe decline of migratory birds throughout the Americas, and the prevailing policy of isolationism spreading in tandem with the concerns over the tensions in Europe. These stimuli generated enormous concern on the local, state, and federal levels of most governments in the Pan American Union, but nowhere more so than in the United States. This concern
encouraged the development of a migratory wildlife treaty that would extend from the northern border of the U.S. to the southern tip of Argentina, and was then also used to establish parks, refuges, and forests to protect habitat, and to promote preservation of natural resources. This Convention marks the first real multi-lateral attempt to forge a coherent conservation plan with the Southern hemisphere and is one of the most long-lasting and successful efforts at conservation diplomacy to date.
INTRODUCTION

NEGOTIATING NATURE: THE CONVENTION ON NATURE PROTECTION AND WILDLIFE PRESERVATION IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

In February 1937, having just returned from a whirlwind trip around the globe, Harold J. Coolidge dragged his desk as close as possible to the bathroom door and, between bouts of dysentery, wrote excitedly to the members of the American Committee on International Wildlife Protection (AC) about the possibility of extending conservation regulations throughout the western hemisphere. Wedged between descriptions of his harrowing encounters with a variety of mega-fauna in Africa and complaints about the severity of his intestinal problems, Coolidge eagerly recounted a note he had received from Director General of the Pan American Union, Leo Rowe in which Rowe commented on recent U.S. Department of State reports about potential Nazi sympathizers making inroads in Latin America. This, declared Coolidge, provided the unique opportunity for the American Committee to use the threat of European invasion to encourage the Department of State to support, and the Pan American Union to adopt, a broad-based treaty that would protect one of the defining characteristics of the western hemisphere: its wildlife and wilderness areas. In 1938, meeting of the PAU the AC introduced Resolution No. 38 calling for a hemispheric convention. In 1941, twenty-one nations signed the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere and pledged to protect wildlife populations and to establish national parks to defend wildlife habitat.
This dissertation examines the 1940 Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Protection in the Western Hemisphere and discusses the agreement in the context of the efforts of the American Committee to utilize improved inter-American relations to extend previously established international bird protection measures to nature more broadly. It argues that this Convention provided the foundation for standardized conservation nomenclature and has institutionalized nature protection as a national and international goal throughout the western hemisphere. The American Committee, drawing upon the successes and the precedents established by Progressive Era conservationists, networked with hundreds of scientists, conservationists, and politicians in almost every American nation to draft, almost exclusively without the direct assistance of Department of State officials, an agreement that was both comprehensive and applicable across the hemisphere, regardless of nations' economic or political circumstances. Toward this end, they introduced categories of protection for various lands, which ranged from highly protected to multiuse reserves and, perhaps most importantly for wildlife in the hemisphere, it institutionalized the protection of vanishing species as both a national and international goal. Although the provisions of the agreement could not be immediately realized in most countries, it provided a vision and a goal for government officials and nongovernmental actors to draw upon when proposing protection measures for wildlife, habitat, and nature in those signatory nations. It also encouraged individuals to utilize the agreement in the promotion of international educational and scientific exchange.

The Convention has been an extraordinary success. One has only to look to Costa Rica and the tremendous success that it has enjoyed as the result of its emphasis on nature
protection and the cultivation of an international eco-tourism industry to support it, all of which began with its ratification of the Convention in 1967. Using those articles mandating scientific and nongovernmental cooperation and educational exchange, conservation leaders reached out to both government officials and nongovernmental institutions in the United States as a means of generating interest in and assistance with the establishment and expansion of Costa Rica’s national parks program. Investing in governmental infrastructure rooted in the protection of its national natural treasures ultimately paid off in the end as it has generated millions of dollars in tourist revenue each year, providing an expanded tax base from which the government can draw to fund its multiple, impressive social reform programs. And Costa Rica is just one example.

Article 8 of the U.S. Endangered Species Act, signed by President Richard Nixon in 1973, pledges U.S. financial, personnel, and political support to those nations attempting to implement the provisions of the Convention, which prompted the creation of the Wildlife Without Borders Program, adopted by the U.S. Congress in 1983, to facilitate and emphasize the economic, social, and political benefits of investing in nature protection and that has assisted Central and South American nations in the development of government infrastructure to support conservation. While few historians have pointed to the Convention as the key reason for the establishment of conservation measures in Central and South America, in fact its presence, its influence, and its provisions have been responsible for the establishment of national parks and reserves, for the adoption of

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legislation protecting habitat, species, and unique geological formations, and for more
than 100 educational and training opportunities for career professionals in wildlife
conservation and protected area management in the majority of its signatory nations. The
Convention, indeed, is one of the most impressive and effective pieces of protection
legislation ever adopted in this hemisphere.

In recent years, there have been calls for diplomatic historians to put the 'globe' at
the center of international relations and for environmental historians to incorporate the
very critical role of international interactions into their work. The call, however, has
gone unheeded. The decisive role the environment has played in influencing political,
economic, and social change remains a gaping hole in Latin American historiography.
This study aims to fill the gap by contributing to three spheres of historiography—
conservation diplomacy, Latin American environmental history, and U.S.-Latin
American relations.

As a work of conservation diplomacy, this dissertation focuses on one
nongovernmental organization’s efforts to mobilize a network of private citizens and
government officials across the hemisphere for the purpose of promoting an international
agreement on nature protection. It examines the conception, the creation, the
compromises, and the confirmation of this agreement, all of which were overseen, not by
U.S. Department of State officials, but by private conservationists who compiled data,
recommended programs, and engaged with policymakers to create international policy
regulating the protection of nature. It can be thought of, for chronological purposes, as

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2 Mark Lytle, “Research Note: An Environmental Approach to American Diplomatic History.”
*Diplomatic History* 20(2) Spring 1996. 281.
following Kurkpatrick Dorsey’s work, *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy*. The 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty set precedents establishing the constitutionality of federal jurisdiction over migratory wildlife in the United States and the principle of international cooperation in wildlife protection. Dorsey’s drafters negotiated the political obstacles and established the primacy of the federal government vis-à-vis the states in regard to migratory wildlife. In so doing, they were forced to sacrifice “their dream of extending protection for American migrants on their wintering grounds” in Mexico for the more practical purpose of getting legislation adopted.\(^3\) By focusing on producing a pragmatic agreement, however, the Progressive Era scientists established a precedent in the United States and set the stage for the Depression Era conservationists to extend those regulations south not only to Mexico, but to all of Latin America. By 1936, when American Committee members first began to actively promote the Convention, the U.S. federal government had had jurisdiction over migratory wildlife for two decades. For this reason, they did not have to contend with debates about the constitutionality of forging an international agreement to protect species that crossed state as well as national lines. Moreover, they referenced these earlier arguments when assisting Latin American government officials in their efforts to secure similar legislation in their respective nations. Progressive Era successes meant that AC members could devote their attention to building support for an international agreement that would be attractive to Latin American government officials.

This dissertation diverges from Dorsey in two ways. First, he examines three international agreements aimed at practical protection measures for fish, seals, and migratory birds, to determine those crucial elements necessary for success in international conservation legislation. This dissertation focuses on one agreement that blanketed coverage over all of nature and the various challenges faced in trying to generate such a gargantuan agreement without sacrificing the practical protection measures drafters were determined to make. Second, Dorsey focuses on the compromises and the sacrifices made by conservationists and scientists to generate State Department and U.S. public support for their endeavors. This dissertation does not address the American Committee-State Department give and take, but instead focuses on the disagreements and the deals made within the American Committee itself regarding what should or should not be included in the agreement, and on those discussions between the American Committee members and Latin American government officials to determine what terms were acceptable across the hemisphere. By focusing on the American Committee negotiations with Latin Americans and by examining the initial development of national conservation infrastructure, this dissertation examines an example, not of a bilateral or multilateral effort to protect a species or a series of species in danger of immediate decline but, of the construction of a larger, more integrated, international infrastructure that would protect the loosely defined "nature" through various nongovernmental and governmental cooperative efforts.

This study contributes to Latin American environmental history in that it contextualizes the political, economic, and governmental institutional conditions that determined the degree of conservation that would be implemented. These conditions
primarily included the level of governmental infrastructure available to enforce or enact
nature protection measures in various countries, but also incorporated the level and type
of resource extraction, the scientific community present in each place, and the economic
resources available to devote to protection. In doing so, this study examines the efforts of
Latin American conservationists, both private individuals and government officials,
working to improve environmental protection regulations. It contributes a comparative
examination of government and nongovernmental nature protection efforts in Latin
America. It examines the ways in which efforts to expand the protection of nature during
the 1930s coincided with Latin American governmental concerns over the ecological
degradation caused by unregulated extraction. It looks at the efforts of significant
individuals, government officials, and nongovernmental organizations working to enact
nature protection measures within the countries under consideration. By the 1930s, many
governments in Latin America were sufficiently concerned to take action. Evan Ward, 4
Stuart McCook, 5 and Richard Tucker, 6 have explored the ways in which overuse and

4 Evan Ward, Border Oasis: Water and the Political Ecology of the Colorado River Delta, 1940–1975,
concerning the strained resources of the lower Colorado River and argued that those bilateral negotiations
between the U.S. and Mexican Governments were both complicated and aided by those local, private, and
federal interests that were invested in the abundance and availability of the resource.

5 Stuart McCook, States of Nature: Science, Agriculture, and Environment in the Spanish Caribbean,
1760–1940 (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002) and “Plantas, petroleo, y progreso: la ciencias
agricolas y las ideologias de desarrollo en la época de Juan Vicente Gómez, 1908–1935,” Estudios
the relationship between governments, nature, and the economy in the Spanish Caribbean and argued that
governments in Venezuela, Puerto Rico, Cuba, Colombia, and Costa Rica turned to scientists to establish
control over nature so as to alleviate the more pressing environmental and economic stresses while the
governments intensified their commitment to export led growth at the catastrophic ecological cost of soil
exhaustion, erosion, and epidemics of crop diseases and pests.

6 Richard Tucker, Insatiable Appetite: The United States and the Ecological Degradation of the Tropical
of mono-crop agriculture and argued, in part, that those optimistic U.S. scientists who flooded into Latin
American nations from the 1920s to the 1940s, spreading American agricultural practices, culture, and
large scale monocrop agriculture transformed the ecosystems, communities, and
governments of Latin America, but few historians have examined governmental attempts
to solve ecological problems. This study contributes to this scholarship by examining the
establishment and early development of nature protection efforts in several Latin
American nations as a means of solving such problems.

Finally, this dissertation contributes to the historiography of U.S.-Latin American
relations by examining the international context that made the Convention on Nature
Protection politically possible. American Committee members were able to use the
improvement in relations among the American states during the 1930s to their advantage
in the effort to promote hemispheric-wide nature protection regulations. This relative
improvement in relations, however, was a recent development, as between 1904 and 1925
the United States pursued an interventionist foreign policy toward Latin America.
Indeed, the historiography on hemispheric relations—works such as Emily Rosenberg’s
*Spreading the American Dream*, Warren Cohen’s *Empire Without Tears*, and Richard
Tucker’s *Insatiable Appetite*—focuses on the efforts by U.S. businessmen to export
American goods (along with morals, ideals, and culture) to Latin American nations in
order to “spread” American culture and values throughout the hemisphere.\(^7\) Those
activities rarely favored Latin American governments or its environment, as U.S. interests

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\(^7\)The development of American business interest and the part that these businessmen played in conducting
American diplomacy in the interwar years can be found in Emily Rosenberg, *Spreading the American
Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890–1945* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982);
University Press, 1987); Joan Hoff-Wilson, *American Business & Foreign Policy, 1920–1933* (Lexington:
University Press of Kentucky, 1971); Robert Johnson, *The Peace Progressives and American Foreign
invested in destructive, large scale, mono-crop agriculture and resource extraction. Previous historians have focused on how the collective appetite for natural resources in the United States led Latin American states to engage in viciously destructive resource extraction practices and the negative consequences of U.S. involvement in Latin American societies. While this dissertation does not refute the claims of historians about the ill effects of U.S. business or economic power in Latin America, it does demonstrate that the reality was more nuanced, illustrating that some Americans engaged in business practices in Latin America recognized the consequences of unregulated resource extraction and worked with Latin Americans to reverse the damage by putting preservation into the political infrastructure.

***

I first became interested in the Convention during the final semester of my master’s degree studies when I wrote a seminar paper on the Convention. During the research process, I quickly became enthralled by the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection and its role in creating the agreement. I was particularly taken with Executive Council member Harold Coolidge and his obvious conviction and determination to get what would later become the Convention out of realm of office musings and into practice—his passion and his enthusiasm were contagious. For Coolidge, an agreement that would promise much, but delivered little toward actually protecting wildlife in the hemisphere was not acceptable and he put his heart into ensuring effective protection measures were enacted. Moreover, the process of developing the Convention itself was equally compelling as an early example of concerned private citizens working together across borders, in cooperation with national
governments across the Americas, to create and promote an internationally binding agreement. As I went further into the research, I was struck by the responses from Latin American officials and private citizens who expressed interest in the agreement’s potential and pledged their support of the Convention. It was perhaps most remarkable to me that these individuals were able to promote the agreement against the backdrop of the severe economic dislocation of the Great Depression and amidst the onset of the Second World War.

In researching this project, I intended to focus on the role Latin American government officials and conservationists played in shaping the Convention. Toward this end, I decided to examine a cross section of countries to see how the Convention was perceived and acted upon in different geographical regions. I chose to conduct research in Argentina in the southern cone of South America; Venezuela in northern South America; Costa Rica in Central America; and Mexico in North America. During the summers of 2004 and 2005, I went in search of the records of the various nationally appointed Committees of Experts—the group appointed by a special Pan American governing board to compile data for the Convention. Unfortunately, I never found those specific records nicely bundled in a conveniently accessible location. I did, however, find a wealth of information on the creation of the national parks, on initial attempts to develop wildlife protection legislation, and those early national efforts to stem large scale industrial ecological destruction. Given the wealth of information on these issues and the lack of an abundance of information directly relating to the Convention, I focused my efforts on gathering evidence on early conservation efforts, particularly those efforts focused on the creation of governmental infrastructure institutionalizing conservation—
beginning around 1936 and going through 1942. I then used that information, which varied from place to place and archive to archive, to piece together the key players and the institutional structure in each place, so that I could identify the degree of cooperation and the underlying motivations in each country. The bulk of the project that evolved was a comparative history of the development of national infrastructures of protection. This process is connected to the main theme of the larger work as it demonstrates how these countries got to the point where—politically, socially, economically, and technologically—they could adopt large scale, national and international protection measures.

What became clear early on in the research was that U.S. conservationists took the lead in promoting and drafting the Convention. Working closely with Latin American officials and private individuals, U.S. conservationists sought to build support for the effort and to get advice on crafting an agreement that would be acceptable across the Americas, but they maintained control of the proceedings and over the final language of the Convention. The American Committee made considerable efforts to solicit input from Latin American sources, sending surveys to hundreds of Latin American officials and private individuals, and virtually bombarding them with early drafts of the Convention as a means of generating support and determining what types of objections, if any, there would be at the actual meeting and addressing them beforehand. Although they accepted some advice some Latin American officials, particularly the Argentineans in the initial stages, Coolidge in particular was careful to maintain as much control as possible over the text and over the actual meeting, inserting text almost identical to that suggested by U.S. Department of Interior officials and rejecting offers to hold the
Convention in other nations. This, on the surface, suggests little real input or change resulting from Latin Americans, but I argue that the Convention itself is truly Pan American, not because of who wrote the actual text, but because the premise of the agreement is rooted in Pan American cooperation—government-government, government-nongovernmental organizations, and nongovernmental organizations-nongovernmental organizations—that nations can and have tapped into at will. Moreover, these three spheres overlap and intersect, encouraging and emphasizing regional integration in national efforts to protect nature, rather than emphasizing national responsibilities to protecting their own nature. This cooperation has facilitated an awareness that nature itself is not just a national issue, it is a regional one that requires an international effort to protect it.

Sources for this project include a combination of personal papers, the records of the U.S. Department of State and the Fish and Wildlife Service; records of Ministries of Foreign Relations and Agriculture and in some cases those records dealing with the Departments of National Parks and Territories. The most extensive documentation on the Convention can be found in the personal papers of Harold Coolidge, housed at Harvard University, and those of Alexander Wetmore, housed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C. Correspondence contained in both sets of papers reveals the breadth and magnitude of the network of conservationists that they cultivated throughout the Americas to promote nature protection. All of the archives in Latin America turned out to be treasure troves of material; unfortunately most of it did not deal directly with the Convention. There is, however, an enormous amount of information on the ways in which these nations were confronted with, and tried to address the issue of, unregulated
resource extraction and the ecological consequences of those practices. There is also significant documentation on sporadic, but important efforts to protect wildlife. The documentation for Costa Rica is perhaps the most easily accessible, and is by far the most voluminous, and presents an extraordinary example of the ways in which government officials utilized the international conservation community to make nature marketable and to assist the nation in its transition from a national economy driven by agriculture and to one driven by ecotourism.

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This dissertation is organized into chronological and thematic chapters. Chapter 1, *The American Committee: Internationalizing Conservation in the Western Hemisphere, 1900–1937*, examines the creation of the American Committee and argues that, by 1938, members used their experiences working with European organizations, and its political connections, to put conservation on the agenda of the 1938 PAU Convention. In doing so, it asserted itself as the preeminent international nongovernmental organization in the hemisphere. The AC capitalized on the growing power of the Pan American Union and emphasized conservation as part of a common “American” experience. Chapter 2: *The Call to Conservation: The 1938 Pan American Convention and Resolution No. 38*, examines the effort to generate support for a hemispheric agreement to regulate nature protection and argues that the compromise made between American Committee members Harold Coolidge and Alexander Wetmore between the desire for *preservation*, as opposed to *conservation*, measures in the Convention created a flexible agreement and, most importantly, one that was agreeable to most nations in the western hemisphere.
Chapters 3, 4, and 5 examine the interaction between the American Committee members and their counterparts in Argentina, Venezuela, and Mexico. Chapter 3, "The Anomaly of Argentina: Argentinean Aspirations to Connect through Conservation, 1903–1938," examines the evolution of Argentina's national system of conservation and argues that Argentinean scientists and politicians used their connections in South America to influence the terms of the 1938 Pan American Resolution. Chapter 4: "Networking and Negotiating: Venezuela, 1917–1940," examines the evolution of preservation policies in Venezuela as the result of the efforts of an established network of conservationists and argues that the small, determined community of conservationists linked to U.S. conservation organizations worked with the Venezuelan Government during the 1930s to stem deforestation and habitat decline. This relationship confirmed to American Committee members drafting Resolution 38 and the Convention on Nature Protection, the existence of wide-spread interest in a treaty to establish a hemisphere wide framework for nature protection. Chapter 5: "Mexican Conservation Efforts 1917–1940," examines the Mexican perspective on the Convention on Nature Protection and reveals the unexpected uses of conservation diplomacy. It argues that the decision to ratify was rooted in the hope that participating would improve Mexico’s bargaining position with the United States in resource use negotiations, particularly regarding water rights to the Colorado River. Mexican officials intended to use those articles stipulating cooperation to gain additional negotiating leverage with the United States. These interactions illustrate the ways in which the American Committee, at times deftly and at times not, navigated through the tensions between U.S. and Latin American initiatives and motivations concerning the Convention.
Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the critical time period between the adoption of Resolution 38 and the meeting of the Convention on Nature Protection in 1940. Chapter 6: *Negotiating for Nature*, examines American Committee efforts to prepare a convention and argues that debates over whether to pursue a preservationist approach to wildlife protection or to pursue a more conservationist approach produced a treaty that harnessed Inter-American scientific management, developed uniform standardized language for defining nature protection institutions and utilized private, non-governmental interest in the hemispheric protection of wildlife. Chapter 7: *The Precipice of Preservation* examines the negotiations at the Convention and the ratification of the agreement and argues that the treaty created a workable framework for the responsible management of natural resources and the protection of nature, wildlife, and natural monuments. Together, these two chapters examine the inherent tensions within the conservation movement, indeed, within the American Committee itself, as idealists, like Harold Coolidge, sought the most extensive coverage possible, and realists, like Alexander Wetmore, who sought the most politically plausible agreement possible. While these two perspectives worked at times together and at times at odds, the combination proved to be particularly successful in the final analysis.

The final chapter, Chapter 8: *The Case of Costa Rica*, examines the revival of the Convention during the 1970s and the role the Convention on Nature Protection played in Costa Rica's emergence as a leader in nature protection in the Americas. It argues that Costa Rica's revival of the Convention served as a catalyst, prompting both the United States and the Organization of American States to revisit the largely forgotten agreement. Moreover, Costa Rica's use of the Convention prompted neighboring nations to revisit
the terms of the agreement. This is most evident in Panama’s ratification of the Convention in 1972.

Although it has not been the most well-known of the protection treaties, the Convention on Nature Protection has played a crucial role in the conservation and preservation of nature in the western hemisphere. It provided a guide and a framework for enacting uniform standardized nature protection measures across the hemisphere for the first time. Even though these provisions were too ambitious to be enacted immediately after the Convention was ratified, it provided a framework and a goal for conservationists—both government officials and nongovernmental organizations—toward which to work. It has prompted several interested governments, including the United States, to invest considerable resources in the establishment of national parks and reserves, and to take measures to protect vanishing wildlife.
CHAPTER I

THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE: INTERNATIONALIZING CONSERVATION IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, 1900–1937

In the early part of the 20th century, conservationists in the United States sought ways to assist in global efforts to preserve wildlife. Committed to their goals and confident that their education and experience qualified them for the task, such individuals as John C. Philips, Harold Coolidge, and Thomas Barbour explored the possibility of networking with likeminded conservationists in Europe and the Americas to promote their vision. In 1927, they formed the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection, an offshoot of the Boone and Crockett Club, as a vehicle with which to mobilize the forces—both governmental and nongovernmental—necessary to realize their aims. During the 1930s, the American Committee worked first with European organizations, compiling data, donating money and attending conferences, but found they had little influence with their European colleagues. By 1937, American Committee members turned their attention to the Americas. Between 1936 and 1938, American Committee members focused on harnessing the growing power of the Pan American Union (PAU) and emphasized conservation as part of the larger, common “American” experience.

This chapter examines the establishment of the American Committee, traces its involvement in international conservation, and its decision to introduce a resolution for a hemispheric convention at the 1938 Pan American Union Convention. It argues that
the American Committee, frustrated by what its members considered the inefficiency of European international conservation organizations and spurred by the improving hemispheric relations following the introduction of the Good Neighbor Policy, facilitated an international conservation convention in the western hemisphere, one for which they had wished for more than twenty years. This initiative, combined with the tireless efforts of a few, helped to shape the direction of conservation in the western hemisphere for decades to come.

**The Expansion of the European International Conservation Organizations**

Conservationists in Europe created a number of international organizations at the end of the 19th century to respond to declining wildlife populations. Rapid industrial expansion wreaked havoc on ecosystems and intensified the decline of migratory wildlife across the world. Conservationists, sportsmen, and concerned citizens on the local and national level responded by founding nongovernmental organizations focused on the protection of nature. These nationally based nongovernmental organizations soon recognized they would have to work internationally to be effective. These national movements first branched out, creating a group of European international conservation organizations, then this new international community fomented an international conservation movement raising money, financing and conducting scientific expeditions, compiling statistics, disseminating information, and generating popular support for its initiatives.

In the United States members of national organizations such as the Boone and Crockett Club and the Audubon Societies, as well as local sportsmen’s groups, worked individually and in cooperation to promote national bird and big game species protection.
These organizations encouraged camaraderie among their membership of largely white, middle-class men, emphasizing proper sportsmen-like hunting practices and an appreciation for wilderness and wildlife conservation. They connected with sportsmen throughout the United States and Britain through the publication of journals, newspapers, and magazines, creating a community of likeminded individuals holding a common set of ideals concerning the protection of wildlife. These conservation organizations, however, lacked political power to influence national policy. Individuals concerned with wildlife protection or interested in promoting natural reserves soon realized they would have to cooperate to be effective.

The members of international conservation organizations differed from their national counterparts in that they primarily consisted of men with solid scientific educations and of higher than average wealth. Scientific institutions in the United States and Britain funded research trips around the globe, sponsoring scientists to conduct studies and collect samples. These scientists, exposed to declining wildlife populations, shrinking habitats, deforestation, and development in the most remote locations in the world, understood the magnitude of the problem better than most. Emboldened by the national conservation movements and concerned by the scale of declining wildlife populations, these scientists often joined forces with European international conservation organizations to advance international protection measures. For those not affiliated with

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8 John Reiger, *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2001); pp. 150–155. Support for the creation of Yellowstone National Park and the Lacey Act of 1900 came largely from sportsmen organizations, such as the Boone and Crockett Club, parent organization to the American Committee.

9 There is considerable information on international conservation organizations in Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2001); Chapter 16.
scientific institutions, personal wealth sometimes provided the means to gain similar insights by participating in safaris in Africa or hunting expeditions in India. These enthusiastic bird and game hunters, what Richard Fetter has termed “penitent butchers,” toured the globe, shooting every animal in sight with wanton abandon only to return home from their journeys lamenting the poor status of Africa’s elephants, India’s rhinos, and South America’s sables.10

By the beginning of the 20th century, the situation in Africa had reached a critical point. The seemingly insatiable European commercial demand for ivory and the mythical medicinal value of rhino horns had led to the near extinction of both.11 Moreover, the large expanses of territory these populations required were being encroached upon by expanding development, and depleted by deforestation and cultivation.12 In response, European international conservation organizations began hosting conservation conferences to make proposals to national governments for regulating wildlife protection in their respective colonies. In 1900, conservationists in Britain and Germany convinced the British Foreign Office to host a meeting to address the issues of wildlife decline in


11 The white rhino, found typically in southern Africa, were shot for their horns (believed to have medicinal value), and for sport. Elephant populations all over Africa had faced intensive hunting practices by those seeking ivory, taken from tusks and teeth. Both these animals required large expanses of territory, which, by the turn of the century, were being severely encroached upon by the rapidly growing human populations, and the deforestation and agricultural cultivation that accompanied them. Most attempts to protect elephants and rhinos were largely cut off with the onset of World War I, as the outbreak of fighting had largely ceased the global demand for ivory and the imperial ability to enforce regulations. Report of the American Committee for the Boone and Crockett Club Meeting, December 19, 1932; Harvard University Archives, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Records of Harold Jefferson Coolidge, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee. Hereafter referred to as HUA, HUG #, Category, Box #, file name.

12 Mark Cioc, unpublished manuscript titled *Game Conservation*, p. 8.
Africa. The product of this meeting was the *Convention Designed to Ensure the Conservation of Various Species of Wild Animals in Africa which are Useful to Man or Inoffensive*. This conference was attended by both conservationists and government representatives from Great Britain, Germany, Spain, the Belgium, France, Italy, and Portugal, who considered proposals for regulating wildlife protection in African colonial holdings. The meeting yielded several comprehensive studies on wildlife and adopted resolutions which required signatory nations to regulate hunting through licenses and closed hunting seasons, and granted special protection to those species deemed in danger of vanishing—specifically primates, elephants, rhinos, and giraffes. While these measures had strong support at the meeting, few nations’ enacted such stringent regulations because of the administrative difficulties of enforcement. Although the signatories to the 1900 London Convention failed to enforce much of the regulations to which they had agreed, the conference resulted in the establishment of parks and reserves in Africa. It also provided the international community of conservationists with an example of a successful forum in which conservationists and government representatives met to discuss game protection problems and solutions.


15 Nash, p. 355.

16 Additional information concerning Wetmore’s trip to London and his attendance at the Convention can be found in SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.
A number of wildlife conferences took place following the 1900 London Convention. In 1902, European international conservation organization representatives and government delegates from Belgium, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, France, Luxembourg, Monaco, Portugal, and Sweden met in Paris to grapple with the issue of conservation and protection of migratory birds across Europe at the first International Congress for the Protection of Nature. Delegates signed an agreement calling for the international protection of migratory birds throughout Europe and the compilation and distribution of information on game populations, habitat, and protection legislation to both prominent European international conservation organizations and national governments. In 1906, the Prussian Ministry of Education formed the Central Institute for the Care of Natural Monuments, tasked with finding and protecting natural monuments throughout Europe, defining natural monuments as “those which are still in their primitive location and have remained completely or almost completely, untouched by civilisation.” The Prussian definition included plants and animals, as well as geological formations as monuments.

In addition, the International Zoological Union (IZU) held meetings to exchange data on the key causes of declining wildlife populations, to develop possible solutions and to rate the potential effectiveness of conservation measures. By 1910, the agenda had become so varied and the meetings so large that members more concerned with conservation specifically formed an ancillary organization, the International Conference

17 Tienhoven, p. 10; Ibid.


for the Protection of Nature (ICPN). In 1913, the ICPN held its first meeting in Bern, Switzerland, attended by conservationists and government delegates from seventeen nations, all of whom signed an agreement promising to advance the protection of the flora and fauna within their borders.\textsuperscript{20} Two years later, twelve nations ratified the agreement. World War I interrupted the application of the provisions and, while there was a second meeting in Paris in 1923, it failed to revive a similar degree of interest in the Conference.\textsuperscript{21} The use of chemical weapons and new military technology during the First World War resulted in such profound ecological destruction that nature protection efforts redoubled following the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.\textsuperscript{22}

The international conservation movement made tremendous strides in the decades following the war, marking what Roderick Nash called the “high point of institutionalized global nature protection.”\textsuperscript{23} These efforts included the establishment of the International Union of Biological Science (IUBS) in 1919 at the Conférences des Académies Scientifiques Interalliées in Brussels to focus solely on the promotion of global biological studies for the purpose of conservation.\textsuperscript{24} In 1928, under the auspices of

\textsuperscript{20} The seventeen nations were Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and United States. New Zealand and Australia signed on at a later date.

\textsuperscript{21} The United States, the United Kingdom, Spain, Argentina and France never ratified the treaty.

\textsuperscript{22} Edmund Russell, \textit{War and Nature: Fighting Humans and Insects with Chemicals from World War I to Silent Spring} (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Chapter 1.

\textsuperscript{23} Nash, p. 359.

\textsuperscript{24} There is good background information on this conference, along with several others, contained in a report titled “General Information on the Conference for the Establishment of an International Union for the Protection of Nature," drafted March 5, 1948 for the United Nations. This report, along with several others, can be found in the HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, Administrative Papers of the IUCN and other Conservation Organizations, ca. 1941–1969, Box 4, International Relations, International Unions, Protection of Nature Conference.
the IUBS, Dr. Peter van Tienhoven, a prominent Dutch conservationist, founded the International Office for the Protection of Nature (IOPN), providing a formal headquarters for the compilation of data and the distribution of information.\textsuperscript{25} Also in 1928, another group, the Permanent French Committee for the Protection of Colonial Fauna, held the first Conseil International de la Chasse in Paris demanding scientific investigation into endangered species in the colonial holdings.\textsuperscript{26} Noting the terrible toll that unrestricted commerce had wrought on endangered wildlife species, the Conseil adopted resolutions to investigate controlling the international trade of endangered species.\textsuperscript{27} As European international conservation organizations’ efforts to protect wildlife expanded during the 1920s and early 1930s, conservationists in the United States decided it was time to step into the international conservation arena.\textsuperscript{28}

Americans had experience with international conservation legislation. In 1908, the United States first proposed the Fur Seal Treaty to ban the wasteful practice of

\textsuperscript{25} This office sponsored the Congress for the International Protection of Nature in 1930. By 1934, France, Belgium, Belgian Congo, Netherlands, Netherlands East Indies, Poland and Germany formally became members. Minutes of the American Committee, December 19, 1934; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee. Moreover, Poland and Czechoslovakia created several international parks along their border (most notably in the regions of Tatra and Peinines), and in 1929, these two nations extended their reach to Romania to develop a park at the confluence of the three borders. Also Tienhoven, “A History of the International Cooperation for the Protection of Nature;” SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWL, Correspondence, 1930–1955.

\textsuperscript{26} At the Conseil, member states passed resolutions articulating migratory game protection in the form of hunting seasons and weapons restrictions, for the conservation of rare species, the establishment of parks and reserves, and the formation of a permanent commission to see these resolutions implemented.

\textsuperscript{27} Summary of the Activities of the International Wildlife Protection Committee, During the Year 1931, pp. 4–5; HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

\textsuperscript{28} American Committee Charter, February 1929; Ibid.
pelagic sealing which had taken a devastating toll on fur seals in the North Pacific.\textsuperscript{29} The Treaty, ratified in 1911, promoted the protection of seal rookeries and implemented a system of shared-take, or the redistribution of wealth generated by those nations with jurisdiction over the rookeries to those nations without rookeries within their borders. In doing so, those nations which did not have jurisdiction over any rookeries were encouraged to comply with the provisions of the treaty and to restrict poaching. U.S. conservationists had also been the primary instigators of the Migratory Bird Treaty with Great Britain and Canada signed in 1916, which extended national protection laws for certain species of birds across the U.S.-Canadian border.\textsuperscript{30}

Conservationists in the United States believed that the well-developed network of American sportsmen organizations could contribute to international preservation efforts by holding similar conferences in the western hemisphere and fostering conservation measures throughout all of the Americas. To an extent, American citizens took their inspiration from international conservationists in Europe. John C. Phillips (1876–1938), a prominent U.S. ornithologist, had attended annual meetings of the BSPFE, served as an officer of the International Ornithological Union (IOU), worked tirelessly for van Tienhoven at the IOPN, and had assisted in the establishment of Albert National Park in the Belgian Congo. Building on his experience in Europe, Phillips advocated for the creation of an American international conservation organization. A lifelong member of the Boone and Crockett Club (BCC), Phillips argued at the annual meeting in 1927 that it


had been American ideas that had sparked the international conservation movement in the first place, and that an "American Committee," with a centralized headquarters, would be in the best position to advise the Department of State on appointments of delegations to international scientific conferences.\textsuperscript{31}

In 1928, Phillips wrote to fellow BCC members Harold Coolidge and Thomas Barbour requesting support.\textsuperscript{32} Coolidge and Barbour, both members of several European international conservation organizations and avid conservationists, heartily supported the idea. The trio wrote to more than one hundred sportsmen's organizations, drawing from the network of likeminded conservationists, to participate in the initial founding. The responses were impressive. Within a year, ninety-four people and organizations responded with enthusiasm for the idea, and eighty-seven offered "small contributions" to help the new committee get off the ground.\textsuperscript{33} In November 1929, the BCC combined these donations with a portion of dues money and invested in the establishment of the American Committee for International Wild Life Protection. This organization was to be

\textsuperscript{31} Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930, p. 14; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

\textsuperscript{32} Coolidge's recollection of this July 1928 exchange can be found in the Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930, p. 14; Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930, p. 14; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee. The primary center of the American Committee was the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Coolidge held the position of secretary. Headquarters followed Coolidge in 1937 to the New York Zoological Society in New York City. This information on the American Committee was found in a proposal titled "Project for the Support of the Work of the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection," SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955. While there have been numerous publications by the members of the American Committee, there has been nothing published about the Committee or its works.

\textsuperscript{33} A complete list of the organizations which responded to the inquiry by J.C. Phillips can be found in the Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930, p. 14; Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930, p. 14; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.
presided over by men carefully chosen from prestigious natural history museums, conservation organizations, and scientific institutions around the country.\textsuperscript{34}

As one of the key founders, Harold Jefferson Coolidge, Jr. (1904–1985) served on the Executive Committee from its inception in 1929 to its dissolution in 1979. Coolidge spent his youth traveling throughout Asia and Africa photographing wildlife and collecting specimens for various American scientific institutions. Having developed an acute sense of nature’s intrinsic value, Coolidge believed strongly that international cooperation was essential to protecting natural resources, wildlife and habitat. Moreover, his uncle Archibald C. Coolidge was a scholar in international affairs, a member of the United States Foreign Service, and the editor-in-chief of the policy journal, \textit{Foreign Affairs}.\textsuperscript{35} This close familial connection to the world of international politics was a defining motivator for the younger Coolidge when considering wildlife protection programs. An extraordinarily charismatic man with a dry and often quirky sense of humor, Coolidge impressed most people who met him with his unending energy and his tenacity when it came to issues dear to his heart—from wildlife, to politics, to the best way to get around the Belgian Congo without contracting a cantankerous parasite. In 1927, acting as an assistant zoologist, Coolidge accompanied the Harvard Medical

\textsuperscript{34} Information on the initial development of the American Committee can be found in an undated memo from Harold Coolidge to the members of the committee titled “International Wildlife Protection,” SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955. Additional information on three of the founding members of the Boone & Crockett Club, Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., George Bird Grinnell, and Gifford Pinchot, and a solid discussion on its efforts to conserve big game populations and to lobby for the establishment of National Parks for the protection of habitat can be found in James Trefethen, \textit{Crusade for Wildlife: Highlights in Conservation Progress} (Harrisburg: Stackpole Company, 1981) and Karl Jacoby, \textit{Crimes Against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation} (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

Expedition on a year long excursion to Africa where he collected a variety of plant and animal species (specifically gorillas) from Liberia to the Belgian Congo. Upon returning to the United States, Coolidge took a position with Harvard’s Museum of Comparative Zoology. The following year, Coolidge accompanied Theodore Roosevelt Jr. on the Kelley-Roosevelt Expedition along the Mekong River (1928–29), collecting specimens and recording their experiences.

Coolidge was also an expert in international nongovernmental organizations. In addition to his work with the American Committee and the Museum of Comparative Zoology, he was a lifelong member of the British Society for the Protection of the Fauna of the Empire and the Wildlife Protection Society of South Africa. He gave personal donations to various international conservation organizations and maintained a voluminous correspondence with diplomats, game wardens, political representatives, and conservationists from all over the world. These experiences networking with other conservationists around the globe positioned him one of the most knowledgeable persons in the United States on ways and means of developing and facilitating international conservation regulations.

Thomas Barbour (1884–1946), also a founding member of the American Committee, was the Committee’s expert on nature protection efforts in the Caribbean Basin. Barbour was a physically impressive figure, towering over his colleagues at an

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impressive six feet, six inches tall, and a stout three hundred pounds. His nearly photographic memory, straightforward personality, and the rather "colorful manner" in which he told personal stories made him a presence one was not likely to forget. Born into a wealthy family, Barbour had the means to travel widely, and he did so with gusto—traveling during his teens and early twenties through India and China collecting exotic animal and bird species for various scientific institutions.\(^{39}\) Beginning in 1910, on his first trip to Panama, Barbour fell in love with the Caribbean Basin and spent the next two years on a personal crusade to protect its ecosystems against destruction by monocrop agricultural practices.\(^{40}\) In 1910, Barbour accompanied the group of Smithsonian scientists sent to Panama to catalogue the biological life in the Panama Canal Zone (PCZ), the five mile corridor on either side of the U.S. constructed canal.\(^{41}\) The fruitfulness of this expedition led the Smithsonian to establish a scientific research station on Panama’s Barro Colorado Island, which became a meeting place for scientists from all


\(^{39}\) In 1926, he took a position as an assistant herpetologist with Harvard's Museum of Comparative Zoology and left soon after for a year long expedition traversing from Liberia to the Belgian Congo. During this excursion, Barbour focused his attention on collecting, photographing and measuring African reptiles and amphibians. Peters, p. 434.


\(^{41}\) In 1903, the United States and the newly independent government of Panama, signed the Hay-Bunau-Varilla agreement, in which the Government of Panama sold a strip of land to the United States for the purposes of constructing a canal through which ships could pass, reducing the time it took to ship goods from the east to west coast. This treaty allowed the United States to take possession of a zone of 5-miles on either side of the canal to ensure protection. As the United States began construction on the Panama Canal in 1903, scientists accompanying the expeditions took advantage of the unique opportunity and advocated for a study of the neo-tropical biota within the zone. For information on the PCZ see Stanley Moreno, *Naturalists of the Isthmus on Panama: A Hundred Years of Natural History on the Biological Bridge of the Americas* (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 2004). Information on the treaties dealing with the Panama Canal, see John Major, *Prize Possession: The United States Government and the Panama Canal 1903—1979* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
over the world. During this two year expedition, Barbour traveled extensively throughout Central America—including several trips north to Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Honduras—where he learned to speak Spanish and observed first hand the devastating ecological, economic and social consequences of mono-banana-crop agriculture.

Barbour’s trips through Central America convinced him that conservationists must cooperate to preserve fragile ecosystems in the tropics. In 1912, he left Central American for Cuba, where he was confronted by the harsh consequences of sugar cane production. Vast scale, mono-crop farming of sugar cane had cleared enormous tracts of land where disease ravaged sugar plants refused to grow after centuries of production, leaving the earth looking barren. Upon his return to the United States in early 1913, Barbour resolved to find someone to purchase the bankrupt East Atkins & Company plantation for the purposes of establishing a scientific research station, along the lines of the one being constructed on Barro Colorado, as well as a tropical botanical garden. Using his position with the Museum of Comparative Zoology, Barbour convinced Harvard University to buy the plantation. After the purchase, the University converted the house into a dormitory where visiting scientists from all over the world could study the sickly sugar plants and the island’s unique biota. It also established a scholarship

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42 By 1940, with the support of Barbour and Wetmore, the BCI was incorporated into the Smithsonian Institution Archives, as a Bureau of its own. The study was eventually extended to include the entire country. During the 1920s, Barbour spent considerable time and personal funds collecting scientific papers to be housed there, and expanding his publications on Barro Coloradoan biota. Stanley Moreno, *Naturalists of the Isthmus on Panama: A Hundred Years of Natural History on the Biological Bridge of the Americas* (Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, 2004), Chapter 2.

43 The East Atkins & Company declared bankruptcy after multiple years’ of poor crop production due to disease. Peters, p. 435.
fund to sponsor foreign study on the island. In 1927, following his negotiation of the purchase of the East Atkins plantation, Barbour assumed the directorship of the Museum, where he worked closely with Harold Coolidge. Coolidge and Barbour went about cataloging and displaying collections, personally donating considerable sums of money to expand the library, and encouraging the financing of scientific research.

Encouraged by the immense degree of interest in Latin America as an area for conservation, preservation and scientific research, Barbour began to take a more active role in the diplomatic efforts to promote conservation. He requested an appointment from the U.S. Department of State to attend the Pan American Scientific Congress in 1908. Thereafter, he attended the second (1921) and third (1924) Pan American Scientific Congresses as the U.S. delegate. He used this position to reinforce his connections with scientists in Latin America building on his network of committed conservationists across the Americas. When approached by Phillips, Barbour saw his chance to utilize the AC to lobby the Pan American Union for better conservation regulations in Latin America. Barbour looked to the PAU as the international organization that held the key to international conservation as it would allow the American Committee to pursue diplomatic conservation on the multilateral plane, attaining a level of effectiveness impossible bilaterally. He encouraged American Committee members to make effective use of the PAU to effect change, instead of writing to individual national governments which was almost always, he argued, a lost

44 Ibid, p. 344.
45 Ibid.
46 Barbour to Coolidge, October 16, 1931; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928-46, Box 30, Correspondence.
cause as Latin American governments were unlikely to make substantial changes to their actions or polices based on letters without any sort of political authority. The Pan American Union had at least some political authority with which to support their claims. Although Barbour preferred to devote his time to travel and the Museum, he was instrumental in bringing the Convention on Nature Protection about because he encouraged other American Committee members to use the Pan American Union to advance more effective conservation regulations in these nations.

By 1930, the American Committee counted an impressive number of prominent scientists and conservationists among its number, yet no one with expertise on the Southern Cone or the interior Andean nations. To fill this gap, Phillips reached out to Assistant Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, Frank Alexander Wetmore. Wetmore had an impressive resume, having traveled to the Colombian Andes, along the Cuban coast line, through Argentina's Patagonia, up Venezuela's Orinoco River delta, and into the remote tropical jungles of the Veracruz state of Mexico. Over the course of his

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47 This information was taken from a series of letters Barbour wrote to Coolidge during the late 1920s and early 1930s. These letters can be found in HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 30, Correspondence.

48 This shift and the expanding influence of the PAU will be addressed in the next chapter.

49 The American Committee also had a number of experts on Africa, Asia and India. George D. Pratt, Director of the American Museum of Natural History, had spent considerable time in Asia and India; Kermit Roosevelt had accompanied his father on several expeditions to Africa and had been to Asia numerous times with expeditions funded by the NY Zoological Society; Joseph Grinnell and Alfred Collins both with the University of California at Berkeley's Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, had made numerous collecting expeditions to various Pacific Islands. Additional information on the early members of the American Committee can be found in the Minutes of the First, Second and Third Meetings; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

50 On a biographical note, Wetmore published his first paper on Redheaded Woodpeckers at the age of fourteen and devoted his 20s to studying, collecting, cataloging and ultimately publishing more than one hundred and fifty papers on birds of the western hemisphere. By the time of his retirement, he had collected and donated more than 26,000 skins of various bird species and had discovered 56 new species.
career as Assistant Secretary to the Smithsonian Institution (1925–44), Wetmore maintained an extensive correspondence with ornithologists, botanists, and conservationists in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela. Given their common interests, Wetmore had crossed paths with the likes of Barbour, Coolidge, and Phillips several times throughout the 1920s. In December 1930, he initially refused Coolidge’s offer to join the American Committee arguing his schedule was too tight to accommodate a fledgling committee.\(^{51}\) Coolidge, however, had his mind set on Wetmore and bombarded him with requests until, after Coolidge promised that Wetmore would have to do little more than offer his opinion on South American birding issues, Wetmore agreed to serve in July 1931.\(^{52}\) In his note accepting the membership, Wetmore emphasized to Coolidge that his participation would be limited, if any.

**Working in the Shadows**

The story of the American Committee in the early 1930s is largely of the effort to work with their European counterparts to preserve big game in the far corners of the world. In so doing, they consciously worked to build a network of like-minded conservationists and government officials who could help realize their goals. In the early

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During the 1930s, he conducted a series of studies on South American birds that migrated north, which founders of the Convention were able to draw upon to emphasize the importance of protecting all species, not just those migrating south. During the 1930s, Wetmore actively communicated with scientists (primarily ornithologists) in Latin America. Wetmore corresponded, perhaps most extensively, with Alfonso Dampf of the Sociedad Mexicana de Historia Natural, 1932–39 and Romulo Jordan Sotelo, the Director of the Biology Department at the Instituto Del Mar, in Peru. He also engaged in a regular exchange of letters with scientists in Colombia, Haiti, Venezuela, and Argentina. During the 1950s, 60s and 70s, Wetmore focused his studies on Panama, the fruit of which was a four volume set, *The Birds of the Republic of Panama* (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1968), which remains one of the most comprehensive studies of Central American bird life.

\(^{51}\) Wetmore to Coolidge, December 28, 1930; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.

\(^{52}\) Wetmore to Coolidge, July 1930; Ibid.
1930s, the American Committee kept up a busy schedule, encouraging U.S. conservation organizations to reach out and cooperate with similar organizations in other countries. The American Committee also sponsored investigations into those species in the United States considered in danger of extinction, campaigned to stop the government-sanctioned destruction of predators, and worked to spread “correct information on matters of international conservation among those interested and... promoting wherever possible high standards of sportsmanship among Americans in contact with wildlife in foreign countries.”

Utilizing the well-established community of sportsmen, American Committee members published regularly in prominent outdoor journals, such as *Field and Stream*, and scientific magazines, such as the *Journal of Mammalogy*, to foster a spirit of conscientiousness toward international wildlife conservation.

Its primary focus was working on the international plane to maintain conservation efforts on the international level, particularly in Europe, specifically with the British Society for the Protection of Fauna of the Empire and the Office for International Nature Protection, in their efforts to expand conservation across borders. American Committee

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54 Founders of the American Committee did not want to focus their efforts on protecting specific plants or animal species, instead they articulated the desire to discover those species in danger of decline and to work with local conservation organizations and international tradesmen to develop conservation programs to preserve species while providing for the maximum usage. Information on the early goals of the American Committee was found in the proposal, “Project for the Support of the Worked of the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection.” There was no author listed, however, the report was most likely written by Harold Coolidge. A copy can be found in SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.

55 Phillips also noted that the Committee did not want to conflict with either T. Gilbert Pearson’s or the International Ornithological Union’s work on bird protection in Europe. Phillips to Wetmore, July 22, 1930; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 79, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, American Committee for International Wildlife Protection, Minutes and reports, 1930–1952.
members chose to focus their efforts on enhancing the international protection of big
game animals threatened with extinction, rather than further contributing to bird
protection, although several members were prominent ornithologists. This decision was
based in part on their commitment to extending the work of the Boone and Crockett Club
to assist in the protection of large game animals in the United States. The decision was
also rooted in the larger economic and ecological context as American Committee
members did not consider international wildlife protection organizations as well funded
as those organizations devoted to protecting birds. European organizations were certainly
making strides to protect those species in danger of decimation in Africa and Asia, but
American Committee members did not believe the European organizations were doing
enough to stem the destruction, especially of those larger species targeted by poachers.
American Committee members also saw the issue of international protection of game
animals as crucial to the overall health of the environment and argued vociferously for
extended habitat protection for all species in danger of decline.

Initial efforts were ambitious, if not especially fruitful. Using the established
international community of conservationists and the U.S. Foreign Service, the American
Committee obtained a wealth of information on wildlife protection from all major nations
in Europe and most of their colonial game departments. Members expanded and
bolstered the international network with voluminous letter campaigns to national
governments, nongovernmental organizations, sportsmen’s organizations, and private

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56 Minutes of the Second Committee Meeting, April 1930; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General
Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee. The
information collected by the American Committee was housed at Harvard’s Museum of Comparative
History, and catalogued and distributed to interested sportsmen’s organizations, scientists, conservationists
and diplomats.
individuals to bring attention to a multitude of issues in places outside European borders. They sponsored scientific reports on the devastating affects of nagana (an often fatal disease transmitted by the tsetse fly) on ungulates in Zululand; the reckless slaughter of Giant Sable herds in Angola, musk-ox herds in Greenland, and big game herds in Northern Rhodesia; the drastic decline of the white rhinoceros population in southern Africa; the government condoned decimation of elephant populations in Uganda; the machine-gunning of emus in Australia; the poisoning of predatory animals by Bulgarian foresters; and the massacre of gorillas in the Belgian Congo.\textsuperscript{57}

Although the American Committee lacked standing to vote or force change at European conferences, it sometimes contributed scientific studies, money, and occasionally advice on the best methods to protect wildlife populations. Amidst the spirit of interwar international conservation conferences, the BSPFE hosted a meeting for those national empires with colonial holdings in Africa, at the London Convention of 1933. Representatives from each of the colonial powers in Africa, as well as observers from the IUBS and the American Committee, met at London’s House of Lords and resolved to expand the number of national parks for the purposes of tourism and stipulated the creation of “natural reserves,” tracts of land set aside from all development and tourism. The American Committee presented a report on the catastrophic affects of nagana on ungulates as well as a series of maps showing the location, geography, wildlife species

\textsuperscript{57} Minutes of the First Meeting of the American Committee, December 11, 1930; SIA, RU 7006, Alexander Wetmore Papers, Collection Division 2, Box 79, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, American Committee for International Wildlife Protection, Minutes and reports, 1930–1952. The government-condoned destruction of game animals in southern Rhodesia, Swaziland and the Sudan were particularly alarming. In Rhodesia, approximately 58,000 mammals and reptiles were killed by government hunters over the course of 4 years as a means of exterminating predators. Government officials poisoned water supplies of wildebeests nearly annihilating the entire species.
and type of more than one hundred game reserves and parks already in existence in Africa.\textsuperscript{58} While they could contribute this report on behalf of the BPFSE, the American Committee could not lobby on behalf of its findings or vote on any of the proceedings. All members could do was observe.

Following the London Convention, key American Committee members took off to the remote corners of the globe to catalogue wildlife protection policies. Phillips traveled from London to tour the national parks and game reserves in Eastern and Southeastern European countries.\textsuperscript{59} Coolidge embarked on a six-month tour of Japan where he tapped into the “fast increasing interest in wildlife protection of a national as well as of an international nature” and expanded his network of fellow conservationists in the process.\textsuperscript{60} He continued on through the East Indies, Africa, and British India where he met up with fellow American Committee member, Arthur Vernay. Vernay had traveled to India with the intention of gathering information on the Indian lion and rhino populations and to investigate the possibility of establishing gaming reserves. He returned to the United States determined to generate an active international interest in stemming the devastating situation facing Indian wildlife. First and foremost, Vernay noted, it was imperative that the American Committee take a more active role in assisting

\textsuperscript{58} Summary of the Activities of the American Committee, 1931; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid. In addition, the American Committee sent delegations to attend the Conference on Nature Protection of India (1934), the International Ornithological Congress (1934), the European Committee for International Bird Preservation (1934); the Pan Pacific Scientific Congress (1934) and the International de la Chasse Councils (1933).

\textsuperscript{60} Minutes of the First Meeting of the American Committee, December 17, 1931; Ibid. Japan was of particular interest to the American Committee as it had not previously been involved in the European international conservation organization movement, owing in large part to the humiliation suffered following their exclusion from the Treaty of Versailles.
the governments in the colonies (not in Europe) in the establishment of national parks. India, he argued, was so “subdivided and chopped up, politically and otherwise, [that] it would be all but impractical to set aside parks or reserves” without assistance from the people themselves and the international conservation community.  

Vernay wrote letters to the U.S. State Department, the War Department, and President Franklin Roosevelt requesting support for his initiative to do something to assist the BSPFE. When this effort elicited a kind, yet dismissive, response, he wrote to U.S. conservation organizations (the Society for American Mammologists, the National Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, and the Wilderness Society, to name a few) requesting assistance in spreading the word. While Vernay’s initial efforts were unsuccessful, he took an aggressive step toward establishing a relationship between the government and nongovernmental conservation organizations. Moreover, India was not politically important enough for the U.S. Government to really commit to assisting. U.S. Department of State officials believed it was more productive to work with the national governments in London and Paris, than those in Africa.

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61 Ibid.

62 Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the American Committee, December 19, 1934; Ibid.

63 Ibid.

64 No author listed, “Project for the Support of the Work of the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection,” SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWL P, Correspondence, 1930–1955. While Vernay lamented the status of Indian fauna, Barbour was in South Africa reporting on the protection measures for the Addo Bush Elephant, the Bontebok, the Mountain Zebra, the white-tailed Gnu, and on the recent enlargement of the Mkuzi, Hluhluwe, and Umfolosi Reserves. While Barbour noted that wildlife protection was clearly better off in Africa than India, he returned to the United States and embarked on an impressive lecturing tour encouraging Americans to take an interest in African wildlife protection and advocating the extension of its National Parks. Information on Barbour’s trip through Africa can be found in a series of letters he wrote to Coolidge while traveling. This correspondence can be found in HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 30, Correspondence.
This was a crucial learning experience for the American Committee. They realized their efforts would be more successful with both political and popular support, and India was too far away to generate it. U.S. Department of State officials wanted to maintain good bilateral relations with the governments of the empires, which meant that the U.S. Government would not make any real efforts to assist conservation in colonial holdings in Africa, India, or the rest of Asia. Moreover, Coolidge and Barbour believed it would be more difficult to generate support from sportsmen organizations in the United States to protect African and Indian wildlife while in the midst of the Great Depression. Where they could be persuaded, indeed where the American Committee could argue that it was in their interests to give their financial and political support, Barbour and Coolidge argued, was in Latin America. By 1935, the American Committee began to look to promote conservation in Latin American nations.

While publicly supportive, American Committee members expressed private frustration with the European failure to take what they believed to be sufficient measures to truly protect migratory game in Africa. Although the London Convention set aside tracts of land for the protection of those species of elephants and rhinos favored by poachers and advocated an increase in park guards to enforce the rules of the reserves, Barbour was frustrated the convention did not do enough to address trafficking in products, like ivory, obtained illegally, insufficiently protecting wildlife from the whims of the market. Coolidge seconded this complaint remarking that these efforts took only

65 There were several conferences held following the London Convention to apply similar standards to Asia and the Pacific, including the Conference on the Fauna and Flora of the Pacific Area, in 1934. This conference merged with the London Convention in 1938, to form the International Conference for the Protection of the Fauna and Flora of Africa, Tropical Asia and the Western Pacific. British conservationists requested U.S. participation in the Convention for the Protection of Terrestrial Fauna and Flora of Africa, Tropical Asia and of the Western Pacific in early 1939 and, though Wetmore attended the
a small step toward establishing measures sufficient to truly protect wildlife. Indeed, he argued that it was imperative to create strict international commerce regulations banning the trade in those species in danger of extinction.66 He emphasized a ground-up approach—working with local populations to develop concrete and practical conservation programs—concentrating on creating a conservation plan that worked in accordance with local interests, rather than working with government officials in London who had little influence on what happened in Africa.67

Yet, while the members of the American Committee privately questioned the overall effectiveness of the London Convention, they never openly criticized the European international conservation organizations.68 They maintained public silence for two reasons. First, they believed that it was crucial to portray a “civilized solidarity” when working to promote protection.69 International conservation organizations, they argued, had enough to deal with in trying to get solid international legislation enacted by national governments. They needed to present a united front. While they might not agree with the ways in which the London Convention attempted to address conservation

November meeting, the Convention was permanently postponed with the outbreak of World War II. Information concerning Wetmore’s trip to London can be found in SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.

66 This argument can be found in a number of places; one of the most detailed and emphatic diatribes can be found in the Minutes of the Second Meeting; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

67 Ibid. The emphasis increases over the course of the 1930s and 1940s. For a detailed account of his position, see HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, Administrative Papers of the IUCN and other Conservation Organizations, ca. 1941–1969, Box 4, International Relations, International Unions, Protection of Nature Conference: General, 1947 and 48.

68 Report on the American Committee Activities during 1934, December 13, 1934; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

69 Minutes of the First American Committee Meeting, December 11, 1930; Ibid.
issues, the fact was the BSPFE and the other European international conservation organizations were making a solid effort that deserved the American Committee’s support. 

The second, more substantial, reason for not openly criticizing the European international conservation organizations lay in the dynamic of political power. Gathering and disseminating information, observing organizational proceedings, and making donations to further the conservation cause was essentially the extent to which the American Committee could participate in advancing conservation in those areas under colonial rule. Members of the American Committee had few inside connections with the European or colonial governments, and the United States had no colonial holdings in Africa or India entitling them to have a formal diplomatic involvement in the conventions. Moreover, the absence of the United States in the League of Nations prevented the American Committee from having any political power within that venue to make suggestions to the European nations. Reinforcing this sense of political powerlessness was the fact that the American Committee received little active support from the U.S. Government during this period. Although Coolidge, Barbour, Wetmore, Vernay, and Phillips each requested financial and political assistance from the U.S. Government in support of conservation efforts, Africa and India ranked low on the list of priorities during the Great Depression. While members of the American Committee could mount impressive letter campaigns, fund independent studies, and donate those findings to the European international conservation organizations, they could do little to influence Europeans to follow their recommendations.

70 Coolidge to Wetmore, October 18, 1932; Ibid.
The Move to Action

The American Committee stepped out from the shadows of the European international conservation organizations and into action in its efforts to assist the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) in establishing a biological reserve on Ecuador's Galápagos Archipelago in 1934. This set of islands earned fame as the site of Charles Darwin's observations on variations in fauna leading to the theory of natural selection.\(^71\) The animals had not only developed differently from those on the mainland but had differed from island to island as well. He characterized the subtle variations in appearance as gradual transformations resulting from natural selection, published in the *Origin of Species*.\(^72\) By 1933, with the anniversary of Darwin's visit to the Archipelago fast approaching, British scientists articulated their desire to have the Galápagos set aside as a wildlife sanctuary and a place for scientific research. A small group of scientists with the BAAS returned from the Archipelago noting the steep decline in the number of turtles from their previous trip to the islands only five years before. British scientists also articulated that the protection of the islands, and a biological field station, would be both a tribute to Darwin and a haven for future scientists.\(^73\) The Linnean Society of London noted that if the Government of Ecuador could be persuaded to set aside the smaller, less economically viable islands, including Brattle and Seymour, it would go a long way in


\(^{73}\) H. G. Swarin, “Statement Regarding Fauna and Flora Refuge upon the Galápagos Islands,” unpublished. A copy can be found in SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.
saving the smaller reptiles and might prove to be successful in re-establishing some of the larger ones.

But, in 1933, as the interwar global economic depression deepened, this endeavor was not something British conservation organizations wanted to do alone. The BSPFE was consumed by issues of protection in Africa. Although the Linnean Society articulated its desire to help, members were unsure how much they could do or what, precisely, their role should be.\textsuperscript{74} The BAAS seemed to be in the best position to lead the charge, and, in November 1933, it put together the British Galápagos Committee (BGC) to investigate the possibility of constructing a research station on the Archipelago.

As the Archipelago was in the Western Hemisphere, and because the American Committee had proven to be such a willing participant on other international issues, the BGC requested the support of the American Committee in establishing an International Galápagos Commission (IGC). The IGC was to be made up of three scientists from the BGC, three U.S. scientists appointed by the American Committee, and three representatives from the Republic of Ecuador.\textsuperscript{75} This commission was tasked with investigating the feasibility of establishing nature reserves, as well as a monument and a research station in honor of Charles Darwin, on the islands of the Galápagos. In October 1934, the American Committee agreed to join the IGC. Although Wetmore had hoped to

\textsuperscript{74} ACIWLP Secretary’s Report, “Activities during 1934,” December 13, 1934; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.

\textsuperscript{75} To the best of my knowledge, no delegates from Ecuador were ever appointed. The British Galápagos Commission was made up of members from the Linnean Society of London, the Society for the Protection of Fauna and Flora of the Empire, the Royal Geographical Society, and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves and the American Galápagos Commission consisted, primarily, of American Committee members. BCG to the American Committee, September 23, 1934; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.
limit his participation in the Committee, he agreed to assist with the IGC, recruiting
friend and fellow ornithologist, Robert Moore, of the California Institute of Technology’s
Department of Zoology, as the Committee’s representative. Moore had extensive
experience in Ecuador, having traveled twice (1927 and 1929) to the Andean region to
study bird populations. Moore accepted the position and left for Quito in early
November 1934.76

With the decision to join the IGC, Wetmore requested information from the U.S.
Department of State on the economic and political climate in Ecuador so as to develop
more effective strategies for protecting Galápagos wildlife. Secretary of State Cordell
Hull responded with a comprehensive report outlining Ecuador’s recent skirmishes with
neighboring Paraguay and the clashes with Peru over rights to the stretch of land in the
Amazon basin along the shared border.77 Hull noted in his report that the border disputes
might actually work in the favor of the IGC, as establishing a reserve on the Archipelago
would ensure the Ecuadorian Government of a permanent foreign presence on the
islands.78 Although there could be no overt promises made, the IGC could allude to the
possible foreign, i.e. U.S., assistance available on the Archipelago in the event of an

76 Biographical information on Robert Moore can be found in Herbert Friedmann, “In Memorian: Robert
Thomas Moore” The Auk, 81(July 1964): 326–331. I found no indication as to the names of the other two
U.S. scientists appointed to the IGC.

77 Attached to Hull’s letter to Wetmore, undated April 1935; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 79, Organizational
Committee, 1933–1938, and 1943. Good secondary sources on these disputes are Bruce Farcau, The Chaco
Peace: Militarized Interstate Bargaining in Latin America (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001),

78 Hull to Wetmore, April 1935; Ibid.
armed invasion from either neighbor. Hull closed his note asking to be kept informed on any developments made by the IGC.

By early 1935, Moore had been appointed Chairman of the IGC and his first report, submitted to both the American Committee and the BAAS, focused on the most pressing problems facing wildlife in the Archipelago. Decades of over-hunting and the effect of the invasive species had taken an extraordinary toll on the large island tortoises and iguanas. Tortoises, which had served as foodstuffs for passing ships as they were slow and easy targets for hunters, were in trouble; Moore’s report estimated three of the fourteen species of large tortoises on the Archipelago had become extinct. The production of leather made from the larger marine and land iguanas had greatly reduced the numbers of these reptiles between 1920 and 1925.

The most damaging factors, however, were invasive species, particularly those animals which had been left by passing ships on the island to become feral. Pointed hooves and rounded teeth of feral animals ripped plants out by their roots and tore holes in the ground, leading to catastrophic soil erosion. Birds and reptile populations

79 Ibid.

80 H. W. Parker, “On the need for the preservation of the Galápagos fauna reptiles,” p. 81; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 79, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, American Committee for International Wildlife Protection. Galápagos Committee, 1933–1938, and 1943. Although there was no clear indication of who H.W. Parker was, it is inferred both in this report and in subsequent correspondence in this file that he was one of the Commissioners.


plummeted as pigs, rats, and cats feasted on clutches of eggs and defenseless young.  

The remarkable capacity of feral animals to reproduce increased population levels from 60-75 percent per year; this far outstripped the reproductive levels of native species and decimated the limited resources of the islands.  

These factors wreaked havoc on native plant and animal populations to the extent that, by 1935, Commissioners were concerned that these native animals would become extinct if drastic action were not taken.  

To combat this, the IGC Commissioners advocated the construction of a research station on the island of Indefatigable and the immediate designation of the islands Brattle and Seymour as nature reserves to protect fauna from certain extinction. The structures for the proposed reserves were strict, minimizing and monitoring human traffic, prohibiting the removal of plants and animals, and eradicating feral animals.  

To assist in paying for this protection, IGC Commissioners highlighted that a research station and reserves could be economically attractive to the rather financially challenged Republic of Ecuador. In the report outlining the work of the IGC for Ecuador’s President Velasco Ibarra, the IGC focused far less on the probable extinction of native species and far more on the potential revenue that could be generated through  

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both scholarly interest and foreign tourism to the Archipelago.\textsuperscript{87} Foreign scholars, tourists, and their money would first have to travel to the capital city of Quito to go through customs and stock up on supplies for the trek out to the Archipelago, sparking a demand for hotels, markets, restaurants and theaters.\textsuperscript{88} Over time, and with increased interest in the Archipelago, tourism would contribute to a larger, national transportation and communication infrastructure, generate employment and development for the Republic of Ecuador as a whole and, with it, additional wealth to a nation in economic limbo.\textsuperscript{89} Following his review of this report, President Ibarra granted permission to create reserves and parks on the islands, with the purpose of protecting fauna, and assented to the creation of a research station to be constructed on the island of Indefatigable in 1935.\textsuperscript{90} While this was certainly a success for the IGC, it was unable to devote much in the way of resources to the construction of the Research Station given the ongoing economic depression.

In early 1936, Wetmore’s correspondence with Hull regarding the Galápagos Archipelago took a decidedly isolationist turn as Hull encouraged Wetmore to deemphasize the British role in the IGC, with the idea of removing the British altogether


\textsuperscript{89} Furthermore, Swarin emphasized that advertising this endeavor would most likely be inexpensive as the Galápagos were already a popular destination of wealthy yacht owners. H.G. Swarin, “Statement Regarding Fauna and Flora Refuge upon the Galápagos Islands,” pp. 2–5; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 79, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, American Committee for International Wildlife Protection. Galápagos Committee, 1933–1938, and 1943.

\textsuperscript{90} Moore to Wetmore, undated, 1935; Ibid.
from the islands. This interest stemmed from the recognition of the strategic importance of the Archipelago in defending the Panama Canal, the tense turn of events in Europe foreshadowing a possible second European conflict, and U.S. Congressional position of leaving Europe to the Europeans. In early 1934, the Department of War recommended to President Roosevelt the acquisition of the Galápagos for the creation of a potential port essential for the protection of the Panama Canal. Roosevelt rejected the proposal arguing that the acquisition of territory from another American Republic would conflict with the Good Neighbor Policy. State and War Department officials maintained interest in the Archipelago, however. Assistant Secretary of State Sumner Wells suggested to Wetmore that perhaps if the U.S. Government sponsored the construction of the research station, the presence of American military personnel and facilities would not be out of place, and that station could then be used as makeshift naval bases should it become necessary.

Recognizing that the British would not take the request to relinquish their position in the IGC well, Wetmore asked Moore for his ideas concerning the possibility that the British might agree to take a largely inactive role, leaving the construction of the research station to the United States. Or, in the event that the British were determined to remain in the Galápagos, Wetmore asked what Moore thought about the possibility of the American Committee putting the IGC and the Archipelago on hold until a convention for the

91 Adolf Hitler had recently become Chancellor of Germany in 1933 and immediately began to implement authoritarian policies and drastic changes to the economically and psychologically depressed nation. For a comprehensive source on the rise of Hitler see William Simpson, Hitler and Germany (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).


93 Wells to Wetmore, undated; Ibid.
protection of nature could be held, most likely in 1940. Moore was unsure how the British would respond and oppose the postponement of the plans for the research station, noting that without more immediate efforts, wildlife on the Archipelago would most certainly disappear.\textsuperscript{94} In an exchange between Sumner Wells, Robert Moore, and John Phillips, Wells emphasized that the Department of State was not opposed to protecting the fauna on the Galápagos Archipelago, only to the presence of a British research station. He further opined that the removal of all people from the islands might be the best thing for the endangered wildlife species.

Moore disagreed, noting that fighting with feral animals for survival most certainly would not be the best thing for those native animals on the islands.\textsuperscript{95} Wells responded that the Department of State had “a decided objection to any foreign nations having a hand in the collecting of funds or management of the Galápagos” and, if it came to it, the “State Department... promised to bring this subject of the better protection of the Galápagos Islands up at the next Inter-American Conference.”\textsuperscript{96} While Moore remained skeptical, when the news of this promise reached Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harold Coolidge encouraged the American Committee to reduce financial support to the IGC and to divert those funds to the American Galápagos Committee instead. He then encouraged the American Committee to oppose any attempts by the British to deal directly with the Ecuadorians.\textsuperscript{97}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{94} Moore to Wetmore, September 26, 1937; Ibid.
\textsuperscript{95} Moore to Wetmore, September 4, 1937; Ibid. Information on Well’s perspective was recounted by Moore.
\textsuperscript{96} Phillips to Wetmore, December 27, 1937; Ibid.
\textsuperscript{97} Phillips recounted Coolidge’s position in a letter to Wetmore, January 19, 1935; Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
No one on the American Committee really wanted to abandon the attempts to protect wildlife on the Galápagos, but the Department of State’s offer to support Galápagos protection at the next Pan American Convention in Lima, Peru was an opportunity they could not afford to ignore. Coolidge, along with Barbour and Philips, wanted to use that support to get their idea—using the rhetoric of protection ideology as a uniquely American phenomenon to foster a compelling sense of obligation to protect nature throughout the American nations—for an American Conference on nature protection adopted at the Lima Convention. Bilateral agreements focusing on protection of one region were no longer enough for Coolidge or the American Committee. Unique mega fauna like those turtles and lizards on the Galápagos were also in danger on Mexico’s Isla de Guadalupe; South American wildlife, like the sable and the rhea, were also facing extinction. Wells’ promise to support the protection of the Galápagos was exactly what Coolidge needed to hear. If the American Committee agreed to pull out of the International Galápagos Committee and could persuade the British to give responsibility of the Archipelago to them, perhaps Wells could be persuaded to support the American Committee’s plan for a western hemisphere convention on nature protection. A convention would articulate the hemisphere’s commitment to wildlife protection, establish a uniform set of definitions for protected regions, and facilitate cooperation among conservationists within the Americas. While working in concert with the British had been helpful for the American Committee in

98 The meetings in which the American Committee stressed conservation as a uniquely American phenomenon were the first (December 1930), second (December 1931) third (December 1932), and fifth (December 1934). The minutes of both the December 1930 and 1931 meetings can be found in Minutes of Committee Meetings; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, American Committee.
developing and enacting strategies to advance international wildlife protection, the opportunity to move beyond what could be accomplished by Anglo-American cooperation was at hand. Most importantly, the American Committee had political support in its endeavor. The time, American Committee members agreed, was right.

No one, however, wanted to alienate British support or criticize British efforts as American Committee members recognized the enormous strides they had made in wildlife protection and, perhaps more practically, they did not want to be excluded from future European conventions. Wetmore recommended shifting the blame for withdrawing support from the IGC onto the domestic political situation in the United States and, if that did not work, directly onto the U.S. Department of State. But he was concerned that the British might continue their efforts on the Archipelago without assistance from the American Committee.\(^9^9\) Phillips advocated a more direct approach, telling the British that the United States would be the primary sponsor of any protection measures in the American Republics. Neither excuse was necessary, however, as British resources were pulled away from the Galápagos and devoted toward the burgeoning conflict in Europe by the end of 1937.\(^1^0^0\) The American Committee formally withdrew from the IGC on November 4, 1937, although Moore remained as Chairman of the much diminished Commission until 1938. Wells supported the American Committee’s proposition for a convention, and a resolution for an International Committee of Experts

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\(^9^9\) Moore to Wetmore, September 26, 1937.

\(^1^0^0\) The research station on the Archipelago was not built until 1960.
to monitor wildlife protection policies in the western hemisphere was added to the agenda of the 1938 Pan American Convention.¹⁰¹

**Conclusion**

The 1930s saw the flourishing of European international conservation organizations as well as the creation and expansion of the American Committee, one of the first and most influential U.S. international conservation organizations. The development of the European international conservation organizations throughout the first three decades of the twentieth century was indicative of a growing awareness of the ecological devastation resulting from unchecked industrial development and unregulated massacres of wildlife for personal and commercial use. The creation of the American Committee in 1929 contributed to this growing awareness and encouraged conferences in the western hemisphere along the same lines as the Europeans. In its first years, members of the American Committee worked in the shadows of the European international conservation organizations, attending conferences, compiling statistics and, most importantly, developing a sense of what was effective and what was not. The Americans then worked in conjunction with British conservationists for the protection of the Ecuadorian Galápagos Archipelago, but pulled back from long-term efforts together to turn their attention to the western hemisphere in 1937. This shift was crucial for the development of the Committee. Although it would continue to work with the European organizations, American Committee members asserted themselves as the preeminent international conservation organization in the western hemisphere and joined forces with

the U.S. Government, the Pan American Union, and conservation organizations in the hemisphere to bring about the Convention. The Convention was crucial because the American Committee was attempting to do in the Americas what the Europeans had done in Africa, begin discussions between officials in the United States and in Latin American countries regarding those larger environmental concerns, possible ways to offer protection to wildlife, and to formulate a relationship from which officials in all nations in the hemisphere could draw; if they failed, they would lose credibility. If they succeeded, however, American Committee members believed they could advance protection legislation much farther than the Europeans had and foster conservation in Latin America.

The experiences of working both for and with the European international conservation organizations were crucial to the Convention on Nature Protection for three reasons. First, the work of the International Galápagos Commission put Wetmore in repeated contact with Department of State officials Cordell Hull and Sumner Wells, and highlighted the potential benefits to be gained for conservation by framing the Convention as a political tool fostering the Good Neighbor Policy, and the opportunity to create a uniquely hemispheric Convention without the European influence. Second, the experience of working in Ecuador illuminated the level of interest among Latin American governments for responsible conservation programs if framed in an economically compelling manner. Although President Ibarra expressed interested in protecting the Galápagos, he set the two larger islands of the Archipelago aside only after the report emphasizing the revenue that could potentially be generated through tourism. A western hemisphere convention to protect nature would have to be applicable and attractive to
nations dependent on natural resource extraction, while providing additional options for those nations with solid conservation programs. As such, it must be framed as in the economic interest of the nations. Finally, the success of the IGC in spurring protection legislation in Ecuador sparked the belief and determination in American Committee members and in the Department of State that such a Convention was indeed possible.

Over the course of the next year, American Committee members harnessed the U.S. domestic political situation, Pan American rhetoric and strategic interest in Latin America, and focused efforts on constructing a Resolution for the 1938 Pan American Convention in Lima. Robert Moore returned to the California Institute of Technology and continued to press for the construction of a research station on Indefatigable.
CHAPTER II

THE CALL TO CONSERVATION: THE 1938 PAN AMERICAN CONVENTION AND RESOLUTION NO. 38

Teddy Kidder clung to the railing, soaked to the bone by the tropical storm, hoping against hope he would not be sick yet again. The rough seas of the December storm plagued him with a vicious seasickness and slowed travel to the point he missed the boat he had been scheduled to take from Panama to Lima where he was to observe the 1938 Pan American Convention. At 2 p.m., December 12, 1938, Kidder landed in Panama City, vaulted toward the ticket station, pushed his way through the throngs of people to the front of the line, and requested a ticket on the 6 p.m. fast boat to Lima. The man behind the counter told him he was crazy. December was the season for tropical storms, especially along the Equator, and the fast boat to Lima was guaranteed to be “absolute misery.” If that were not enough, it cost nearly one hundred American dollars. Instead, he recommended waiting five days and taking the slow boat servicing the west coast of South America. It would take longer but it was much cheaper, and he was guaranteed to make it there in one piece. The portly man behind Kidder piped in that a trip like that would take two weeks. Why waste time when he could take the fast boat to Lima and be there in three days?

Two other men engaged in a spirited debate while Kidder grew increasingly frustrated. Spending three days on a boat guaranteed to make him ill was extremely
unappealing; however, the slow, safe route would waste too much valuable time. He was responsible for lobbying for the American Committee for International Wildlife Protection resolution calling for an international wildlife protection conference at the Lima Convention, and, as it was, he would arrive a week late. If he missed the Convention altogether, he would miss the opportunity to gain valuable support for the Resolution. If the resolution did not succeed, the momentum of the American Committee would undoubtedly be affected, and wildlife protection in the western hemisphere would be tabled until the next Pan American Convention scheduled for 1940. Moreover, the political climate was right in 1938 for the passage of a wildlife protection Resolution; who knew what it would be like at the next scheduled meeting. Kidder bought the fast boat ticket, and three very long, sick days later, he arrived in Lima.  

This vignette is reflective of both the urgency American Committee members felt and of one of the fundamental debates which followed the construction of the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. Despite concerns for his personal safety, what must have been a horrific dread of seasickness, and the fact that he was not even an official appointee, Kidder was determined to make it to the Lima Convention because he was convinced that it was the right time and place to introduce a hemispheric Resolution. The debate over the fast versus slow boat method of travel is reminiscent of the disagreement within the American Committee over how to approach wildlife protection in the western hemisphere, especially in the midst of the

gathering European storm. Harold Coolidge was determined to use the aura of good feelings brought about by the Good Neighbor Policy, as well as the emerging hemispheric emphasis on the Pan American Union (PAU), as a legitimate international organization, to establish the most comprehensive wildlife protection laws as quickly as possible. He was less concerned with the immediate political or economic costs and more concerned with the possible long term costs of not implementing preservation policies. Alexander Wetmore wanted protection measures for migratory wildlife just as much as Coolidge, but recognized some of the more practical limitations of achieving it. Instead, Wetmore preferred the slower and more politically and economically pragmatic approach, creating legislation that would survive constitutional challenges, get solid, if imperfect, laws established, chart the positive effect those laws had on wildlife populations, and then introduce more stringent regulations based on those successes. Wetmore believed that, by taking the more immediate, more comprehensive approach, Coolidge risked alienating national governments unwilling to enact protection measures that might hinder economic development and those which lacked the institutional infrastructure to comply with more immediate, stringent regulations. In the end, neither really won or lost the debate. The resolution and, ultimately, the convention that developed from this was a combination of both men's ideologies.

Good Neighbors, 1921–1938

During the Great Depression, the relationship between the United States and Latin American states underwent a profound transformation as Washington dropped the interventionist tactics associated with “dollar diplomacy” in favor of a more respectful
"good neighbor policy." President Herbert Hoover initiated the shift in the late 1920s, with the release of the Clark Memorandum on the Monroe Doctrine in March 1930 renouncing the Roosevelt Corollary that had served as the basis for U.S. police actions in the past. Hoover traveled to ten Latin American countries on a goodwill tour in which he pledged the United States to be a "good neighbor." These actions contributed to a dissipation of the anti-U.S. sentiment that had grown in Latin America earlier in the 1920s. President Franklin D. Roosevelt accelerated the pace of improving hemispheric relations by appointing two Latin American-minded individuals, Sumner Wells and Cordell Hull, Assistant Secretary of State and Secretary of State respectfully, and by adopting the rhetoric of pan-American brotherhood, pledging to respect the sovereignty and independence of the American Republics. To demonstrate the United States' commitment to this new policy, in 1934 President Roosevelt authorized the removal of the U.S. Marines from Haiti and abrogated the 1903 Platt Amendment to the Cuban constitution allowing for U.S. occupation of the island.


In conjunction with the declaration of the Good Neighbor Policy, Secretary Hull introduced policies to lower the tariffs from the 1930 Hawley-Smoot Act. This Act forged reciprocal trade agreements, reduced rates on those much needed raw materials in the United States, and promoted the export of U.S. manufactured goods. The reduction in tariffs and the reinvigorated hemispheric trade agreements were facilitated by the Pan American Union, the Inter-American organization created to promote a political, economic, and cultural unity between the South and North Americas. Multilateral cooperation at the Pan American Union had declined during the 1910s and early 1920s in favor of bilateral trade agreements between Latin American and European nations, in the wake of U.S. interventionist policies in Latin America.\(^\text{107}\) Indeed, Latin American officials from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela presented stinging criticisms of the Platt Amendment at the 1910 PAU conference in Buenos Aires, Argentina and railed against U.S. intervention in Haiti and Nicaragua during the two 1920s conferences.\(^\text{108}\) Nevertheless, U.S. policymakers maintained the legitimacy of the Platt Amendment and other interventionist tactics, precipitating a two-decade decline in Latin American participation in the PAU.\(^\text{109}\) Wells and Hull worked to reverse that decline by using the PAU as a forum for initiating bilateral agreements between the United States and individual Latin American nations as well as multilateral, hemispheric agreements aimed

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\(^{108}\) Rowe, "The Pan American Union, 1940;" pp. 2–3.

at promoting economic activity. In less than five years, participation at the PAU meetings had doubled from its low point during the 1920s. Marking a dramatic turnaround, more than one hundred delegates attended the 1938 Lima Conference, the highest attendance to date. In addition to political and economic cooperation, Secretary Hull also advocated greater cooperation in scientific matters, supporting strongly the efforts of the Pan American Scientific Congresses.

Inter-American scientific cooperation was well established by 1938. As early as 1901, more than 800 scientists from across the Americas attended the Second Latin American Scientific Congress in Montevideo, Uruguay. So large were the proceedings that delegates agreed to break future conferences down into multiple conventions, based on the categories of science, public and private law, ethnology, archeology, linguistics, medicine, and sanitation. At the Congress’s 1905 meeting, officials invited delegates from all American Republics to the 1908–09 conference in Santiago, Chile and renamed the gathering the First Pan American Scientific Congress. Discussions centered solely on the broader, Pan American issues with delegates seeking to address those problems to which solutions would promote a better understanding among the Republics. More specifically, brainstormers at the Santiago Congress looked beyond scientific issues to explore regional interconnections among economic, social, and political problems. The

110 Rowe, “The Pan American Union, 1940;” p. 3.
111 Ibid.
113 Leo Rowe, Pan Americanism (Washington: PAU Bulletin, 1938); p. 3.
114 Ibid., p. 2.
Second Pan American Scientific Congress, held in Washington, D.C., December 1915–January 1916, took up for the first time issues directly related to conservation including the preservation of a common, American, anthropological heritage and the conservation of natural resources.\textsuperscript{115} These scientific conferences also provided a venue for the scientific community to consult and advise government officials on matters of common inter-American, concern generating Pan American based solutions. The Inter-American Committee for Agricultural Development enjoyed particular success in this type of cooperation during the 1930s and 40s. The framers of the Resolution sought to harness the momentum and apply that same technique to the protection of wildlife. Indeed, for members of the American Committee watching the situation unfold, there was no better time or place to introduce a plan to protect nature in the Americas.

**The Road to Lima**

In July 1938, Harold Coolidge contacted the Director of the Division of the American Republics in the Department of State, Laurence Duggan, to inform him that the American Committee intended to introduce a resolution at the December Pan American meeting calling for a Convention on Nature Protection in the Western Hemisphere. State Department approval, Coolidge believed, would lend credibility to the Resolution. Duggan agreed to review the draft Resolution and, if it passed inspection, to sponsor its introduction at the Lima Convention. He also requested any information available on Latin American conservation programs so that he could emphasize Latin American

\textsuperscript{115} Rowe, \textit{Pan Americanism}; p. 4. They also addressed a host of other issues including agricultural production, education, engineering, international law, mining, public health and medical science, transportation, commerce, finance, and taxation.
 receptivity to the idea when presenting it to his colleagues. Coolidge sent Duggan the few articles he had and a copy of a survey the American Committee had recently drafted to send to various Latin American scientists, conservationists, and government officials, as well as U.S. businessmen in Latin America, requesting information on national parks, relevant government institutions and employees, existing wildlife protection programs, and general information on native fauna and flora species of their respective regions. Between October 1938 and March 1939, the survey would be distributed to approximately four hundred contacts throughout the American Republics as a means of gathering evidence to support their cause, to test the receptivity of the scientific community, and to determine national capabilities for implementing protection legislation. As responses would not come in until after the Resolution had been adopted, the questions were designed to assist American Committee members in tailoring

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116 Coolidge to Laurance Duggan, July 15, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC. Duggan’s reply has not been found; however, Coolidge recounts Duggan’s previous correspondence in most of his letters.

117 Coolidge to Duggan, October 11, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 30, Pan American Union: 8th International Conference, December 9–27, 1938. A copy of the “Questionnaire on the Fauna and Flora of the American Republics,” can be found in ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

118 ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC. Prior to the introduction of the December resolution, American Committee members compiled a list of names of persons—usually friends or associates—they believed would be able to answer the questionnaire effectively. American Committee members then sent out requests to those individuals and to government departments in the American Republics asking for additional names and addresses of those who might be able to adequately contribute to the questionnaire. As a result, the survey was addressed to scientists, government officials, U.S. businessmen and their Latin American associates, educators, ornithologists, anthropologists, and foresters.
the subsequent Convention to appeal both to those nations with conservation programs in existence and to those nations in need of assistance.\footnote{\textit{Ibid.}}

Attached to the survey was a letter from the American Committee asking for a quick response as to whether recipients thought their nation would support the Resolution and a later Convention.\footnote{A copy of this letter is attached to the Minutes of the ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; \textit{Ibid.}} As the success or failure of the resolution would reflect on the credibility of the American Committee as an international nongovernmental organization, members wanted to increase support for the measure among members of the Pan American Union. Indeed, Coolidge noted, “if it [the Resolution] fails, our credibility will be questioned and our effectiveness forever limited.”\footnote{Secretary’s Report, ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; \textit{Ibid.}} To generate as much support as possible in such a limited time, American Committee members framed the Resolution as being in the interests of the Americas as a whole. The first two of the five recommendations made in the draft resolution stipulated that all American Republics “adopt legislation and national regulations making Nature Protection and Wildlife Protection possible” and keep the Pan American Union informed on those laws and regulations. The third article called for the creation of an Inter-American Committee of Experts to study problems relating to nature protection in the hemisphere, to offer their advice to governments, and to collaborate on scientific research. The fourth article outlined the committee’s responsibilities—primarily the compilation of data on wildlife protection programs, laws, and regulations, and the creation of a vanishing species list, and the drafting of a treaty mandating international cooperation in wildlife protection that
could be signed by nations of the Americas. The fifth article called for the information to be housed at either the Smithsonian Institution or the headquarters of the American Committee, as these facilities had the staff and the resources to collate and disseminate this information as needed. It emphasized cooperation and collaboration of nations with shared natural resources.

After distributing the surveys and before the Lima Convention, Coolidge consulted with Warren Kelchner of the U.S. Department of State’s Division of Latin American Affairs and Undersecretary of State Sumner Wells for advice on the first draft of the Resolution. Kelchner suggested several alterations. First, the language assigning the ultimate responsibility of the Convention needed to be clearer. As it was, there was no clear assignation of what organization—the Pan American Union, the individual governments, or the American Committee—was responsible for monitoring the implementation of the agreement. Second, Kelchner suggested making the PAU responsible as it had the resources, contacts, and political power to monitor progress and assist in the implementation. Third, the Resolution and the proposed convention should not be initiated, monitored, and maintained by the United States, but should incorporate Latin American government officials and conservationists as a means of making it more pan-American. Fourth, Kelchner suggested more “generic” language be used and leaving the requirement for a vanishing species list to be presented at the

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122 Memorandum of conversation between Kelchner, Coolidge, and Kidder, October 18, 1938; National Archives, RG 43, Records of International Conferences, Commissions, and Expositions; International Conference Records U.S. Delegation to the Eight International Conference of American States, Box 2, Delegation Correspondence, 1938.
Convention out of the Resolution. Finally, Kelchner advocated leaving a date for the actual Convention undetermined.  

But ambiguous language and vague provisions were not supported by Undersecretary of State Sumner Wells. Wells was one of the foremost experts on Latin America during the 1930s—having served as a Foreign Service officer to Cuba, as the Chief of the Latin American Affairs Division, and as the chief advisor on Latin American affairs for the Roosevelt administrations. Wells argued that, with the recent trend of constantly changing Latin American administrations, the more specific and the shorter the timeframe, the more likely it was that the provisions of the Resolution and ultimately the Convention would be carried out. A delay of as little as 5 years, he warned, would allow the Resolution and its provisions to get lost in the changing administrations’ paper shuffle. As such, he recommended allowing no more than one year following the adoption of the Resolution for nations to compile and deposit their information at the Pan American Union. Wells concurred with Kelchner’s assertion that the vanishing species list requirement be dropped from the draft as he did not think it was feasible to compile a suitable list in under two years time. The Kelchner and Wells reports were presented to a Special Committee of the American Committee devoted to the Resolution by AC

123 Memorandum of conversation between Kelchner, Coolidge and Kidder, October 18, 1938; Ibid.

124 I did not find the letter from Wells to Coolidge, however, Coolidge recounted this exchange in a letter from Coolidge to Laurance Duggan, July 15, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC. Also, a solid, if somewhat biased, source on Sumner Wells is Benjamin Wells, Sumner Wells: FDR’s Global Strategist (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997).

125 Coolidge to Laurance Duggan, July 15, 1938.
Secretary Reid Blair on November 1, 1938. After little deliberation, the Committee agreed to keep a short window of time open for nations to comply with the terms of the Resolution and agreed it was impractical to expect a complete vanishing species list in time for the conference. In Ecuador, Peru, and Paraguay continual change in political administrations and the relatively undeveloped scientific community made it improbable that the data would be generated in a timely fashion, and strong wording “might scare off some of the countries.”

They settled on a suitable compromise in the final draft of the resolution. The preamble proclaimed that the American Republics were “richly endowed with natural scenery, with indigenous wild animal and plant life, with unusual geologic formations, which are of national and international importance.” As such, nations should pledge to protect and preserve “natural habitat representatives of all species and races of their native fauna and flora including migratory birds, in sufficient numbers, and over areas extensive enough to assure them from becoming extinct through an agency within man’s control.” The Resolution recommended that nations adopt suitable legislation to protect wildlife and nature, to keep the Pan American Union informed on their efforts; to appoint a delegate to a committee of experts designed to study wildlife protection problems and formulate solutions; and meet in Washington DC in 1940 to draft “a convention of international cooperation among the American Republics relative to the

126 Coolidge to Blair, November 1, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

127 Ibid.

128 Lima Convention Resolution 38 (draft), December 23, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
preservation of fauna and flora” that would be administered and monitored by the Pan American Union.

In a memorandum attached to the Resolution, the American Committee additionally recommended the following framework to be applied to the Inter-American Committee of Experts. A representative from each American nation should be assigned to the Inter-American Committee of Experts within a year of the passage of the Resolution. Wherever possible, each representative was to head a team of individuals responsible for conducting a national wildlife species inventory and for compiling information on national parks, game legislation, and species in danger of extinction, in need of protection, or danger of decline. In addition to these responsibilities, the Committee should offer to consult with government officials on nature protection and to facilitate a closer relationship between governments and conservationists. Wells approved this draft on November 6, 1938.

Lima

Once the Resolution had been approved for submission to the 1938 Convention, the American Committee searched for a delegate to represent them. Coolidge encouraged Wetmore to attend, as his extensive knowledge of conservation in Latin America.

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129 Ibid.

130 Ibid.

131 Robert Moore, of the International Galapagos Committee, was the first choice as he was most familiar with Latin America. In addition to his involvement in the protection of wildlife in Ecuador, he had close ties to scientists in Mexico, Guatemala and Colombia, and, had experience working with the Pan American Union advancing protection legislation. He was designated the delegate to the Conference by Coolidge in September, but subsequently resigned due to scheduling conflicts arising from his position with the California Institute of Technology. Wetmore to Coolidge, October 8, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
America and his recent success in shepherding the Migratory Bird Treaty with Mexico through to ratification made him an excellent candidate. Wetmore declined, citing scheduling conflicts. Interestingly, Wetmore then noted that perhaps the Committee had exhausted its usefulness and should relinquish implementation of the Resolution to the PAU. International conservation legislation, he argued, especially that of the scope of the Convention, required the support of lawyers to construct a legally feasible document; diplomats to sell the idea to their respective nations; and well-positioned statesmen to see that the legislation was enacted and enforced. Furthermore, “our proper function [is] in matters concerned more directly with threatened species,” not in tackling the establishment of governmental infrastructure and general wildlife protection legislation for the hemisphere.

The American Committee had done the legwork for the Convention and the U.S. Committee of Experts by submitting the surveys to the most qualified personnel in Latin America and developing a workable draft in light of those replies. But for this Resolution to be adopted, Wetmore argued, it should be introduced from someone in a much larger institution, specifically he offered the U.S. National Park Service, State Department, or Forest Service. Furthermore, he warned, the American Committee risked alienating those same departments for future assistance by “stepping on political toes.”

Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Game Mammals was signed in Mexico City on February 7, 1936. (49 Stat. 1556; P.L. 86–732). It was ratified by Mexico on February 12, 1937. The treaty went into force March 15, 1937.

Wetmore to Coolidge, October 8, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

Ibid.
Coolidge accepted Wetmore’s decision not to attend but, believing nongovernmental-governmenal cooperation was essential to the success of the Resolution, disregarded the advice on forfeiting a “direct hand in the proceedings.” Generating support from multiple national congresses (especially those responsible to constituents with investments in resource extraction industries) would be no easy feat and would require a committee devoted solely to seeing it through.\textsuperscript{135} PAU officials were busy keeping the hemisphere from falling into disarray; U.S. National Parks Service and Forest Service officials focused on the every day administration of U.S. Parks; and State Department officials focused their attentions on the European conflict and the maintenance of good hemispheric relations. It was too important and too complex, Coolidge believed, to leave solely to politicians subject to a multitude of issues and interests. None could devote sufficient attention to supporting the establishment of parks around the hemisphere. Instead, Coolidge argued, the responsibility fell to international conservation organizations in the hemisphere, specifically, it fell to the American Committee. Contrary to Wetmore’s assertion that working to enforce conservation legislation was beyond the scope of the committee’s duties, Coolidge claimed that this was exactly why the American Committee had been created in the first place.\textsuperscript{136}

With Wetmore’s recusal, the Committee appointed Alfred “Teddy” Kidder to attend the Lima Convention. Kidder’s father, a founding member of the American Committee, was a committed conservationist, and in his youth Kidder accompanied his

\textsuperscript{135} Coolidge to Wetmore, October 1938; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 78, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, ACIWLP, Correspondence, 1930–1955.

\textsuperscript{136} Ibid.
father to the annual meetings of international conservation organizations and on African
safaris. Although Kidder’s personal career choice led him to follow in his mother’s
footsteps with archeology, he maintained a keen interest in international wildlife
preservation. As an employee of the Peabody museum, he had planned to travel to
Lima in early December to conduct archeological research. He offered to attend the
proceedings, answer any questions, and encourage the Committee on Moral Disarmament
and Intellectual Cooperation (MDICC) where it was scheduled to be presented to pass the
resolution. With his acceptance, Coolidge sought to get him an official appointment,
which would allow him access to all convention events. The State Department, however,
refused, restricting U.S. participation to government employees. Nevertheless, the
American Committee sent Kidder, in the hopes that he could lobby delegates outside of
the actual Convention. Kidder left Massachusetts for Peru on the first of December
armed with multiple copies of the Resolution and of The Organization of Nature
Protection in the Various Countries, written by Dr. G. A. Brouwer, which he was
instructed to pass out at will. During the trip to Peru, Kidder absorbed both the
Resolution and pamphlet to be sure he was well versed in the provisions and he could
highlight its argument.


139 I never found a copy of Brouwer’s pamphlet; there was no copy in either the Coolidge or Wetmore papers. There is a good description of Kidder’s frustrations with it, however, in Kidder to Coolidge, December 23, 1938; Ibid.
Upon arrival in Lima, Kidder found the Hotel Bolivar, an impressive six-story hotel in Plaza San Martin, delightfully chaotic, as the lobby was packed with diplomats and delegates. Having just arrived from an exhausting two week trip and not having been able to eat for the better part of a week, he retired to his suite to remove the travel grime, but returned to the lobby within the hour. His letters noted he could barely “speak to anyone for more than two minutes at a time” and that the atmosphere of the Conference was “stupendous,” with a “remarkable and invigorating energy.” He was unpleasantly surprised, however, that those members of the Moral Disarmament and Intellectual Cooperation Committee, whom he met that afternoon, had not seen a copy of the resolution, as a copy was supposed to have been mailed to those members of the MDICC by the American Committee before Kidder left for Lima. As a result, he spent the first few days tracking down those officials assigned to the Committee, handing out copies of the Resolution and trying to convince them of the need for broader based, international conservation programs. Kidder withheld distributing the Brouwer pamphlet, however, because Brouwer portrayed Latin Americans as having a “total and frightening disregard for the environment” and Kidder was concerned that distributing it would alienate Latin American officials. He was so diligent that by the third morning, the U.S. Delegate, Ben Cherrington, requested that he cease “any activity resembling lobbying,” as some delegates feared the Convention would drag on for a month as they were being ambushed by so many private interests requesting support. Kidder was also

140 Kidder to Coolidge, December 23, 1938.

141 Ibid.
"advised not to hand out any literature until the Resolution had been dealt with," effectively ending his dilemma over whether to distribute Brouwer’s pamphlet.

Having been excluded from taking part in social activities and diplomatic discussions, Kidder requested Cherrington’s assistance in generating support for the Resolution.142 Sympathizing with his frustration, Cherrington informed Kidder that Mexico, Cuba, and Bolivia also intended to submit proposals for the protection of places of cultural, historical, and archaeological significance under a resolution written by the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH).143 Cherrington requested Kidder’s opinion on the Committee’s proposal to lump the Resolutions together. Kidder disagreed, arguing that a Resolution to protect wildlife effectively had to make wildlife its first priority; if the Resolutions were lumped together, the issue of wildlife protection “would be pigeonholed and very little would be done about it.”144 PAIGH’s project emphasized preserving spaces of cultural and historical significance, meaning those places created and modified by humans. The Resolution proposed by the American Committee, on the other hand, was to protect those areas uniquely outside of human manipulation. Offering protection measures for wilderness placed an equivalent national value on nature and modified spaces. Indeed, it applied a cultural and historical value to nature. The best way to protect wilderness, wildlife, and nature, Kidder maintained, was

142 Ibid.

143 PAIGH had been established at the 1928 Sixth International Conference of American States to provide technical assistance, training, and research, in the areas of cartography, geography, history and geophysics.

144 Kidder to Coolidge, December 23, 1938.
through a separate, stand-alone resolution, which devoted resources and attention solely to nature protection.¹⁴⁵

Kidder also had his doubts that the American Committee and PAIGH would be able to agree on wildlife protection legislation enough to draft a possible treaty. By 1938, the relationship between PAIGH and the American Committee was strained. PAIGH had reached out to the American Committee in 1933 to assist with the International Galapagos Committee (IGC) noting that the protection of national monuments coincided with the protection of wildlife on those islands. The president of PAIGH, Wallace W. Atwood, who had been appointed to assist with the IGC in 1934, disagreed with Chairman Robert Moore over what could be classified as a national monument. Atwood argued that natural monuments were, by definition, inanimate objects in the form of geological formations or structures with cultural or archeological significance. These areas he felt should be set aside as monuments, providing the strictest measures of protection possible. Those animals in close proximity of the geological formations would be protected by the zone. But Moore argued wildlife fit all of the definitions of natural monuments. In his view, they possessed extraordinary beauty and were natural objects of aesthetic, historic, and scientific value. In places like Ecuador, where the wildlife was unique, the term was far more applicable to a Galápagos tortoise, finch, and iguana, than to any geological formation on the islands. Indeed, the wildlife was far more fragile and far more unique than those rock formations PAIGH proposed to protect. The problem with simply declaring an area protected, thereby offering wildlife protection was that, with rare exceptions, wildlife migrated in seasonal shifts, expanding their territories over

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.
time. Protection of a static monument was not enough to ensure wildlife protection as they migrated out of bounds. Differences in the devotion of resources kept the two organizations at loggerheads until finally PAIGH backed out of the IGC altogether in 1936. There had been "considerable rivalry between the two organizations" ever since. That same year, PAIGH introduced a resolution to the Pan American Conference in Mexico City to sponsor a Pan American program to protect national natural monuments. To generate support, they had included the "conservation" of nature as part of the benefits of protecting spaces of geological and archeological value and Atwood reached out to the American Committee for support. Coolidge and the Committee refused to get behind it, claiming that the program did not have anything to do with the protection of nature, adding to the rivalry.  

Cherrington left dinner that evening promising to do what he could to support the passage of a separate resolution, but he was unsuccessful. Just prior to closing the proceedings on December 20, the Committee adopted Resolution 38 merging the conservation of nature and protection of natural monuments under one Resolution. The protection of nature was then placed under topic heading number 19.  

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146 Coolidge to Ballard, February 20, 1941; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).  

147 The Resolution, under Topic Heading 19, is as follows:

WHEREAS: The American Republics are richly endowed with natural scenery, with indigenous wild animal and plant life, with unusual geologic formations, which are of national and international importance; and

The American Republics are desirous of protecting and preserving their natural habitat representatives of all species and races of their native fauna and flora including migratory birds, in sufficient numbers, and over areas extensive enough to assure them from becoming extinct through an agency within man's control.
to keep the Resolutions separate had failed, Cherrington motioned to keep the Conventions separate and to hold a separate conference for each Resolution. This, he noted, would promote more efficient and effective meetings. He then moved to postpone the decision regarding the proposed Conventions until the following day. Cherrington found Kidder an hour later and informed him of this decision, noting that while the Resolutions were together, the chance to hold a Convention focused solely on wildlife protection still existed. While the loss of an independent Resolution was unfortunate, Kidder admitted that a separate Convention was more important and more necessary. Although it meant defying Cherrington’s request to quit lobbying, Kidder tracked down the Committee members and redoubled his efforts to convince them to vote in favor of two separate Conventions. The following morning, Cherrington’s motion to keep the conventions separate was upheld by the delegates to the Moral Disarmament and Intellectual Cooperation Committee. At the close of the proceedings, Kidder called the decision a “victory for wildlife.”148 The issue now was to get each nation to follow through on the provisions set by the Resolution.

The 8th International Conference of American States Recommends: 1. Adopt legislation and national regulations making Nature Protection and Wildlife Protection possible. 2. Inform the PAU on legislation, regulations and other measures for the preservation of fauna and flora to the committee. 3. A Committee of Experts will be appointed to study these problems and formulate recommendations to the PAU. 4. Draft a convention of international cooperation among the American Republics relative to the preservation of fauna and flora. 5. That the PAU be requested to take the necessary steps to carry out the provisions.

A copy is attached to the Questionnaire on the Fauna and Flora of the American Republics that the American Committee distributed to officials throughout the Americas; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

148 Kidder to Coolidge, December 23, 1938.
Governing Board

Following the Lima Convention, three officials with the PAU’s Division of Agricultural Cooperation were appointed by the Division to head a special governing board to oversee the implementation of Resolution 38’s provisions. Venezuelan ambassador to the United States Diogenes Escalante was elected chairman; Hector David Castro, with the El Salvadorian Ministry of Interior, was elected vice-chairman; and Nicaraguan Ambassador to the United States Leon de Bayle and Chargé d’ Affaires of Bolivia Raul Diez de Medina served as co-secretaries.\footnote{None from the United States served on the Advisory Board. Handwritten note attached to the Questionnaire on the Fauna and Flora of the American Republics; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.} The Board met for the first time April 5, 1939 and agreed to hold the Convention on Nature Protection in May 1940, immediately following the Pan American Scientific Congress scheduled to be held in Washington DC at the end of April.\footnote{Report of the Special Committee of the Governing Board Appointed to Consider the Resolution Adopted at the 8th International Conference of American States Relating to Nature Protection and Wild life Preservation, April 5, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).} This would ensure the participation of as many representatives from the scientific community as possible.

The Board then called upon each nation to appoint qualified individuals to represent its government on the Inter-American Committee of Experts (IACE). As stipulated by the Resolution, delegates to the IACE were responsible for compiling information, ensuring implementation of the Resolution’s provisions, and acting as representatives to the Convention. They were required to have a solid scientific education, be an “expert in the field of nature protection,” and have an understanding of
their national legal structure. The Governing Board contacted the U.S. embassies throughout Latin America to enlist support in encouraging national governments to appoint the same delegates attending the Scientific Congress to the Convention as they would already be in Washington and could then attend the Convention.\textsuperscript{151}

Attached to their request, the Board distributed a survey to government officials, focused on obtaining more detailed information on nature protection programs. It asked recipients to list details about any national parks including location, size, and type of administration, and any unique features under protection. Additionally, it asked for any information available about fauna and flora, including what, if any, species were under protection; what level of protection was needed; whether certain species could characterized as “vanishing” or “in need of protection,” and any hypothesis as to the future of those species without protection.\textsuperscript{152} The responses were to be analyzed and submitted to the Inter-American delegate from that country who would present the findings at the Convention on Nature Protection in 1940.

\textbf{Conclusion}

The Good Neighbor Policy, the rising attendance at the Pan American Union conventions, and the dogged determination of American Committee members were the crucial components to the adoption of Resolution 38. The Good Neighbor Policy made


\textsuperscript{152} Ibid.
an agreement to cooperate in the conservation of resources and the protection of the environment more attractive to Latin American governments.

The Pan American Union itself was crucial to the success of the treaty. The PAU was the perfect forum for facilitating Inter-American cooperation in conservation, it had the political power to legitimize the effort, and the increased emphasis on Inter-American unity only enhanced its effectiveness. As a forum for Inter-American dialogue, it provided a space for conservationists to work with diplomats toward a common goal. By holding a number of Inter-American conferences to address uniquely hemispheric issues, the PAU facilitated international cooperation on wildlife protection without which Resolution 38 might never have seen the light of day. The American Committee members who framed the Resolution recognized that a nongovernmental organization would have little influence without support from government officials when negotiating for additional national protection measures. However, they also recognized the futility of trying to get the U.S. Department of State to initiate bilateral or multilateral discussions concerning the protection of the environment, especially when pressing economic issues weighed so heavily on relations during the Great Depression. They therefore worked on their own, building contacts and support throughout Latin America, until improved inter-American relations made governmental cooperation possible. Once that happened, the PAU was the perfect forum for facilitating Inter-American cooperation in conservation.

Finally, the sheer determination of conservationists, like Teddy Kidder and Harold Coolidge, kept the Resolution and ultimately the Convention on track through the bureaucratic obstacle course. The next stage would be perhaps the most complicated as the American Committee, the Governing Board assigned to facilitate the terms of
Resolution 38, and the U.S. Committee of Experts worked both together and at odds with each other to draft the treaty to be introduced at the Convention, to compile information to adhere to the Resolution, and to generate sufficient support for the Convention with their Latin American counterparts. The following three chapters examine the development of nationally implemented conservation programs in Argentina, Venezuela, and Mexico.
CHAPTER III

THE ANOMALY OF ARGENTINA: ARGENTINEAN ASPIRATIONS TO CONNECT THROUGH CONSERVATION, 1903–1938

Dr. Hugo Salomon, a top-notch Argentinean ornithologist, had just spent ten days on a cramped river boat; he was exhausted; he was covered with insect bites; and he was only ten kilometers from Iguazú Falls and those elusive birds, the cascade billhooks. His guide, Alejandro, then informed him that going forward their trek would be punctuated by loud cries to keep the larger wildlife away. As they would be traversing through prime alligator habitat, he wanted nearly twice the money originally agreed on before he would continue. Salomon, who saw no reason why he should try to scare off every animal within hearing distance and pay double to do so, went off by himself to deliberate whether to agree to the price increase. Stopping to watch a pair of toucans, he turned his back to the river and mulled things over. What happened next was a blur: a soft noise behind him sent chills down his spine and he whipped around to see the eyes and nose of an alligator cresting the water not five feet away. The squat alligator sprang forth, snatched his bag with all its contents, and returned to the murky depths. Salomon, presumably shaking like a leaf, returned to Alejandro and promptly agreed to his terms.

This vignette reflects the 1937–38 U.S.-Argentinean negotiations to bring about the Pan American Union Resolution 38. The few tense seconds with the alligator may be likened to the short window of time that U.S. and Argentinean conservationists believed they had to obtain an agreement on establishing a broad-based and uniform set of
conservation laws across the Americas. According to conservationists in both the United States and Argentina, the time was right in 1938 to work toward such a program.

Although Chapter 2 focused on the passage of the 1938 Resolution, this chapter steps back chronologically to examine the development of Argentina's development of a national conservation infrastructure and an international nongovernmental organization. Initially, Argentina used U.S. national park system as a framework for developing their own national infrastructure. Interestingly, the Argentineans then took their conservation efforts further by banning dam construction in or near the national parks. Moreover, the Government of Argentina actively cultivated international protection agreements with its immediate neighbors. When American Committee representatives reached out to Argentinean conservation leaders in 1937, Argentineans believed that their nation rivaled the United States in its efforts to protect nature and they were determined to play an active role in the facilitation of an inter-American agreement to protect nature. Although their participation drops off once the resolution was passed, Argentina's development was a model for other South American nations to follow and their correspondence and support for the resolution was critical to the American Committee in 1938. This strategy is important for a study of the Convention on Nature Protection because having a strong South American promoter to offer feedback on the practicality of the provisions and to generate critical support in Latin American nations provided the Convention with (essentially) a South American stamp of approval, and that acceptance was then hailed by American Committee members in their correspondence as proof that the Convention was truly a Pan American effort.
Argentina was critical to the Convention in two ways. First, the existence of an internationally focused nongovernmental organization willing to engage in a dialogue regarding the Convention bolstered American Committee members’ beliefs that the timing for the Convention was right. Second, Argentina’s well developed national park infrastructure and considerable efforts toward facilitating international nature protection agreements supported Harold Coolidge’s assertion that the Convention had to provide for both the establishment of protected reserves, but also for more strict provisions establishing wilderness reserves. Some Latin American nations, including Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and the United States, already possessed national reserves, monuments, and parks and a Convention mandating those areas would do little to advance conservation in those countries. Coolidge used this argument to support his assertion that the Convention needed articles mandating the establishment of strict wilderness preserves and vanishing species protection.

Argentina, in particular, was a crucial component because, as North American conservationists worked to establish parks and protect nature, conservationists in Argentina were making parallel efforts to establish similar protections. Equally important, as indicated below, Argentinean Department of National Territories and U.S. Department of Interior officials had a previously established working relationship that familiarized both sets of participants with the national conservation infrastructure in place in both countries. Moreover, American Committee members had engaged in several discussions with Argentinean members of the Comisión Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna Suramericana (National Commission for the Protection of South American Fauna or CNPFS) at the European international conservation conferences during the mid- and
late-1930s. This governmental and a nongovernmental exchange of information established a connection American Committee members could use to solicit both Argentinean advice and support when it came to the Convention.

**Conservation in Argentina, 1903–28**

In 1903, following nearly a half century of border conflicts, an international arbitration tribunal led by British Government officials formally drew the Argentinean-Chilean border down the continental spine of the Andes and forever gave the contested space of Patagonia to Argentina. An 1881 agreement had stipulated that the border ran along the tallest peaks and the continental watershed. But water markers proved to be problematic as they changed with the seasons and were diverted by natural obstacles—rocks, erosion, tree debris, avalanches, etc. Based on Francisco Moreno’s report to the Ministry of Exterior Relations (Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores or MRE) titled *Reconocimiento de la Region Andina de la Republica Argentina*, Argentine President Julio de Roca and Chilean President Isidoro Errázuriz signed the Pactos de Mayo in the Strait of Magellan, formally making the tallest peaks the official border. Unfortunately, this did not stem the saber rattling. Concerned that war would ignite if the boundary issue over 96,000 square kilometers in Patagonia were not settled, Great Britain offered to arbitrate the dispute in 1898 and hired Moreno to lead the British commission through

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153 Several British companies and private citizens resided in both countries, each of whom would be significantly affected by the outbreak of war between the two nations. For information on British commercial interests in Argentina, see Vera Blinn Reber, *British Mercantile Houses in Buenos Aires, 1810–1880* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979). For more information on the border between Chile and Argentina, see George V. Rauch, *Conflict in the Southern Cone: The Argentine Military and the Boundary Dispute with Chile, 1870–1902*. For additional information on the War in the Pacific, see Robert N. Burr’s *By Reason or Force: Chile and the Balancing of Power in South America, 1830–1905* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965) and William F. Sater, *Chile and the War of the Pacific* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986).
Patagonia. In 1903, King Edward VII split the contested area almost in half, giving 42,000 sqk to Argentina and 54,000 sqk to Chile, upholding the previous agreement and permanently marking the highest peaks of the Andes the border. For his part in settling the dispute, Moreno received 7,500 hectares of land from President Julio Roca along the southwestern shores of Lake Nahuel Huapi, in the center of Patagonia. Moreno promptly donated his tract to the Republic on the condition that the park be modeled along the lines of Yellowstone National Park, to “defend the national honor and integrity” by forever protecting its national natural symbols.

The use of nature as a national symbol of patriotism in the years between 1890 and 1915 was a common trend among Argentinean nationalists. This association of nature and nationalism proved to be useful to the Ministry of Foreign Relations (MRE) official and co-founder of the Sociedad Cientifica Argentina (SCA), Estanislao Zevallos in his support of the park. Although the nation was in the midst of an economic boom and had successfully sent several expeditions into the border territory, Zevallos was well aware that Argentina would not invest a considerable amount of money to develop a park on the land Moreno donated in Patagonia unless it could be framed in nationalist terms.

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154 Moreover, the decision prohibited Argentina’s intervention in Pacific affairs and enforced the mutual naval limitations decreed by the Pactos de Mayo. Carlos Fernandez Balboa, “La Naturaleza que Supimos Conseguir” Todo es Historia, N° 427, p 19.

155 Ley N°4.192 gave Moreno the land; Boletín Oficial de la Republica Argentina, 2 August 1903.

156 Balboa, p. 19.

157 Estanislao Zevallos served the Republic of Argentina in multiple capacities during his adult life, including two terms as president of the House of Representatives, one term as the director of the Department of Commerce, and three terms as Minister of Foreign Relations. Information on Zevallos was obtained in a June 17, 2005 conversation with Santiago Bardelli, reference librarian with the Biblioteca Nacional de la Republica de Argentina, Agúero 2502, Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires, República Argentina.
By casting the park in that way, Zevallos could argue that the MRE had a responsibility to sponsor the initial development of the park as a means of incorporating a highly contested border region more fully into the Argentinean national ethos. The 1900, 1901, and 1903 expeditions to Patagonia had revealed that the communities there were primarily Chilean and German immigrants, indeed few were Argentinean by birth. Zevallos believed that applying a national value to the park early on could foster a sense of national identity among the inhabitants of the region. Without this ethos, he argued, Argentina risked future problems along the border. Furthermore, the establishment and development of this national park would connect the peaks of Patagonia with Argentinean patriotism, instilling in Argentineans both in the region and throughout the nation an appreciation for those natural symbols.

Isidoro Ruiz Moreno, the Director of the DTN, agreed that fostering a national desire to protect its natural spaces was crucial, but he emphasized that the development of a park was important for Argentina when viewed in the larger Pan American context as well. The protection of its “more spectacular” land from the hazards of industries bent on extraction, indeed the very possession of a national park, was the ultimate sign of a


159 Boletín de Comisión de Parques Nacionales, January 19, 1922, pp. 2–3; Archivo General, Departamento de Territorios Nacionales, Comisión de Parques Nacional. Benedict Anderson has noted that nationalism is an imagined political community, fostered by a common language, religion, and national experience. This experience is solidified and expanded upon through printed materials—newspapers, books, pamphlets—and disseminated through schools. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London & New York: Verso, 1991).
"civilized" nation. Doing so, before any European nation adopted the idea, put Argentina in a small, highly civilized conservation club. It was possible, noted Ruiz to Zevallos, that this cultural/conservation connection could be useful in future diplomatic discussions, or perhaps in negotiations at the Pan American Union. While Zevallos was certainly not convinced that the possession of a national park would wield any additional diplomatic weight in the hemisphere, he believed that modeling the system on that of the United States and Canada would be an excellent political tool to use to connect with U.S. officials and in eventually expanding the number of parks. Toward that end, Argentinean conservationists began to explore ways to cooperate with the North Americans.

Ruiz and Zevallos appointed a small Comisión de Parques Nacionales (CPN) in 1906 to gather information from U.S. and Canadian institutions and to develop a workable structure for a national parks system. Scientists, Drs. Angel Gallardo and Antonio Lynch, were appointed to oversee the scientific investigations into the territories to evaluate the possible expansion of the number of parks. Engineers, Eduardo Huergo and Carlos Frers, were appointed to design markers for the park boundaries and draw blueprints for roads and tourist services into the park. Legal advisers, Arron de Anchorena and Luis Ortiz Basualdo, were appointed to formulate the legal framework for

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160 Ruiz to Gallardo, December 14, 1906; Archivo General, Dr. J.R. Moreno, Territorios Nacionales (proyectos, economía, finanzas, caminos, leyes, decretos, indios, correspondencia, etc.).

161 Ibid.

162 Zevallos to Ruiz, December 22, 1906; Ibid.

163 Balboa, p. 19.
the new park.\textsuperscript{164} Gallardo and Lynch recommended sites for additional parks, but emphasized that the CPN was too small at that time to manage several at once.\textsuperscript{165} Instead of establishing multiple parks which they could not maintain, they encouraged the MRI to declare those areas to be reserves modeled on the U.S. National Forest Reserves.\textsuperscript{166} Marking those spaces as reserves allowed for monitored extraction of resources while maintaining the protection of the landscape. The Comisión's first report concluded that as the size and strength of the CPN grew, it could upgrade the protection from National Reserves to National Parks.\textsuperscript{167} This development was critical to both the Comisión's support of the resolution as it called for a Convention to establish the same type of developmental framework across the hemisphere. With this type of infrastructure in place, working with neighboring nations on creating shared protected regions would be less complex as the overall structure had been agreed upon.

In one of the first of many exchanges, in 1912, the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey sent geologist and hydrologist Bayley Willis to Argentina to assist the CPN in the

\textsuperscript{164} Memorandum titled "About Works of the Geologist, Bayley Willis" to the Minister of the Interior, author unknown, September 12, 1914; Archivo General, Ruiz Moreno, Documentos de Territorios Nacionales Ano 1914, Legajo 4; pp. 3093–3095.

\textsuperscript{165} They argued the initial park could be expanded to encompass the entire lake Nahuel Huapi and extended to the actual international border with Chile. The territory of Lanin, a small sliver of the tallest Andean ridge approximately one hundred miles north of Nahuel Huapi, and Los Alerces just to the south were included to offer long-term protection of the enormous forests of lahuán (the massive cousin to the North American larch) and rare Andean-Patagonian flora (specifically pehuen, rauli, and roble pellín), indigenous only to the narrow area of the cordillera. Memorandum from Moreno to CPN Director, Gallardo, September 12, 1906; Argentine Republic, Archivo General de la Nación, Archivo del Dr. J.R. Moreno, Territorios Nacionales (proyectos, economía, finanzas, caminos, leyes, decretos, indios, correspondencia, etc.)

\textsuperscript{166} Report by the Comisión de Parques Nacional to el Senado y Camara de Diputados, Parque Nacional del Sud: Proyecto de Ley, November 13, 1906, p. 7; Archivo General de la Nación, Dr. J.R. Moreno, Territorios Nacionales (proyectos, economía, finanzas, caminos, leyes, decretos, indios, correspondencia, etc).

\textsuperscript{167} Ibid.
preliminary geological survey of Patagonia. Willis embarked on a six-month trip from Buenos Aires to the Andes and returned with a report on geological formations inside the park and the best places for the possible future extension of the park boundaries.\textsuperscript{168} He then submitted a report to Ruiz encouraging the establishment of hydroelectric facilities for the waterfalls of the Rio Grande (near Ushuaia, the capital of Tierra del Fuego) and the Santa Cruz, because facilities on both waterways would produce enough power for a southern urban center to rival Buenos Aires.\textsuperscript{169} Two pages at the end of the seventeen page survey discussed the hydroelectric development of Patagonia, noting that dams on the tributaries of Lake Nahuel Huapi—specifically the Rio Nirehuau, Arroyos La Lana, and Chacabuco—would expand the growing community of Bariloche and offer employment for decades to come.\textsuperscript{170} In 1917, based on Willis' recommendations, Ruiz petitioned the Government for the funds to begin development.

But, by 1917, the Argentineans were determined to learn from what they considered to be U.S. errors. The CPN lobbied against Ruiz's requests, citing the unfortunate damming of the Tuolumne River in the United States' Yosemite National Park. In December 1913, the U.S. Congress passed the Raker Act, granting the city of San Francisco the right to construct a dam across the Hetch Hetchy valley inside the Yosemite National Park to provide much needed water for the city.\textsuperscript{171} San Francisco's

\textsuperscript{168} "About Works of the Geologist, Bayley Willis," p. 2.
\textsuperscript{169} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{170} Report by the Comisión de Parques Nacional to el Senado y Camara de Diputados, Parque Nacional del Sud: Proyecto de Ley, November 13, 1906; pp. 5-6.
\textsuperscript{171} Good sources on the debate over Hetch Hetchy include Robert Righter, The Battle Over Hetch Hetchy: America's Most Controversial Dam and the Birth of Modern Environmentalism, (Oxford; New York: 88
demand for a reliable water supply, coupled with a new national political dynamic, created a division between those committed to preserving the wilderness as represented by naturalist spokesman, John Muir, and those more interested in efficient management of its use as represented by Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot. The preservationists ultimately lost the fight to save Hetch Hetchy and construction of the O’Shaughnessy Dam began in 1914.

The fate of Hetch Hetchy proved to be the point at which the Argentinean park officials diverged from their U.S. framework. Gallardo, an admirer of Muir, petitioned the MRI, the MRE, and the DTN for assistance in stopping the plan to dam within eighty kilometers of the park, noting that the United States had made a tragic mistake in allowing that type of development inside the park boundaries. National Parks were for the protection of national spaces and, to honor those spaces, it was the national responsibility to protect them from such development. That, argued Gallardo, was the purpose of having a national park. There were plenty of other rivers to dam, but those near the park must be left alone. Legislation passed by the Argentinean national congress

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173 Bertonatti, Claudio y Adrian Giacchina. “Políticas y Estrategias de Conservacion: Las areas naturales mas alla de la legislacion.” Todo es Historia N°427 (Febrero 2003); p. 75.
in 1922 prohibited the construction of hydroelectric facilities in its parks and for up to eighty kilometers on any waterway flowing into the parks.\textsuperscript{174}

\textbf{The South American Committee}

As the CPN worked with a U.S. inspired framework to create a national park system, Argentinean conservationists connected with the larger European international conservation community. Members of the Sociedad Ciencia de Argentina as well as faculty from the Universidad de Buenos Aires observed the meetings of the British Society for the Preservation of the Fauna of the Empire (BSPFE), the International Ornithological Union (IOU), and the Conseil International de la Chasse in Paris. They corresponded with Dr. Peter van Tienhoven's International Office for the Protection of Nature (IOPN) headquartered in Brussels. As they engaged in these discussions, they were determined to establish a similar international conservation organization to advance legislation throughout South America.\textsuperscript{175}

In November 1928, almost precisely the same time Harold Coolidge and his cohorts founded the American Committee, Dr. Angel Cabrera proposed to the board members of the SCA the establishment of an Argentinean Commission to investigate international wildlife protection in South America. Cabrera, a prominent Spanish conservationist living in Buenos Aires, stressed that Argentineans were the leaders in South American conservation, but that the Government of Argentina was not able to bear that burden alone. He pointed to the failed efforts by the MRE in 1919 to establish an

\textsuperscript{174} Ibid. p. 76.

\textsuperscript{175} Dr. Angel Cabrera to Harold Coolidge, August 1931; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
international park along the border with Brazil, to which he attributed to the fact that there had been no conservation organization to assist the government in its endeavors.\textsuperscript{176} The time was right, argued Cabrera, to form an Argentinean international conservation organization to promote the establishment of protection legislation throughout the South American continent. The SCA board agreed and, in 1929, established the Comisión Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna Suramericana (National Commission for the Protection of South American Fauna or CNPFS).\textsuperscript{177}

The CNPFS charter was short and specific, emphasizing the cultural, historical, and political connections among nations in South America. Drawing upon those connections, the relatively small CNPFS grew quickly as members reached out to the universities and other scientific groups, expressing a unique awareness of the economic, ecological, and political environment in South America.\textsuperscript{178} The accelerating global demand for natural resources during the 1920s had wreaked havoc on South American ecosystems. National governments had benefited from the economic boom produced by private extraction of lumber, oil, copper, and silver, and had little incentive to impose regulation on such revenue generating activities. Likewise, governments encouraged monocrop farming of coffee, sugar, beef, and bananas, with no regard for or recognition

\textsuperscript{176} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{177} Charter of the Comisión Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna Suramericana. Cabrera sent a copy of it to Coolidge in August 1931; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).

of the long term ecological or economic consequences.\textsuperscript{179} As the global depression of the 1930s set in, Latin American nations—several deeply in debt to foreign interests—were left with landscapes scarred by deforestation, oil refining, mining, and monocrop agriculture.

In an attempt to reverse this situation, members of the CNPFS reached out to scientists and conservationists in each South American nation, developing a network of concerned individuals and evaluating the prospects for conservation in the surrounding region. And, although they limited the scope of their efforts to South America, Cabrera kept a running correspondence with American Committee member Harold Coolidge, informing him of the creation of the Comisión and keeping him posted on different activities. By means of this correspondence, conservationists in both North and South America were kept abreast of their respective efforts. Coolidge later utilized this connection in gathering support for the Convention.

The first effort made by the CPNFS was to assist the Argentine Government in the protection of Iguazu Falls along the border between Argentina and Brazil. As indicated in the opening of this chapter, Hugo Salomon, a founding member of the CNPFS, had taken part in a birding expedition to Iguazu Falls in 1928. On this excursion, he had been alarmed by the savage toll lumber companies had taken in the area.\textsuperscript{180} Lumber operations on the Brazilian side had targeted the area above the Falls,


allowing stumps, limbs, roots, and rocks to clog the river's edge and cascade unceremoniously over the Falls. The destruction of habitat had nearly wiped out large fauna, weighing particularly heavy against alligator, jaguar, and other large cat populations. Habitat for tropical birds, such as coatis, toucans, and cascade billhooks, had been destroyed. Accidental fires had raged out of control, turning what had been a thriving tropical jungle ecosystem teeming with wildlife into a smoking, barren wasteland of jagged sticks and stagnating mud. This was a national symbol of beauty and a potential tourist goldmine. But more practically, this type of development polluted the river, which was a source of both water and sustenance for those communities downstream.

Argentine lumber companies had focused on the forests below the Falls because transporting logs around the Falls proved to be prohibitively dangerous and time-consuming.\textsuperscript{181} Thousands of falling trees had wiped out the lush underbrush and been dragged along hastily cut roads, in some places reaching 30 meters wide, and floated downstream on the Paraná River. Floating logs jammed together to create an almost solid surface across the river, tearing everything in its path, and damaging the vegetation growing along the river's edge. Sawdust sloughed into the water. The combination of deforestation and the transportation of logs destroyed habitat and food sources, devastating fish populations. The large scale loss of the tree root system, coupled with the fierce equatorial rains, sent tons of top soil flowing into the Paraná River, turning the water muddy brown.\textsuperscript{182}

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid., pp. 7–15.

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid.
Salomon and Cabrera compiled scientific data, as well as economic and legal data in support of protecting the Falls. Both men used contacts in the SCA to generate preliminary reports on the longstanding effect of deforestation and the life expectancy of fauna populations should deforestation continue. Hoping to generate public support through tourism, Salomon contacted the Argentinean Parks Commission to discuss the costs of developing tourist facilities in the park at Lake Nahuel Huapi and then assembled preliminary costs for constructing such facilities around Iguazú. Cabrera contacted French landscape architect Charles Thays for blueprints and cost estimates for constructing such tourist facilities.\textsuperscript{183} The CNPFS then submitted the information to the MRI, the DTN, and the MRE to encourage governmental support of the proposition.

The efforts were successful. In 1930, shortly before he was ousted by a military coup, President Hipólito Irigoyen authorized the purchase of 75,000 hectares of land near the Falls (owned by the Argentinean company, Ayarragaray), for the purpose of establishing a national park. Nothing substantial was done with the land during the two year military dictatorship of José Félix Benito de Uriburu y Uriburu (1930–1932). Under the dictatorship of General Agustín Pedro Justo Rolón (1932–1938), however, conservation programs in Argentina expanded exponentially.\textsuperscript{184}

In 1934, Ezequiel Bustillo, a younger and far more militant conservationist, replaced Gallardo as Director of the CPN. This appointment proved to be a watershed for the Argentinean national park system. In September, Bustillo submitted a proposal to

\textsuperscript{183} "La excursión de M Thays al Iguazú," Revista Caras y Caretas, 6 de Abril, Buenos Aires, 1902.

\textsuperscript{184} Ley N°12.103; Buenos Aires, Argentina. Additional information can be found in Ezequiel Bustillo’s, \textit{El sistema nacional de áreas naturales protegidas de la República Argentina} (APN: Buenos Aires, 1991); p. 14.
make the CPN a permanent department of its own and to remove it from the control of the development minded DTN. By October the legislature approved this proposal, which created the Dirección de Parques Nacionales (DPN), now repositioned under the Ministry of Agriculture.¹⁸⁵ In November, the DPN was granted the power to declare land national parks. One of its first actions was to create Parque Nacional Iguazú.¹⁸⁶ Before the end of the year, Bustillo upgraded the national reserves at Lanín (379,000 hectares), Los Alerces (263,000 hectares), Perito Moreno (115,000 hectares), and Quebrada del Condorito (600,000 hectares) to national parks.

Bustillo did not limit his efforts to Argentina, but hoped to engage with Brazil on protection measures for Iguazu Falls and the greater Amazon basin. When the Brazilian officials initially declined an invitation to discuss creating an international park at the Falls, Bustillo used a combination of ethical arguments and cajolery to bring them around. When Brazilian Ministério da Agricultura and Ministério da Territorio de Misiones (MTM) officials expressed concern that cordoning off the area around the Falls would adversely affect local industries dependent on forestry extraction and encourage companies harvesting timber in the restricted area to do so quickly, quietly and, as a result, more savagely, Bustillo responded that Brazil had an ethical obligation to protect

¹⁸⁵ The initial department was not much larger than the CPN and it kept most of the original commissioners, with Bustillo acting as President, and Dr. Antonio Lynch, Dr. Victor Pinto, Luis Ortiz Basualdo, Aaron de Anchorena, Romulo Butty, and Engineers Eduardo Huergo and Carlos German Frers. I found almost no biographical information for Lynch, Pinto, Basualdo, Anchorena, Butty, Huergo, or Frers. Additional information on the first director of the DPN can be found in Argentine Republic, MAC; DPN; El Proyectado de Reservas para la creacion de Parques Nacionales en los Territorios Nacionales del Neuquen, Chabuá y Santa Cruz, p. iii.

its shared resources.\textsuperscript{187} Since Argentina and Brazil shared Iguazú, he claimed, Brazil was obligated to work with Argentina to protect the magnificent cataracts. Although Bustillo wanted to obtain protection for both Iguazú and the Amazon, economic interests operating within the Amazon basin proved too strong to allow Brazil to act on protection measures there. In the end, Bustillo was successful in convincing Brazil to create a park of some 170,000 hectares around Iguazu Falls, while the fate of the Amazon was left to the future.\textsuperscript{188}

Simultaneously, as members of the CNPFS engaged in the campaign to protect Iguazú, they worked to build a network of support across the Americas. They did so first by initiating letter writing campaigns to create awareness of ecological problems in South America. Salomon wrote to more than two hundred institutions in South America, the United States, and Europe between 1931 and 1933 to call attention to drastically declining South American bird populations. In a 1932 letter to Coolidge, Salomon described how the Argentinean rhea, the flightless bird of the pampas, was threatened by cattle ranchers, who were dividing land with fences and restricting habitat.\textsuperscript{189} Dusters made from the feathers were exported at an alarming rate, as European buyers paid


\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Nuevos Parques Nacionales}, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{189} Salomon to Coolidge, October 19, 1932; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
between five and nine pesos per kilo. Although trapping was prohibited and hunting restricted, game laws were largely provincial and there was no uniform system of regulations or enforcement. 190

Salomon described conditions in Argentina as an example of the common problems across South America and reached out to Coolidge and others in the international conservation community for assistance in finding ways to balance economic realities in South America with sound conservation measures. The nations of Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, and Colombia had been driven by unregulated natural resource extraction resulting in catastrophic ecological devastation. To find a solution that would be both practical and effective, Salomon sought to investigate the relationship between conservation and development in other areas of the world which had implemented intensive extraction industries along side effective protection measures. The American Committee for International Wildlife Protection responded enthusiastically. Coolidge replied with an impressive collection of pamphlets, booklets, reports, and summaries the American Committee had compiled on British efforts in Africa and encouraged Salomon to contact the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey for additional ideas.

Salomon also requested permission from the British Foreign Office to travel through British colonies in Africa to survey the different methods of workable nature protection in areas with higher concentrations of resource extraction, so that he might apply those models to South America and broaden the scope of protection legislation. Salomon received permission from the British Foreign Office to explore the British

colonial holdings in Africa as well as an invitation from the British Society for the Protection of Fauna of the Empire (BSPFE) to attend the upcoming London Convention in 1933.\textsuperscript{191} As a result of his efforts, the CNPFS sent Salomon to the Pan Pacific Scientific Congress in 1932 and Cabrera to the London Convention of 1933 to observe the discussions, make contacts, and gather information.\textsuperscript{192}

This experience proved extremely valuable for the development of his nongovernmental organization. In attending these larger conferences, Salomon and Cabrera networked with other conservationists, requested information, discussed possible protection measures, and established the CNPFS as a legitimate conservation organization. In the eyes of the American Committee, they legitimized the Comisión's international efforts to protect wildlife. Moreover, their participation exposed them, as it did with American Committee members also attending those conferences, to the large scale conservation legislation efforts being advanced by the European nations. While the primary concern of the CNPFS remained the international protection of Iguazú, the conference experiences allowed them to contemplate the possible expansion of similar protection measures across the South American continent.

**Collaborating for Conservation**

At the 1934 annual AC meeting, Coolidge, who had met with Cabrera at the 1933 London Convention and, raised the possibility of establishing a closer relationship with the CNPFS as a means of expanding their South American network. Moreover, he

\textsuperscript{191} Report from Salomon to Coolidge, March 3, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42). The plans to tour the national parks of Africa, unfortunately, were halted following the outbreak of World War II in 1939.

\textsuperscript{192} Ibid.
proposed an exchange of ideas with the South Americans on hemispheric bird protection legislation. As the decade wore on, the experience of the London Convention figured prominently in Coolidge’s conviction that the CNPFS could be a valuable partner in efforts to hold a western hemispheric convention focused on creating uniform wildlife protection programs throughout the Americas.

Once Coolidge’s idea for a hemispheric convention had taken root with the American Committee, he made every effort to enlist the assistance of conservationists throughout Latin America. Toward that end, Coolidge wrote enthusiastically to both Salomon and Cabrera in 1937, requesting constructive criticism regarding the practicality of applying the terms of his proposed Resolution to Latin America. Both Salomon and Cabrera agreed that the Resolution, if adopted, would provide strong encouragement to preservation efforts in most Latin American nations. By 1937, Argentina (1903), Mexico (1917), Chile (1922), Venezuela (1934), and Ecuador (1934) all had national parks and national departments devoted to the management of natural resources. Despite the fact that many nations had institutionalized protection measures during the 1930s, enforcement of those measures had been lax due to poor economic and political conditions. Salomon saw an opportunity in Coolidge’s proposal, if properly framed, to bolster conservation across the Americas. A concerted effort to devise uniform regulations and standards for all governments, he believed, would be just the thing to put conservation back on track. But Salomon had learned from the negotiation process with

193 See Chapter 2.

194 Salomon to Coolidge, October 27, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
Brazil that it was important to act quickly. As with the case of advocating for Amazon protection in its discussions over Iguazú, the CNPFS drew attention to larger issues in order to gain concessions on those points they deemed most important.

Salomon, in responding to Coolidge, outlined three things the American Committee had to change in the Resolution if it wanted the support of the CNPFS. First, it was important for the Governing Board to reflect the Americas themselves, including conservationists from many Latin American countries, not just the United States. A broad spectrum of conservationists on the Board would allow the incorporation of the many good conservation innovations developed by Latin Americans and lend the overall project greater legitimacy. For it to work, the Convention and all of its provisions must be perceived as an American endeavor, broadly construed, reflective of the broader Pan American experience, or it could never be implemented on a grassroots level.

Second, Salomon recommended the Pan American Union as the proper forum for the introduction of the resolution and as the organizing body for negotiations on the proposed Convention. Because the Pan American Union was a democratic body, in which nations could vote on measures, he argued, holding discussions there would allow all Latin American nations to have a voice in shaping the direction of international conservation efforts in the hemisphere. He hinted, moreover, that perhaps the United States might have something to learn from conservationists in Latin America. Along those lines, Cabrera suggested Buenos Aires or Mar del Plata, Argentina, to Coolidge as a location for holding the actual Convention. A Latin American location for such a gathering would lend credibility to the proceedings, he believed, and bring attention to the remarkable strides Argentina had made in advancing wildlife protection, and in this
way encourage the surrounding nations to emulate its successes.

Third, CNPFS members wanted some measure of control over the development of the Convention's provisions (once the Resolution passed) as a means of fine tuning the language to mesh with Latin American political, economic, and social realities. While Cabrera allowed that the United States might be more advanced in conservation, the North Americans did not understand Latin America the way Argentineans did. By virtue of geographical proximity the Argentineans believed they were more aware of the type of legislation that would work in Latin America. Salomon and Cabrera had an ulterior motive in promoting Argentina, in that they hoped to use the CNPFS as a bridge between the United States and Latin America, thereby advancing the CNPFS as the preeminent authority on wildlife protection in South America. In doing so, the Argentineans would build on the American Committee proposals molding and altering the text to suit Latin American conditions. They envisioned a true cooperation with the American Committee in which they would have an important role in developing the Resolution, without which the North Americans might find themselves lacking support. Because they aimed to assert themselves as an authority on conservation in South America, Salomon advocated for a full partnership in developing the Convention.195

The response to Salomon and Cabrera's suggestions in the American Committee was mixed. Alexander Wetmore, who had traveled extensively in Argentina and had been long involved in advancing conservation in Latin America, supported some of Salomon's positions. He urged Coolidge to incorporate language that would place the onus of responsibility on those government and international institutions that would

195 Cabrera to Coolidge, October 4, 1938; ibid.
ultimately be responsible for enforcing the provisions. Moreover, he thought a
Governing Board comprised of representatives from multiple nations was a great idea in
theory, but he wondered at the number of qualified individuals available to take part. Pan
American wildlife protection, Wetmore believed, required an organization focused solely
on wildlife protection. A Governing Board composed of a majority of U.S.
conservationists, he thought, might be the best way to see the Convention on Nature
Protection through to fruition. William Sheldon was in favor of allowing the
Argentineans a say and in opening up the Governing Board to participation from other
nations, but he wanted the United States to maintain the majority.\footnote{Bill Sheldon to Coolidge March 27, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928-46, Box 30, PAU & Colleagues & Friends: William Sheldon. Member, Pan American Committee, PAU, 1938-42.}

Coolidge was determined to see the provisions for the most comprehensive
preservation program incorporated into the treaty. He applauded the idea of a more
democratic convention, but he was leery of transferring the responsibility of the
Convention completely out of U.S. control. He certainly did not want the U.S. hand
detected as the prime driver of this agreement; he wanted the support and the assistance
of Latin Americans, while keeping his vision of the end product in tact. While desirable
in theory, he feared turning the responsibility over to the Pan American Union increased
the probability that the implementation of the Resolution and the terms of the Convention
would be delayed, altered, or relegated to obscurity in light of the demand for natural
resources. He was, however, forced to relent in order to gain support for the Resolution
at the upcoming Pan American Union meeting. By August 1938—three months before
the December Pan American Union convention—the American Committee had received
only a handful of responses to the surveys they had sent out to personal and professional contacts across the Americas requesting support for the Resolution. At the end of August, Coolidge agreed to reword the Resolution, removing a U.S. dominated Governing Board and replacing it with a committee appointed by the Pan American Union, with the stipulation that the CNPFS promise to actively promote the Resolution in Latin America. Coolidge also agreed to invite Argentinean participation in all stages of the process, although he shied away from allowing them any formal authority to change the terms of the Convention. Although multiple people encouraged Coolidge to change the location of the Convention to a site outside of the United States, Coolidge refused. The 8th Pan American Scientific Congress was to be held in Washington, DC in April 1940 and, he argued, holding the conferences consecutively in Washington would bolster participation.

The rest of the American Committee was largely in support of Argentina’s provisions. This was not because they thought this would produce a better system (they clearly did not) but because they firmly believed that if they could get the Resolution adopted and the provisions implemented, the chances for effective wildlife protection in the western hemisphere would be greatly enhanced. Despite these concessions, Coolidge intended to have the final word on at least the draft treaty by working behind the scenes to have his Pan American Committee named to draft the terms of the Convention. In

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197 The American Committee had sent out 400 but had received only 150.


199 See Chapter 3.
this way, he kept the Argentineans on board while retaining a position from which he could influence the outcome.

With the reworded Resolution, the CNPFS kept its promise. A CNPFS member who worked for the Argentinean Ministry of Foreign Relations submitted a petition requesting that the Argentinean Government support the Resolution at the Convention in Lima. Members wrote letters to scientists with the Sociedad Científica de Argentina (the parent organization to the Comisión) to generate support from the scientific community. They sent telegrams to scientists and government officials in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile requesting support and prompting them to return the American Committee survey. No doubt in part due to the CNPFS’ efforts, the American Committee had received over 230 letters in support of their Resolution by the start of the Lima Convention in December. The Resolution, as discussed in Chapter 2, was approved without dissent.

**Conclusion**

The influence of the CNPFS appears to fade after this exchange with the American Committee. CNPFS member Angel Cabrera served as one of the Argentinean delegates to the Convention, along with Don Miguel E. Quirno Lavalle from the Universidad de Buenos Aires. But there is no evidence of the Comisión or the part the Comisión might have played in shaping the Convention on Nature Protection after the Lima meeting. Moreover, Argentina’s actual signature of the Convention on Nature Protection was somewhat puzzling, as, before it consented to sign on May 19, 1941, the Argentinean representative demanded to attach a provision altering the definition of “national park” to allow for the monitored exploitation of natural resources within national territories, as opposed to within states, which were protected from all
This seems to be a contradiction to the fervent efforts to protect nature and the national parks made by Parks Director Ezequiel Bustillo, the DPN, and the CNPFS, particularly the demand to keep dams well outside of park boundaries. Following the signature and ratification of the Convention, Argentina did very little to enact the provisions until the 1970s. In 1970, the Argentinean national congress passed Ley 22.351, distinguishing between National Parks, Natural Monuments, and National Reserves, using the same terms as defined by the Convention.

While the implementation of the provisions of the Convention itself did not immediately achieve the results desired by the individuals of the CPNFS or the AC, the relationships developed between Argentinean and U.S. conservationists proved crucial to the formulation of the Resolution. In many ways, the CNPFS was the South American counterpart to the American Committee. Both organizations had been established at the same time, had attempted to further conservation in their respective hemispheres, and had tried, succeeded, and sometimes failed to bring about effective wildlife protection legislation in their respective regions. The development of the Argentinean CNPFS and the U.S. American Committee mirrored each other. Working together offered the American Committee the unique opportunity to generate Latin American support for their Resolution and the CNPFS a distinctive position of influence in the deliberations.

The successful adoption of Resolution 38 demonstrates the indispensable role played by conservation organizations cooperating across national boundaries in promoting nature protection legislation. The American Committee and the Comisión

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were instrumental in the formulation and promotion of international wildlife protection programs. These precursors to the modern non-governmental organizations worked together to compile and circulate information on wildlife protection programs. They devised and drafted a comprehensive framework to standardize wildlife preservation measures across the Americas and they succeeded in generating momentum which carried the Convention through to fruition.

The Argentineans played a key role in laying the ground work for the adoption of Resolution 38 that led to the Convention on Nature Protection. By insisting the Governing Board be composed of conservationists from across the Americas, not just the United States, they ensured the proceedings would be perceived as a truly Pan American endeavor, thus lending the project legitimacy. By recommending the Pan American Union as the forum for discussion of the Resolution, they sought to emphasize the democratic character of the project, giving Latin Americans the perception of playing a role and adequately hiding the overt U.S. influence in the process. Finally, the Argentineans were able to establish themselves as a bridge between North and South American conservationists, helping to translate the terms of the Resolution to meet South American political realities, of which they had far more awareness than the American committee members. Although the Resolution was largely the work of North Americans like Coolidge and the American Committee, Argentinean cooperation was crucial in obtaining the Pan American support necessary to secure its adoption by the Pan American Union.
CHAPTER IV

NETWORKING, NEGOTIATING, AND NEGATING OPPORTUNITIES:
VENEZUELA, 1917–1940

This chapter examines the evolution of preservation policies in Venezuela as the result of the efforts of an established network of conservationists, and the role of Venezuelans in shaping the resolution the American Committee presented to the Pan American Convention in 1938. It argues that U.S. business interests in Venezuela during the 1920s created a small, determined community of conservationists linked to U.S. organizations; these private U.S. citizens worked with the Venezuelan Government, Venezuelan citizens, and the international conservation community to promote preservation policies during the 1930s to stem deforestation and habitat decline; and finally, this relationship confirmed to American Committee members drafting Resolution 38 and the Convention on Nature Protection the need for a treaty to establish a hemispheric wide framework for nature protection.

In Venezuela, private citizens, both Venezuelan and American, cooperated to compile information to comply with the provisions set by the Resolution. Between 1938 and 1940, American Committee members called upon that network of likeminded conservationists to promote compliance with PAU Resolution 38. In this case, determined individuals, who had devoted their personal resources over the course of the 1920s and 1930s to expanding the knowledge of Venezuelan biota and threats to its ecosystems, compiled the requisite information for the Convention. Moreover, because
they were part of this larger international community, they collaborated on other projects designed to advance protection measures, providing a model of cooperation in conservation that was later exhibited in promoting the Convention itself. Their correspondence to the U.S. Committee of Experts and the Pan American Committee, responsible for drafting of the treaty, stressed the important political, economic and institutional conditions in some Latin American countries which limited their ability to comply with the more demanding provisions of the treaty (specifically the vanishing species lists). Aware that the involvement of private citizens like themselves was crucial to the success of protection measures in Venezuela, they insisted that the role of nongovernmental actors needed to be institutionalized in the treaty, to provide for their legitimate action in the event governments were unable or unwilling to comply.

The case of Venezuela differs from that in Argentina (Chapter 3) and Mexico (Chapter 5). In Argentina, officials with the APN and private citizens working through their international nongovernmental conservation organization, collaborated to advance conservation to the fullest extent possible and engaged with both the U.S. Government and the American Committee in their efforts to do so. The CPNFS then engaged in a dialogue with American Committee members regarding the proposed Resolution 38, eventually lending their support to it as a means of bolstering participation from other Latin American states. In Mexico, it was solely government officials who were responsible for promoting and compiling data for the Convention. Private citizens did not play a significant role in Mexico's decision to sign the agreement. In Venezuela, private citizens were the key agitators securing support and compiling data for the Convention. Because the actors and their allegiances in each case study were so
different, no real Latin American consensus regarding the Convention emerges. Argentinean actors were focused on bolstering their position as leaders in South American conservation issues, Venezuelan supporters were concerned by the drastic loss of habitat and devoted to the need for solid governmental infrastructure to manage protected lands, Mexican officials were focused on finding alternative ways to get U.S. officials to negotiate with them on other shared international resource issues. The result was multiple voices, all supporting the Convention for their own specific interests and all speaking over each other, emerged. The end product incorporated as many of those voices as possible.

**Inviting Investment: Venezuela, 1917–1938**

In 1917, U.S. oilmen working around Lake Maracaibo discovered enormous deposits of oil under the lake, providing Venezuelan President Juan Vicente Gómez with the means to pull Venezuela out of its overwhelming foreign debt. Gomez capitalized on the surging global demand for natural resources brought about by World War I and U.S. dollar diplomacy (the U.S. policy of encouraging the investment of U.S. capital in foreign countries) by encouraging foreign investment and development in the nation. Entrepreneurs from the United States and Europe, who had been trickling into the nation since Gomez’s ascension to power in 1908, flooded to Venezuela to invest heavily in the budding oil industry. While there, these entrepreneurs also invested in the exportation of coffee, sugar, and lumber, whetting what Richard Tucker has termed an “insatiable

appetite" for those resources. Others invested in the importation of virtually every conceivable manufactured product from automobiles to refrigerators. Their foreign currency and their determination to realize every business opportunity transformed this relatively undeveloped nation into a vast bustling network of roads, railroads, cities, and towns.

Lake Maracaibo, which bore the fruit of Venezuelan wealth, also bore the brunt of the ecological upheaval. Following the 1917 discovery of oil deposits under the lake, extraordinarily heavy, steam-powered, land-drilling rigs were altered to work over water and propped up on semi-permanent platforms. These proved useless when they sank into the soft bed of the lake. In 1919, oilmen drove enormous barges into the shallows, with massive boilers perched precariously on top to power the engines of the drill rigs. These hastily constructed contraptions sported parts from a variety of machines—cars, generators, tractors, and boats—none of which fit together particularly well and all of which leaked profusely. By 1935, a shiny film of oil and diesel covered the lake. Workers in the area set fire to the lake to burn the smaller spills. While this technique removed some surface oil, it did nothing about the denser oil that sank to the bottom of the lake, coating fish and underwater vegetation, and poisoning birds and fish-eating fauna. To make matters worse, in 1930, the tidal channel separating the Gulf of Venezuela from Lake Maracaibo was dredged to allow medium sized vessels to reach the lake. The deeper channel allowed salt water to flow more forcefully into the freshwater

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203 Good sources on foreign penetration of Venezuelan oil reserves are George Phillips' *Oil and Politics in Latin America: Nationalist Movements and the State Oil Companies* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); and McBeth, *Juan Vicente Gomez and the Oil Companies in Venezuela, 1908–1935*. 110
lake, introducing new fish species and fundamentally altering the ecosystem. By 1937, water sources were so heavily polluted with brine and oil that entire schools of fish were found dead and the mangrove trees near the lake, which served as a crucial component in the natural filtering process, withered and died.  

Forests surrounding the lake were cut to meet the immediate lumber demands of the oil industry. Men armed with axes and asses found their way into the surrounding hillsides, steadily chopping trees to construct drilling platforms and living quarters. Trees were felled and floated to the lake, then shucked of bark, sharpened into piles, and driven into the earth. Sawdust, bark, and tree debris erupted in piles along the lakeshore, further clogging the flow of water out of the lake and into rivers and streams that would carry water to the outlying areas. Throughout the nation, thousands of hectares of tropical hardwoods were cut to meet the 1920s global demand for cedar and mahogany.  

Improvements in technology, brought by U.S. investors, increased the pace of extraction exponentially, enabling the forest products industry to cut at a faster rate. Every potentially economically viable limb was cut from the forests, leaving a highly flammable tinderbox of broken trees and ripped roots baking in the scorching summer sun.  

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205 Ibid., p. 16.

206 Judith Ewell, *Venezuela and the United States: From Monroe’s Hemisphere to Petroleum’s Empire* (Athens and London: The University of Georgia Press, 1996); pp. 116–118. In addition to altering the ecology of the region, the development of the oil resources also restructured Venezuelan agriculture, as high paying oil jobs lured poor families away from their farms, which were acquired by the state as they became fallow. This rapid and precipitous decline in the amount of food being produced in Venezuela for domestic consumption, coupled with the increasing number of Venezuelans working for the oil companies, forced the federal government to grapple with the problem of food shortages. Venezuela turned to its neighbors for support, importing food at often high cost, which increased the cost of living. The remaining small farms consolidated themselves into a network to compete in this market, partially as a result of this
destroyed any nutritional value left to the soil. This meant less usable land available for farmers to plant crops and graze cattle, decreasing the amount of food available to local communities.

Winter rains fell on burnt slopes, washing tons of soil into torrentosos (raging rivers) resulting in enormous erosion and catastrophic floods. Without the canopy layer to slow the rainfall and a large root system to channel water into swamps and slow moving rivers, sheets of rain fell against the ruined wasteland of sticks, destroying what was left of tropical plant, bird, insect, reptile, and fauna populations. The water in the lowlands, which had previously formed lagoons, bogs, and swamps, now formed stagnant pools of decaying plant matter, creating fertile breeding grounds for malarial mosquitoes. Hoping to keep the money flowing into Venezuelan coffers, the Gomez Government appointed commissions to investigate problems, unfortunately appointing unqualified bureaucrats and corrupt academics to direct them. These commissions chose to emphasize the economic benefits of extraction and overlook the consequences.

shift in the economy and partially as a program initiated by Gomez. Cattle corporations bought up hundreds upon thousands of acres of land and drove smaller farmers and ranchers out, in order to clear enormous tracts for grazing. This process has created endless problems for the Government of Venezuela, and has proven to be a hot political topic for President Hugo Chavez, who was elected president of Venezuela in 1998.

207 Vale, Un Plan Nacional Forestal Venezolano. The premise behind the aforementioned plan was to emphasize the interrelatedness of the forestry ecosystems, focusing sections on multiple facets of forests, including soil erosion, water pollution, wildlife protection, and recreation. Vale, Estudio Forestal sobre los Llanos Occidentales de Venezuela, (Tercera Conferencia Interamericana de Agricultura: Editorial Crisol, Caracas, Venezuela, 1945), p. 31.

208 For discussions of the ecological toll caused by floods, see Vale, La Erosion de los Suelos, El Problema de las Crecientes. El Control de la Erosion en las Carreteras, La Vegetacion en las Vias Publicas (Second Congress of Venezuelan Engineers, Caracas, 1940); p. 19–21.


Between 1919 and 1935, as money continued to flow into Venezuela, little was done to
deal with the cataclysm wrought by unregulated forestry and oil extraction industries.

Opening the door to foreign development resulted in more than a profound change
in the economic and ecological landscape; it limited U.S. political intervention in
domestic affairs at the height of its early interventionist policies.\textsuperscript{211} Venezuela was
particularly susceptible to U.S. influence given its geographical location on the
Caribbean, its oil resources, and the enormous foreign debt accrued under the leadership
of Cipriano Castro. President Theodore Roosevelt's "big stick diplomacy," the informal
doctrine of early twentieth century U.S. foreign policy, wielded power, in the form of
military interventionism, most often in Latin America.\textsuperscript{212} The United States intervened in
the Cuban Revolution with Spain in 1898, removed the Spanish from Cuba and attached
the Platt Amendment to the 1901 Cuban constitution, allowing for U.S. intervention in
domestic disputes.\textsuperscript{213} The 1902 efforts by the British, Italian, and Germans to force
Venezuela to repay its substantial foreign debts by blockading its seaports, prompted
Theodore Roosevelt to invoke the Platt Amendment and to deploy the U.S. Navy in 1903.
It also prompted the attachment of the Roosevelt Corollary the Monroe Doctrine in 1904,
pledging U.S. forces to maintaining stability throughout the hemisphere. This turned the
largely un-enforced Doctrine into the cornerstone of U.S. interventionist tactics in Latin

\textsuperscript{211} For additional information on U.S. interventionist policies during the 1900–1930s, see Thomas Leonard,

\textit{Central America and the United States: the Search for Stability} (Athens: University of Georgia Press,


\textsuperscript{212} Sean Cashman, \textit{America Ascendant: From Theodore Roosevelt to FDR in the Century of American


\textsuperscript{213} A good source on U.S. Cuban relations is José M. Hernández, \textit{Cuba and the United States: Intervention

America for the next eight decades. The United States then used that new doctrine to wield the stick, intervening periodically in Cuba (1906 and 1917), Haiti (1917–1935), Nicaragua (1909, and 1926–1933).

This newly aggressive stance by the United States, coupled with Venezuela’s enormous national debt, put Gomez in a precarious position once he assumed power. The debt caused widespread political unrest at home and carried the risk of provoking foreign collection efforts, either one of which could trigger U.S. intervention. Gomez employed brutal suppression against political dissent, while deftly manipulating U.S. dollar diplomacy tactics by encouraging U.S. oil companies to invest in the oil industry, going so far as to allow oilmen with the U.S. Standard Oil Company to write the national oil policies during the 1920s. While ideologically, U.S. statesmen condemned the political oppression, U.S. businessmen in Caracas praised the Gomez Government for controlling the population. As a result of Gomez’s deft machinations, the United States stayed out of Venezuela while wielding its big stick throughout the rest of Caribbean.


The opening of Venezuela to foreign investment also prompted the interest of the international conservation community. American entrepreneurs in Venezuela often contributed to U.S. and European scientific collections by moonlighting for scientific institutions—the American Museum of Natural History, the Chicago Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, the Carnegie Museum of Pittsburgh, the London Museum, and the Paris Museum—collecting plant, bird, and animal specimens, and cataloguing, sketching, and investigating new, unknown species significantly advancing the study of biology, ornithology, and botany in Venezuela.218

These experiences incited interest in Venezuela from U.S. institutions and prompted foreign participation in the push for preserving Venezuelan biota. Two of the most prominent individuals pushing preservation came in response to Gomez’s open door policies, Swiss botanist Henri Pittier and U.S. financier William H. Phelps, Sr. Henri Pittier (1857–1950) had been hired initially in 1915 to investigate resources and create efficient programs for their extraction, to create national schools of agriculture and forestry, and to conduct extensive studies of Venezuelan biota to promote scientific efficiency in extraction.219 When his contract ended in 1916, Pittier traveled to the

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219 For more information on Henri Pittier and his numerous accomplishments, see Francisco Tamayo Yepes, Imagen y huella de Henri Francois Pittier (Caracas, INTEVEP, 1987); Eduardo Rohl, Discurso en honor del Dr. Henri Pittier (Caracas: Tipografía Americana, 1948); and Jose Saer D’Heguer, Apuntes para la bibliografía botánico—venezolana: una figura ilustre Francois Pittier (Valencia: S.N. 1942). There is a voluminous correspondence between Pittier, the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and the Ministry of Agriculture during the 1920s and 1930s, indicating Pittier’s desire to set aside multiple tracts of land, to finance scientific expeditions to investigate native flora and fauna and for the establishment of a library to collect published photographs, studies, and research plans by Venezuela’s scientists, on their studies, on the natural life, encouraging the establishment of schools specifically designed to focus on issues of conservation. This information can be found in the Colección Pittier, Jardín Botánico de Caracas. The
United States with an impressive array of plants from the area around Caracas, for which he solicited international assistance in cataloguing. These formed the original collection of the National Herbarium in Venezuela, founded to house a national collection of fauna and flora. Pittier returned to Venezuela permanently in 1917 to study forest resources. Over the course of his life, Pittier classified national flora, completing 160 books on subjects including Venezuelan botany, entomology, forestry, agriculture and conservation. He assumed the directorship of the Museum of Commerce and Industry and, in this capacity, trained some of the most politically active conservationists in Venezuela, including Marcus Gonzales Vale and William Phelps, Jr., as well as Francisco Tamayo and Tobias Lasser. Later, after the adoption of PAU Resolution 38, Tamayo and Lasser assisted Vale and Phelps in the compilation of material for the Inter-American Committee of Experts. Over the course of his life, Pittier, perhaps more than any other conservationist in Venezuela, advanced nature protection in the country.

helpful staff at la Biblioteca are working to upload this correspondence to the web. As of April 2008, however, it has not been made available to outside researchers.


221 Henri Pittier wrote some of the groundbreaking works on Venezuelan flora, including the “Manual de las Plantas Usuales de Venezuela” (Caracas: Litografia del Comercio, 1926), a impressive tome specifying the Spanish, African, Indian and Latin name of each Venezuelan plant species, as well as its commercial, medicinal and nutritional value collected on an extensive research trip through the Northwest (Maracaibo region) and Los Llanos (central). He also traveled through the Andes (Merida), Amazonas (south central), the Central region (Caracas) and the Archipelo (Caribbean Islands of los Roques and Margarita). The Herbarium included specimens from each of the major regions. Alfredo Jahn, Jose Saer, Marcus Gonzalez Vale and others donated their own collections to the Herbarium. By 1927, the Commercial Museum Bulletin noted that the Herbarium collection contained nearly 10,000 specimens, which represented nearly 7,000 species. Gonzalez y Tappi, p. 58.

222 Proyecto de Contrato de trabajo entre Henri Pittier y el Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de los EEUU de Venezuela, Septiembre, 1920, Jardin Botanical de Henri Pittier, Caracas, Venezuela. While I found plenty of information written by these individuals, I found very little biographical information on any of them. Luces de Febres was one of the only women to work with Pittier, she earned a scholarship to study botany in Washington, D.C. and upon returning to Venezuela, she continued working for the
William H. Phelps Sr. (1875–1965) arrived in Venezuela to capitalize on
development opportunities provided by the Gomez Government. He invested initially in
construction and eventually in the export of raw materials and the import of
manufactured goods. While spending the bulk of his life in Venezuela, he maintained his
U.S. citizenship and his membership in U.S. conservation organizations.\(^223\) In 1927, he
was contracted by Assistant Director of the Smithsonian Institution, Alexander Wetmore,
to conduct a study of Colombian and Venezuelan birds.\(^224\) Over the course of the next
three years, he collected more than fifty new species of tropical birds for the
Smithsonian.\(^225\) During the next decade, he donated collections of birds to the American
Museum of Natural History and the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology. His son,
William Phelps, Jr., was equally obsessed with ornithology and devoted to the protection
and the study of Venezuelan birds. Perhaps as important, being born in Venezuela and
educated in the United States, Phelps, Jr. embraced a highly cosmopolitan perspective
toward wildlife protection. Both Phelps embraced U.S. ideas on wildlife protection, and

\(^223\) He was most active in the Nuttall Ornithological Club and the American Ornithological Union. Robert

\(^224\) Discussions on the 1927 expedition can be found in file folder titled: Phelps, William H., and William
H., Jr., 1938–1976; SIA, RU 7006; CD 1, General Correspondence, 1901–1977, and undated, with Related
Materials from 1879.

\(^225\) For additional information on Phelps Sr. see Ramón Aveledo, "Contribución del Dr. William H. Phelps
a la ornitología venezolana," *Boletín de la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales* 110 (1966), pp. 3–
11; Guillermo Zuloaga, "Palabras de elogio al Dr. William H. Phelps en la Sociedad Venezolana de
Ciencias Naturales," *Boletín de la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales* 111 (1967), 196–208; and
Murphy, "In Memorian: William Henry Phelps."
U.S. methods to promote it, making them part of a larger Inter-American likeminded conservation community.

As well-connected conservationists, these individuals carried on a lifelong correspondence with U.S. conservationists like Wetmore, Thomas Barbour, and Harold Coolidge. Between the 1920s and the 1950s, Wetmore and the Phelps collaborated on multiple publications, research projects, and field expeditions in Venezuela and Colombia. The Phelps' membership to the American Ornithologists' Union put them in close contact with Phillips; their donations to the American Museum of Natural History and the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology put them in contact with Thomas Barbour and Harold Coolidge. The Phelps called on this network for advice and support when drafting legislation to submit to the Venezuelan Government for the protection of birds and against deforestation in the late 1930s.

**Conservation**

Between the death of Gomez in 1935 and the nation's descent into political turmoil in 1939, there were real efforts made by the Venezuelan Government to establish conservation programs. In 1936, President Eleazar López Contreras authorized the establishment of the Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria, the Servicio Forestal, Aguas y Tierras Baldia, the Servicio de Botánico, and the Herbario de Nacional to gather together scientists, engineers, and academics to address the ecological consequences of deforestation, mining, and oil production and initiate programs to extend the life of those

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226 In 1954, Wetmore participated in an expedition to the rarely seen Territory of Amazonas with both William Phelps Sr. and Jr. Information on this trip can be found in SIA, RU 7006, CD 1, Box 51, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Phelps, William H., and William H., Jr., 1938–1976.
López appointed Henri Pitter to direct the Servicio de Botánico in 1936 and tasked him with addressing the problems associated with deforestation.

Pittier and his protégé, Marcus Gonzalez Vale, drew heavily from reformist programs enacted by U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt’s New Deal to combat the Dust Bowl. Vale, a recent graduate of Yale University, had spent a semester in the western U.S. states of Montana, Idaho, and Oregon studying the results of the destructive forestry practices employed by private forest companies between 1900 and 1910. Over the course of that semester, he made significant parallels between the harsh consequences of those practices in the U.S.—erosion, water pollution, forest fires, and the drastic decline of wildlife populations—and those evident in deforested regions of Venezuela. Moreover, Vale was exposed to New Deal programs which sought to stem some of the more destructive ecological problems arising from the Dust Bowl. The Dust Bowl, a series of catastrophic dust storms were the product of significant ecological damage, raged over the U.S. states of Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas during the 1930s, producing a multitude of Government mandated programs to address the ecological, agricultural, and economic effects of the storms. One of the more successful of these, and one Vale had the opportunity to study in progress, was the Shelterbelt Project. This project, created by executive order on July 11, 1934, implemented the planting of belts of trees in areas suffering from massive erosion as a means of holding topsoil in place. Over the course of his studies at Yale’s School of Forestry, 1933–37, Vale evaluated the successes and

227 Following the death of Henri Pittier in 1950, this information center was incorporated by the Botanical Institute Library.

228 Vale, Un Plan Nacional Forestal Venezolano, p. 5.
failures of the Shelterbelt projects in Kansas and Oklahoma, and brought extensive knowledge of the management and implementation of these programs back to Caracas. When he returned in 1938, he teamed up with Pittier at the Servicio de Botánico, and worked to develop similar programs in Venezuela.\textsuperscript{229}

As a result of Vale’s studies and Pittier’s expertise, the two worked together at the Servicio to devise a series of programs that were introduced and adopted by the Venezuelan Congress between 1936 and 1938. In the Diarios de Debates de la Camera de Diputados (the Congressional debates) for the years 1936, 1937, and 1938, proposals for introducing more managed extraction and for preventing the complete exhaustion of forest resources were adopted nine times out of eleven. Of the eight initiatives introduced between 1936 and 1938 calling for commissions to develop more sustainable programs, the six following were established.\textsuperscript{230} Tree planting programs were organized in those regions outside of Lake Maracaibo. Local laborers were hired to plant a variety of species of trees around agricultural fields that would protect crops, reduce erosion, and retard fires. Crop rotation programs and education programs for farmers on the importance of ground cover at the national school of agriculture were also suggested by the Servicio.\textsuperscript{231} In addition to practical problems to address the ecological consequences of deforestation, Vale wrote multiple letters to the López Government proposing

\textsuperscript{229} Vale, El Proyecto Servicio de Fomento (Protección y Embellecimiento) de los Lados Viales; p. 4.

\textsuperscript{230} Congreso Nacional, Diario de Debates de la Camera de Diputados de los Estados Unidos de Venezuela, Sesiones Especiales, for 1936, 1937, 1938. La Colección de Referencia de la Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela se ubica en Parroquia Altagracia, Caracas, Venezuela.

\textsuperscript{231} Vale, El Proyecto Servicio de Fomento; p. 5. There was no indication if this pamphlet was ever published. A well read copy resides in the rare book collection at the Biblioteca Nacional, El Servicio de Libros Raros y Manuscritos de la Biblioteca; Nacional de Venezuela, Caracas, Venezuela.
programs to conserve forests through preventative means—including monitoring extraction, grading wood according to its sale price on the international market, and taxing lumber exported from Venezuela in accordance with grading standards.\textsuperscript{232} Vale’s bill to “obtain all the benefits of productive forest lands,” was approved by the Venezuelan Congress in November 1936.\textsuperscript{233} By 1937, a commission had been created to gather information on lumber grading systems in the United States, and to develop a list of rules and regulations for formally trained foresters to follow, lumber was taxed accordingly.\textsuperscript{234}

Perhaps as important as the projects themselves, was the intellectual collaboration on the conservation of natural resources that took place at the Servicio at Pittier’s request.\textsuperscript{235} Pittier used the Servicio de Botánico to connect Venezuela with the larger scientific community, by calling upon old colleagues such as Alexander Wetmore and David Fairchild (founder of Florida’s Fairchild Tropical Botanical Institute) to assist him

\textsuperscript{232} Vale, \textit{Estudio Forestal sobre los Llanos Occidentales de Venezuela} (Editorial Crisol: Caracas, 1945); pp. 85–87. Taxes went to pay for fire protection plans and scientific studies.

\textsuperscript{233} Vale, \textit{Un Plan Nacional Forestal Venezolano}, p. 18.

\textsuperscript{234} Congreso Nacional, \textit{Diario de Debates de la Camera de Diputados de los Estado Unidos de Venezuela, Sesion 59, Acta III}, 15 July 1941, Caracas, Venezuela. Unfortunately, there is little evidence in the literature put forth to suggest that implementing taxes slowed the rapacious rate of destruction. While Vale only refers to the Convention a few times in his publications, his recommendations focus on the recommendations of the treaty—specifically in his National Plan for Venezuelan Forests and his report on \textit{La Erosion de los Suelos, El Problema de las Crecientes, El Control de la Erosion en las Carreteras, La Vegetacion en las Vias Publicas} (Editorial Crisol: Caracas, 1945). Finally, there is good information on programs for forestry conservation in his report \textit{Estudio Forestal sobre los Llanos Occidentales de Venezuela}; p. 31.

\textsuperscript{235} Pittier called upon the top scientific minds—Venezuelans such as Lisandro Alvarado, Alfredo Jahn, and Rafael Gonzalez Rincones, and renowned international scientists including William Bebe (author of \textit{Galapagos, the World’s End}), and Liberty Hyde Bailey (Dean of the College of Agriculture at Cornell)—to discuss problems, solutions, and ideas particular to Venezuela. Raul Gonzalez y Rolando Tappi, eds., \textit{Henri Pittier: Caminante y morado de nuestro tropico} (Cementos Caribe y Fundacion Caribe, Caracas, 1997), p. 66.
in identifying particularly puzzling specimens and stimulating international interest in Venezuelan biota. The combination of the promotion of scientific study within Venezuela and the sparking of international interest in Venezuelan biota produced a small but determined community.

Simultaneously, as Vale led the charge for the regulation of the forestry industry, Phelps Sr. initiated legislation to protect birds. In 1936, he contacted fellow ornithologist and long time friend, Alexander Wetmore, requesting his assistance in developing a practical program to prevent the decimation of migratory birds in Venezuela. Wetmore’s response provided Phelps with an account of regulations stipulated in the U.S. Lacey Act of 1900, which authorized the U.S. Secretary of the Interior to adopt measures to aid in the restoration of birds threatened with extinction, Wetmore added an account of the 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada, which prohibited the collection of migratory birds, their parts, and products. The North American precedent was helpful in establishing government authority over wildlife in Venezuela, as well as for indicating the success of such programs. But Phelps wondered whether laws targeting excessive hunting would be sufficient, as the loss of habitat was a far more substantial threat in Venezuela than that incurred by hunting. Legislation to restrict hunting and the removal of eggs did not address the larger problem of habitat loss and would therefore leave even the most protected bird populations defenseless against resource extraction. Phelps wanted a

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237 Wetmore to Phelps Sr., May 11, 1936.

238 Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, June 9, 1936; Ibid.

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national investigation into bird populations and comprehensive protection measures adopted to protect them.

When Phelps wrote Wetmore of his concerns, Wetmore responded that solid legislation providing for the protection of birds from excessive hunting was the first step in a longer process. Typical of his reserved approach, Wetmore argued the initial focus should be to pass legislation that could survive constitutional challenges. Once the laws had been adopted and had survived the challenges, conservationists and government officials could expand upon those precedents. In the succeeding steps, conservationists could use early bird protection laws to gain concessions for the protection of habitat and for investment in scientific investigation to determine additional causes for population decline. Declaring migratory and insectivorous birds “protected” ensured the first step in the long road toward wildlife protection. He need not have worried as there is no evidence of any constitutional challenges posed to the bird protection legislation.

Phelps Sr. followed Wetmore’s advice and introduced legislation to the Venezuelan Congress in July 1936 to preserve bird populations. The bill called for strict hunting regulations on insectivorous and migratory birds and placed “all measures necessary for regulation, control, and enforcement of protection regulations,” squarely in the hands of the national government. The legislature adopted the measures unanimously in August. The Ministry of Agriculture appointed a commission in October to investigate what bird species were threatened and instructed it to ascertain what their

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239 Congreso Nacional, Diario de Debates de la Camera de Diputados de los Estados Unidos de Venezuela, Sesiones Especiales, for July 1936. La Colección de Referencia de la Biblioteca Nacional de Venezuela se ubica en Parroquia Altagracia, Caracas, Venezuela. Although Phelps’ never made direct reference to it, these restrictions are remarkably similar to those imparted by the U.S. Supreme Court ruling, State of Missouri vs. Holland 252 U.S. 416; 40 S. Ct. 382; 64 L. Ed. 641; 1920, which upheld the right of the U.S. Government to enforce the regulations established by the Migratory Bird Treaty with Canada in 1916.
breeding seasons were before any measures could be undertaken to protect them. The commission, led by William Phelps Jr., compiled a list of threatened migratory and insectivorous species, their breeding seasons, and possible protection programs to fulfill the provisions of the bill. After congressional representatives reviewed the commission’s report for the December 1936 meeting, they advocated a complete ban on the hunting of all insectivorous birds and on hunting during breeding seasons of a detailed list of migratory bird species, and adopted the measures without dissent. In early 1937, the Government of Venezuela expanded those protections to prohibit the removal of seabird eggs, feathers, and nests from coastal Venezuela and the Caribbean archipelago. This second bill was lauded by Phelps Sr. as “a great feat” that, five years previous, “would have been impossible to fathom.” It is crucial to point out that this rapid completion was only possible because the Phelps' were ready with lists and data they had compiled for their own personal collections. If it had not been for their efforts, the compilation of data would have been a much more arduous task and would undoubtedly have taken years longer to complete.

The adoption of the second bill was perceived by members of the American Committee as an important shift. Not only was the Venezuelan Government willing to conserve economically valuable resources, but it demonstrated a willingness to implement preventative protection for less economically important species. Wetmore

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241 Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, November 8, 1943; Ibid. This letter, written in 1943, discussed the 1937 effort and expressed Phelps' Sr.'s gratitude for Wetmore's advice.

242 Ibid.
congratulated Phelps on his extraordinary achievement, exclaiming that “these regulations undoubtedly will assist in the protection of countless South American birds.”

Equally important, the adoption of the bird act signaled to the American Committee that the Venezuelan Congress might be amenable to fulfilling the terms of the resolution they intended to introduce at the upcoming Pan American Union Convention and, if a conference for nature protection could be held in a timely manner, the provisions of a wildlife protection treaty.

In addition to the adoption of bird protection legislation, Venezuelans established national parks in 1937. That year, Pittier, Vale, and both Phelps’ joined forces to petition the López Government to establish a national park as a means of protecting the rainforest in the northern state of Aragua. The momentum generated by the passage of the forestry and bird protection measures fueled the determination of these men to have the land declared a national park patterned after the ones already in place in Argentina, Brazil, and Chile. For the first park, they chose a 100,000 hectares of rainforest between the Cordillera de la Costa and the Caribbean Sea that had been set aside as a national reserve by the Gomez regime in 1934. The reserve itself extended from the top of the 7,200 foot pass of the cordillera to the Caribbean ocean.

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243 Wetmore to Phelps, Sr. September 17, 1938; SIA, RU 7006, CD 1, Box 51, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Phelps, William H., and William H., Jr., 1938–1976. Interestingly enough, Dr. Hugo Salomon, Chairman of the Argentinean Comisión Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna Suramericana, inquired if the MRE would support a South American bird treaty along the lines of the North American treaty signed by the United States and Mexico, but the Venezuelan response was tepid and nothing substantial was investigated until 1944. This exchange can be found in República de Venezuela; Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores; Dirección de Políticas Internacional; Expediente No. 83; Argentina: Solicitud de la Comisión Argentina Nacional de Protección de la Fauna Sudamericana; Caracas, Venezuela.

244 Francisco Tamayo Yepes, Imagen y huella de Henri Francios Pittier (Caracas, INTEVEP, 1987).

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barrier, catching most precipitation coming in from the ocean and dumping it on the steep slopes of the mountains.

Prior to 1937, the region had remained undeveloped and those resources within it not harvested owing to the sheer difficulty of getting machinery over the pass. The small villages inside the reserve—Choroni, Cuyagua, Chuao, Cata, La Ciénaga, Ocumare and Turiamo—were tiny communities that sustained themselves with small-scale agriculture, without causing the large scale damage often committed by the forest industry. In 1934, however, a road had been cut over the mountains connecting the villages with the inland cities of Valencia and Maracay, resulting in a steady expansion of those communities over the next three years and an increased toll on the ecosystem. Moreover, the groves of tropical cedar trees near the village of Choroni, which had not been cut because it had not been economically feasible to transport them, were on the verge of being harvested. These immediate threats (the swelling populations and the speculators eyeing the cedar groves) prompted conservationists to call for immediate protection measures.\(^{245}\)

Highlighting three reasons to protect the region, Pittier, Vale, and the Phelps submitted a petition to López.\(^{246}\) Pittier lobbied for the protection of the diverse rainforest. The narrow strip of land between the top of the pass and the Caribbean sea ranges in elevation from 2,450 meters to sea level, encompassing extraordinary forest diversity—including dry shrubby deciduous forest, savanna vegetation and cloud forest.\(^{247}\) Its geographic boundaries had produced a unique and rich genetic pool of

\(^{245}\) Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, October 6, 1938; SIA, RU 7006, CD 1, Box 51, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Phelps, William H., and William H., Jr., 1938–1976.

\(^{246}\) Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, October 14, 1936; Ibid.

plants that were endemic only to the northern side of the pass, including orchids, palms, ferns, and bamboos. The region was also on the migratory route for millions of birds—including curassows, guans, parakeets, hawks, toucans, oropendolas, tinamous, parrotlets, owls, anthruses, bellbirds, manakins, jays, caciques, chachalacas, and woodpeckers—and included tapirs, otters, pumas, ocelots, pacas, kinkajous, coatis, brockets, tamanduas, and tree porcupines as well. Given this extraordinary diversity, Pittier argued that the very wealth of Venezuela was encapsulated within these ecological borders and, as such, the Government had a responsibility to protect it.

Drawing on Pittier’s report, Phelps Sr. emphasized the potential long-term economic profit of a national park in his section of the petition. Creating a park—now, before the land had been deforested and the diversity destroyed—and promoting it as a “tropical oasis” away from the growing metropolis of Caracas, would generate tourism.248 Businesses in those villages inside of the park would benefit over the long term from tourism as people, particularly foreigners, would pay more to see birds, trees, monkeys, cats, and the Caribbean than could be made by the onetime harvest of the cedar groves. Moreover, it was already a reserve, it would not cost anything to upgrade the region to a national park, but it would cost the government, in the long run, to allow the groves to be harvested. To support his argument, Phelps Sr. utilized reports from the U.S. National Parks Administration on tourism in the communities outside of Yellowstone National Park.249 In addition to this, Phelps used a copy of International Galápagos Commission Director Robert Moore’s 1935 report to Ecuadorian President

248 Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, October 6, 1938; Ibid.

249 Ibid.
Ibarra, highlighting the ripple effects of tourism for those communities neighboring nationally protected regions. In addition to the potential economic benefits of tourism, Phelps noted that moderate fees could be levied for admittance to pay for maintenance. He concluded by noting that the Venezuelan economy was sufficiently productive that there was no need to allow rampant resource extraction when it was in the power of the government to invest in a national park and accrue the interest on that investment over the next several decades.

Vale completed the petition with a short note on the larger political, economic, and international implications creating a park would have for Venezuela. He pointed to the Mexican Government’s recent successes in establishing a number of national parks and the successes the Cárdenas administration had had using the conservation of resources to address poverty thus reducing social tensions. Moreover, the U.S. Government had recently invested in the expansion of its parks. It was time, Vale argued, for the good of Venezuelans, for the benefit of the national economy, and for the good of the Americas, that Venezuela establish a national park and add to that movement. The petition was successful and López signed into being Parque Nacional Rancho Grande in February 1937. The land was declared off limits to commercial forestry and mining

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250 Wetmore had sent Phelps a copy of the report in the preceding months. Phelps Sr. to Wetmore, October 6, 1938; Ibid.

251 Information on these strategies, including detailed letters by Phelps Sr. on the strategies employed by Venezuelan conservationists and the requests from Phelps Jr. for assistance can be found in the file titled “Phelps,” SIA, RU 7006: CD 8; circa 1848–1979 and undated, Box 33, Field Work and Official Travel Files, 1910–1974.

252 See next chapter.
initiatives. It was, however, left open to limited agricultural use as those villages inside of the park were allowed to graze livestock and fell trees for personal use.

The shifts in Venezuelan legislation marked a genuine progression in the value upon which the Venezuelan Government placed on nature. Initial forestry legislation of 1934 conserved resources of economic value, emphasizing sustainable programs and practical methods of monitored extraction to allow for prolonged monetary gain while affording some protection to nature affected by deforestation. The adoption of bird legislation marked Venezuela's investment in wildlife protection by safeguarding some species of economic value. The establishment of a national park, the coup de grace, provided for the maximum protection of that nature within its boundaries.

Pan American Possibilities

The combination of constitutionally viable legislation and the establishment of the national park was encouraging to the American Committee. Committee members, in their discussions about the possibility of the proposed Convention having success in Venezuela, noted that the system of parks and monuments outlined by the draft treaty fit with those currently in place. Even the Minister of Agriculture noted it was a sure thing, given that "the Government of Venezuela has already begun to dictate preventative

253 All were divisions within the Ministry of Agriculture. The park was renamed Parque Nacional Henri Pittier in 1953.

254 Dr. W. Reid Blair (Secretary) to Wetmore, November 3, 1938; RU 7006, CD 2, Box 80, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Inter-American Committee of Experts on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation. Advisory Committee to U. S. Representative, 1939–1940. Pan American Union Resolution 38 called for the appointment of an Inter-American Committee of Experts to investigate the particular problems facing wildlife populations and the programs implemented to address them, and then to develop a list of species that could be characterized as in danger of extinction and at risk of extinction. The members were to meet in Washington DC in 1940 at the Convention on Nature Protection to draft a uniform program for preserving wildlife in the western hemisphere based on the evidence collected in the surveys.
measures for the protection of migratory birds of economic value and aesthetic interest,” it was almost a sure thing. Venezuela, like Colombia, Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Paraguay, however, itself had no well-developed scientific society or government officials who could be counted upon to fulfill the provisions of the resolution. What Venezuela did have were private citizens, who sometimes worked with the Government and with the international conservation community, to petition the government for protection measures and who could amass scientific data and a wealth of knowledge of Venezuelan biota to support their efforts.

The American Committee called upon the Venezuelan network of individuals to assist in the promotion of the Convention. Men like Pittier, Phelps Sr., Phelps Jr., and Vale cultivated relationships with foreign scientists to assist in cataloguing and protecting fauna and flora in Venezuela, advancing the international conservation community’s knowledge about Venezuelan biota and those threats to it. The value of the network of likeminded conservationists here was incalculable. While there was correspondence between American Committee members and government officials in Colombia and Peru concerning the Resolution and the Convention, there was nothing comparable to the nearly 30-year relationship between Phelps Sr. and Wetmore, which later extended to Phelps Jr. Likewise, the relationship within Venezuela among Pittier, Vale, and Phelps Jr. was one of the strongest and most effective in the Americas, producing expeditions, studies, publications and, ultimately, a wealth of wildlife protection laws.

255 Ministerio de Agricultura to the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (Signature illegible), April 12, 1940; Republica de Venezuela, Archivo del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, Dirección de Políticas Internacional, Pieza 1, Sobre Protección de la Flora, Fauna y Bellezas Escénicas Naturales, y Comisión Permanente de Recursos Naturales.
When the 1938 Pan American Union convention adopted Resolution 38, Venezuela's Ambassador to the United States, Escalante Diogenes, was appointed to the Governing Board responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Resolution.\footnote{Escalante Diogenes was an upper-crust, well-educated man who had served the nation of Venezuela for more than 30-years as a politician, diplomat, and journalist. Diogenes served as the Venezuelan delegate to the League of Nations and as Minister to London. He was even considered as a candidate to assume the Presidency in 1931. The best biographical information I found on Diogenes was his obituary published in \textit{El Nacional}, Caracas, November 14, 1964.} In March 1939, the Governing Board sent out a revised version of the American Committee survey to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of the Interior in all of the American Republics, requesting that they be distributed to the appropriate departments, then collected, and submitted by the delegate appointed to the Inter-American Committee of Experts. The appointed representative, moreover, was to conduct an inventory of national wildlife, categorizing species as to whether they were in danger of extinction, in need of protection, or in possible danger of decline, and to oversee the compilation of national game laws and conservation programs. The delegate would then submit his findings to the larger Inter-American Committee of Experts at the Convention in 1940.

Ministry of Agriculture official, E. Gil Borges, recommended that either Tobias Lasser, Francisco Tamayo, or Marcus Gonzalez Vale be nominated as the Venezuelan representative, as all held prominent positions in the government and were well-qualified to hold the position.\footnote{E. Gil Borges to the Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria, April 26, 1939; Republica de Venezuela, Archivo del MRE, Dirección de Políticas Internacional, Pieza 1, Sobre Protección de la Flora, Fauna y Bellezas Escénicas Naturales, y Comisión Permanente de Recursos Naturales.} Vale, however, vigorously pursued the appointment as he was convinced that the way to affect change was through the international cooperation. Indeed, he had experience serving on an international commission, as in 1938, when he
served as the Venezuelan delegate to the PAU Committee of Experts on Agriculture to the conference of the International Office of Labor.\textsuperscript{258} The experience of working on such a committee and with the International Office of Labor made him a true believer in the role of international forums in affecting large scale change and he believed the same principle applied to nature protection in the hemisphere. In his correspondence with Diogenes, Vale waxed philosophical over the possibilities presented by the PAU, noting that this Convention made defending nature against destruction in Venezuela and in the Americas the responsibility of the United States—as U.S. business and economic interests were at least partially responsible for causing the ecological damage in the first place.\textsuperscript{259}

In Venezuela, U.S. and European interests had extracted natural resources with little regard for Venezuelan interests or the ecological consequences of development. The Government of Venezuela lacked the incentive to invest economic, military, or political resources toward enforcing those regulations.\textsuperscript{260} Foreign investment had been a critical component in maintaining stability during the 1930s and in enabling Venezuela to avoid some of the more destructive political and economic effects of the depression. No leader would infringe upon that. South America was an enormous continent, and most nations welcomed to foreign investment, if Venezuela established laws to restrict extraction, industries were likely to move on and invest much needed funds in other

\textsuperscript{258} Vale to Escalante Diogenes, April 29, 1939; Republica de Venezuela, Archivo del MRE, Dirección de Políticas Internacional, Pieza 1, Sobre Protección de la Flora, Fauna y Bellezas Escénicas Naturales, y Comisión Permanente de Recursos Naturales.

\textsuperscript{259} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{260} Ibid.
national economies. Equally important, without some support from the international community, Venezuelan laws meant little. Leaders in Venezuela had initiated reforms, but regulation of those industries invested in forestry, or protection measures afforded to sea birds, meant little without the cooperation of the international community. The answer to the problems in Latin America, argued Vale, lay with the Pan American Union and with standardized international regulation devoted to enhancing the effectiveness of measures to protect natural resources, holding international companies accountable for responsible development and it was these standardized international regulations that the Convention on Nature Protection would provide.

Due to his experience and his request, Vale succeeded in securing the appointment as the Venezuelan delegate to the Inter American Committee of Experts. This Committee met for the first time in March 1939 to divvy up assignments and agreed to meet again in early June with the preliminary results. Vale's first act of duty was to enlist the support of Pittier, Lasser, Tamayo, and Phelps Jr., forming a small, but effective Venezuelan Committee of Experts to assist in compiling lists to be submitted to the Governing Board at the Convention. Tamayo was responsible for listing conservation programs in progress. Vale compiled a list of laws designed to protect nature and natural resources. Phelps Jr. was responsible for listing endangered birds and Pittier for listing endangered plants. Lasser was instructed to list all other “vanishing” fauna. This brought up the problematic issue of how to determine if a species of plant or animal was, indeed, vanishing. They decided, although there was no formula offered for how to determine if a species was in danger of disappearing, to list those species in which they had seen a precipitous decline in numbers over the previous five years. This was an
imprecise formula based upon little other than personal observation. They had no clear evidence to support that those species really were in danger and no tangible way, in the time allotted, to conduct a study that would accurately determine danger. But the committee was more concerned with complying with the regulations than achieving accuracy as they decided more in-depth studies and the necessary adjustments could be made in time.

The Venezuelan Committee of Experts was successful in compiling the necessary data, drawing assistance in their efforts from all available resources. Pittier turned to graduate students at the National Herbarium to assist in compiling lists of flora. Phelps Jr. enlisted the support of his father in cataloguing threatened birds. Lasser and Tamayo collaborated on their lists, calling upon Pittier’s sources in the Ministry of Agriculture to develop a comprehensive, if short, list of game laws and protected regions. Indeed, Venezuela was one of the first nations to comply with the provisions of the Resolution.\(^{261}\) In their discussions with officials from the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Foreign Relations, Lasser and Tamayo framed the Convention as a positive and necessary step, highlighting the possibilities opened by international collaboration.\(^{262}\) They were so convincing that in correspondence between the two Ministries, officials noted that “the idea for this project is extremely good” and would likely benefit Venezuela in the long run, although they were not specific as to how they thought this would be accomplished. Moreover, officials with the Ministry of Agriculture were so convinced by Lasser’s

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\(^{261}\) E. Gil Borges to Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria, July 31, 1939; Ibid.

\(^{262}\) Alfonso Mejía to the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, August 3, 1939; Ibid. Vale had served as the representative to the Committee of Agricultural Experts for the International Conference on Labor in Havana, Cuba in 1938, and volunteered to serve on the Committee of Experts for the Convention on Nature Protection.
argument that they thought the Convention should be signed and ratified, as there was "nothing of importance" for politicians to contest. As a result, Ministry officials in both Agriculture and Foreign Relations thought Venezuela would most likely sign it. In June 1939, the Ministry of Foreign Relations submitted the Venezuelan compilation—one of the most comprehensive reports on fauna and flora submitted by any Republic—to the Governing Board a full year before the Convention.

**Conclusion**

On October 12, 1940, Marcus Gonzalez Vale signed the Convention on behalf of Venezuela. On November 2, 1941, Venezuela became the third nation to deposit its ratification in the PAU, following the United States (April) and Guatemala (August). This measure could have been the beginning of effective preservation in Venezuela. Unfortunately for those concerned with preservation, the López Government came to an end in 1940 as his policies to improve the social welfare of Venezuelans had faltered, his promise to pay for it using the nation’s oil revenues frustrated international investors, and political upheaval hit the streets of Caracas. In 1940 López refused to run for reelection. In his place, he appointed his Minister of War, General Isaias Medina Angarita, who appealed to conservatives frustrated with Lopez’s move to encourage mass political participation and ignored efforts to conserve resources as he ratcheted up production of oil. Venezuela did little to protect its natural spaces for the next ten years, as armed

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263 Ministerio de Agricultura to the Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores (Signature illegible), April 12, 1940; Ibid.

264 Amenodoro Rangel, official with the Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria; Dirección de Tierras, Bosques y Aguas to el Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, June 27, 1939; Ibid.

265 In 1943 Medina implemented an income tax law designed specifically with the goal of increasing the Venezuelan take on foreign oil revenues. To do so, he subjected oil industry imports to customs taxes, he
revolts and a succession of leaders filtered through Caracas. Vale continued to submit petition after petition to the governments in an effort to increase the number of National Parks and to advance forestry legislation, with little limited success. Legislation providing for increased taxes and improved protection measures were adopted, but rarely enforced as the government had neither the funds, nor, as the political situation in Caracas dissolved in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the will to support the enforcement of those laws.

Venezuela was important to the members of the American Committee because of the small, determined community of internationally connected private citizens—most notably the Phelps, Pittier, and Vale. Gomez had invited foreigners to Venezuela to write reports to improve extraction efficiency, not for the conservation of resources. But those individuals nevertheless initiated conservation and preservation reforms. Moreover, they framed conservation as economically beneficial, emphasizing the importance of using the Pan American Union as the medium to construct legitimate conservation regulations and to harness those out-of-control interests that were destroying nature. Finally, Venezuelans saw the Convention as the vehicle for saddling the international business community with at least some of the costs of addressing the ecological havoc it had wreaked. And, although the reforms faltered immediately after the Convention, they laid the foundation for additional protection measures to be enacted in the future, when political conditions permitted.

made it mandatory that oil companies had to develop refining facilities in Venezuela and, most importantly, the state's taxation powers were extended to include oil profits. The result was staggering, as by 1944 the Venezuelan share of the revenues leaped to 60 percent (counting both rent and taxes). Hellinger, 68.
CHAPTER V

MEXICAN CONSERVATION EFFORTS 1917–1940

In contrast to Venezuela, where government conservation programs did not emerge until the end of the decade of the 1930s, Mexico had a long history of government initiatives to protect the environment. Efforts to use science to “improve” the land around Mexico City through enormous drainage programs backfired at the turn of the twentieth century, the consequences of which spurred the Porfirio Diaz administration to put an end to the drainage projects and invest in national forestry programs; the devastation wrought by the Mexican Revolution encouraged the establishment of the first national park and the social destruction wreaked by the war prompted the reformist administration of Lázaro Cárdenas to use conservation programs as a means for addressing the unemployment crisis and for improving agricultural output during the worst years of the depression. The shared border with the United States prompted a government bureau with high-level officials ready and able to address issues such as the protection of shared natural resources and the decline of migratory wildlife along the border.

This chapter examines the Mexican contribution to the Convention on Nature Protection and argues that Mexico’s decision to ratify was rooted in the hope that participating would improve its bargaining position in resource use negotiations, particularly regarding water rights to the Colorado River. Because Article 6 of the
Convention called for “cooperation” among the signatories, Mexican officials argued that it was possible that signing the Convention would give them additional leverage in future resource negotiations with the United States. The Convention did not offer Mexico, as it did in Venezuela, a framework to employ in the establishment of protected areas, as Mexico had a well-developed infrastructure in place. It did not offer additional protections to vanishing species of wildlife, as the 1936 Migratory Bird and Game Mammals Treaty already covered those species attached to the Convention. Nor was it the product of collaborative effort as it had been in Argentina, as Mexican officials did not take part in the initial discussions with American Committee members over the Lima Resolution nor did they actively engage with American Committee officials in the year and a half leading up to the Convention. Instead, the purpose behind signing the Convention was to employ the mandated scientific commissions outlined in Article 6 to push the United States Government to examine the effects of and encourage change of its policies, particularly regarding water use, which adversely affected Mexico. There is no clear evidence why the American Committee and the Mexican Government did not make a more concerted effort to work together as it would have been easy to do after the ratification of the 1936 Migratory Bird Treaty, however it is likely that American Committee members were confident the Mexican Government would sign and therefore expended their efforts generating support in other nations, like Venezuela, Colombia, or Brazil, of which they were less certain.

Mexico’s participation in the Convention differs from its Argentinean, United States, and Venezuelan counterparts in one distinct way—there were no private Mexican citizens involved in either the process or the discussions regarding the Convention. I
found no evidence to suggest that private citizens were in any way significantly involved in the discussion surrounding the Convention in Mexico, or in the papers of the American Committee members, nor was their participation as necessary in discussions of whether Mexico would sign the Convention as Mexico had such a developed governmental department devoted to natural resource management and wildlife protection. When the American Committee reached out regarding the Convention, they went to those government officials Wetmore had worked with on the Migratory Bird Treaty between the United States and Mexico in 1935 and 1936. As such, the objective in getting involved in the Convention as well as the goal for using the Convention in Mexico was rooted in the larger concerns of the government and the larger context of the Mexican-U.S. relationship. The objective for Mexico’s involvement in the Convention was to sign an agreement that would require nothing substantial from Mexico and then use the articles of the Convention to negotiate with the United States over water rights. This makes the case of Mexico’s involvement in the Convention inherently different than it had been in Venezuela, where private individuals, working independently of the government, were in large part responsible for initiating national involvement in the Convention and in which case their interests were focused on advancing flexible protection measures for wildlife, rather than on the governmental interests of negotiating for additional concessions in larger international discussions.

**Creating an Infrastructure for Conservation**

Nationally instituted conservation programs began in Mexico at the turn of the twentieth century at the instigation of one Miguel Angel de Quevedo (1862–1946). Overly enthusiastic drainage efforts by Mexican engineers trying to improve the area
around Mexico City for agriculture by stemming the annual floods in the Valley of Mexico resulted in the drainage of hundreds of square miles of swamps, marshes, and lakes. Quevedo was one of the lead engineers involved in the drainage projects. He had studied engineering at the Ecole Polytechnique in Paris, France, in the late 1880s, where he gained an appreciation for the use of forest resources in developing sustainable agricultural practices. Indeed, his courses on hydraulic agriculture put him in close contact with the French forestry expert, Alfredo Durand-Claye, who insisted that an engineer not educated in forestry was doomed to be "an ignoramus who will make grave mistakes." Determined to put his knowledge of forestry to use, Quevedo returned to Mexico in the late 1880s, to impart this wisdom upon his Mexican colleagues, and was hired to oversee the construction of the Grand Canal. This new Canal was to be a drainage system designed to stem flooding in the Valley of Mexico by channeling water out of the region. But in their enthusiasm, the engineers went too far, resulting in the loss of nearly six hundred square miles of lakes, in devastating dust storms, dried crops, and dead trees, as well as a noticeable decline in wildlife.

Having been involved in the engineering projects that led to this ecological disaster, Quevedo then embarked on a series of private initiatives to advance the protection of Mexico’s forest resources. Over the course of his career, Quevedo sponsored nationwide forestry education initiatives, constructed seedling nurseries to

266 For the most comprehensive source on the Mexican Government’s desague (drainage) projects, see Louisa Schell Hoberman, "Technological Change in a Traditional Society: The Case of the Desague in Colonial Mexico," Technology and Culture 21 (July 1980): pp. 386–407.


268 Ibid.
replant deforested areas (viveros), and lobbied the Mexican Government for nationwide conservation programs to protect the forest reserves.\textsuperscript{269} Previously, in 1901, he founded the Junta Central de Bosques (Central Meeting of the Forests), initiated an inventory of Mexican forests, and engaged in discussions with the Ministry of Public Works to address dust storms resulting from desertification. In addition to these programs, the Junta campaigned to create parks and green spaces in Mexico City, expanding the number of parks from 2 to 34.\textsuperscript{270} By 1909, 8 years after the creation of the Junta, the group finished its inventory and Quevedo took the results with him to the North American Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources in Washington, D.C. where he connected with U.S. Forest Service official Gifford Pinchot to assist him in his effort to advance a more sustainable national forestry program. In 1901, at the Second National Meteorological Congress of Mexico, Quevedo advocated the establishment of Schools of Forestry, like those at Yale University in the United States and Ecole Polytechnical in France. In 1908, this idea came to fruition as Quevedo established the first School of Forestry in the federal district. In 1914, the French Government sent professors from Ecole Polytechnical to Mexico City to teach courses at this new school in forestry education, but it was a short-lived endeavor as the Revolution forced the school to close in 1915.\textsuperscript{271}

The outbreak of the Mexican Revolution interrupted Quevedo's forest protection efforts. The Revolution began in November 1910, as an attempt by upper and middle

\textsuperscript{269} Good information on Quevedo can be found in M.E. Musgrave, “The Apostle of the Tree,” \textit{American Forests} 46 (May 1940): p. 204; and Simonian, Chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{270} Simonian, p. 72.

\textsuperscript{271} Ibid., p. 75.
class conservative leaders to overthrow the 30-year dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz.

Moderate revolutionaries, like Francisco Indalécio Madero and Venustiano Carranza, fought to reform the political system to allow for more political participation for the upper and middle classes. More radical leaders, like Francisco “Pancho” Villa and Emiliano Zapata, supported the lower classes’ demands for social and economic reforms. Under the presidency of Victoriano Huerta, a former Diaz supporter, revolutionary violence intensified so much that between 1913 and 1914 the four main revolutionary forces met together in the summer of 1914 in Mexico City to oust him. Over the next three years, battles continued in the Bajío region, region on the Mexican Plateau (west-central Mexico), as the four factions of the Revolution fought ruthlessly against each other. In 1917, Venustiano Carranza assumed the presidency and a brief pause in the fighting ensued after nearly seven years of intense warfare.

The ecological costs of the Revolution were enormous. The Bajío region, with its fertile soil, temperate climate, and rainfall—the principle region where wheat, corn, chick-peas, beans, and various fruits and vegetables were grown to feed the nation—was

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272 Madero defeated Díaz in the 1910 election, following the outbreak of the Revolution. His presidency was short-lived and he was assassinated as the result of revolt in Mexico City in 1913. General Victoriano Huerta, a general under Díaz, assumed the dictatorship in February 1913 and resigned in July 1914 following intervention of the United States in the war. The years between the resignation of Huerta and the adoption of the constitution of 1917 were the most devastating of the war, as revolutionary factions fought to shift the war in their favor. Venustiano Carranza, who assumed the presidency with the overthrow of Huerta, called for a constitutional convention in late 1916. The constitution it produced claimed national ownership of subsoil resources (especially silver and petroleum); restricted foreigners' ability to own property or conduct business in Mexico; committed the Government to a program of land redistribution; restricted the Catholic Church from owning property and operating schools, and barred its officials from holding public office; recognized the principles of unionization, minimum wages, and maximum hours; and strengthened the office of the presidency. Good sources on the Mexican Revolution are David Brading and eds., Caudillo and Peasant in the Mexican Revolution (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1980); John Tutino, From Insurrection to Revolution in Mexico: Social Bases of Agrarian Violence, 1750–1940 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); and Ramon Ruiz, The Great Rebellion: Mexico 1905–24 (New York & London: WW Norton & Company, 1980).
also a casualty in the war that took more than one million Mexican lives. Soldiers cut trees indiscriminately for firewood and war matériel; as food resources diminished, they slaughtered game and cattle by the thousands for food. Midnight raids resulted in burnt crops, homes, and often out of control forest fires. Burnt soil baked in the hot sun. As the bulk of the fighting took place in this fertile region, the production of food for the nation was significantly interrupted, prompting those in higher elevations and more northern regions to cut forests to plant food.

Between 1917 and his assassination in 1920, Carranza worked with Quevedo to address some of the more egregious ecological problems and to try to sew the tattered nation back together. Carranza employed Quevedo to establish the first national parks, El Desierto del Los Leones and El Chico, as symbols of peace and unity. El Desierto was of particular importance to Carranza and Quevedo because of its 17th century Spanish ruins, a symbol of heritage and history, and its watershed for Mexico City's water reserves. Carranza directed Quevedo to utilize his viveros (nurseries) and begin planting in the regions surrounding Mexico City. These forest zones were to be strictly protected.

In 1919, Carranza authorized the construction of botanical gardens in Mexico City's Chapultepec Park to house examples of Mexican floral diversity. The attempts by

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273 Although he focuses more on the earlier period, a good source on the agricultural productive capacity of the Bajio region is Michael E. Murphy, *Irrigation in the Bajio Region of Central Mexico*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1988).

While there have not been any environmental histories written of the Mexican Revolution, there are several references to the ecological problems resulting from the extraordinary demand for resources and the toll taken on the landscapes as a result of battles. For the best source for discussion of the environmental affects of the war, and Quevedo's efforts to at least marginally stem the tide of destruction, see Samuel Solis, "La labor de Ingeniero Miguel A. de Quevedo en Veracruz," *Mexico Forestal* 24 (July–September 1946): pp. 60–61.

Carranza to establish reforestation programs and small national parks before his assassination in 1920 were, however, not enough to repair the overwhelming damage caused by war.

Nonetheless, Quevedo continued his efforts through the succeeding administrations. In 1922, under the administration of Alvaro Obregon (1920–24), Quevedo created the Mexican Forestry Society which was instrumental in the creation of a wildlife refuge on the Island of Guadalupe, approximately 241 kilometers (150 miles) off the west coast of Mexico’s Baja California peninsula. Much like Ecuador’s Galápagos Archipelago, the fauna on Isla Guadalupe had evolved with unique characteristics and faced extreme pressures from feral animals left on the island. The Mexican Government decreed that “the Island of Guadalupe of Baja California, as well as the waters that surround it, remain reserved for the protection and development of the natural wealth that they contain, as much in forest matter and flocks, and hunting and fishes.” Six years later, in 1928, the administration of Plutarco Elías Calles declared the entire island a “zone reserved for wildlife.” This was a significant move because it was the first time the Mexican Government established a reserve for the protection and conservation of seals, both elephant and fur. In addition to protecting marine species, in 1922, Quevedo had convinced the Mexican Congress to declare a decade long moratorium on the hunting of borrego cimarrón (bighorn sheep) and berrendo (elk). In 1931, he founded the Mexican Committee for the Conservation of Wild Birds, a nongovernmental organization that was an offshoot of the International Committee for

Bird Protection, and lobbied the Government to prohibit the use of *armadas*, destructive firing batteries, in the hunting of aquatic birds. Even with these accomplishments, the death of Carranza had removed a powerful ally in the cause of forestry restoration and wildlife conservation. For nearly a decade, the succession of leaders who followed Carranza—Obregón, Plutarco Elías Calles (1924–1928), Emilio Portes Gil (1928–1930), Pascual Ortiz Rubio (1930–1932), and Abelardo L. Rodríguez (1932–1934)—were occupied by the internal rebellions and did little to continue conservation efforts.277

**Shifting Toward Internationalizing Conservation**

Two significant events occurred in the mid-1930s that were crucial to Mexican participation in the Convention on Nature Protection. The first was the 1933 adoption in the United States of the “Good Neighbor Policy,” and second was the 1934 election of Lázaro Cárdenas to the Presidency of Mexico. In March 1933, U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt announced in his inaugural address that “In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor—the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others.”278 This type of rhetoric, espousing respect for Latin American nations, encouraged a more open forum for discussion at the Pan American Union on various political, social, economic, and environmental issues. The election of President Lázaro Cárdenas in 1934 initiated an administration that reshaped Mexico to such an extent that some historians have referred


to his administration as the “Second Revolution.” Beginning with the top tiers of
government, Cárdenas established a highly professional diplomatic corps determined to
assist Mexico in capitalizing on the brewing global conflicts. As a prerequisite to this
policy, Mexico had to modernize its economy. In the first three years of his
administration, Cárdenas introduced several agricultural reform bills authorizing the
redistribution of private land, enacting sustainable extraction practices, and accelerating

These efforts included the implementation of nationwide conservation measures.
Quevedo submitted a report to Cárdenas that he had written in 1926 for President
Plutarco Calles advocating the expansion of the \textit{viveros} as a direct means for addressing
unemployment.\footnote{Miguel Angel Quevedo, “Los desastres de la deforestacion en el Valle y Cuidad de Mexico,” \textit{Mexico Forestal} 4 (May–June 1926): pp. 67–82. In this article, Quevedo discussed using unemployed laborers to assist in reforestation projects.} In this report he noted that in Mexico City alone, one thousand men could be hired to plant trees and patrol the forest zones to protect them from harm, up to two thousand women could be hired to work in the \textit{viveros} themselves, tending to the saplings. Although Calles does not appear to have acted upon the recommendations in
Quevedo’s report, Cárdenas concurred with Quevedo’s assessment and authorized the extension of federal jurisdiction over forest resources. Cárdenas used Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution, stipulating that the Government of Mexico maintained the right to “impose on private property the rules dictated by the public interest and to regulate the use of natural elements, susceptible to appropriation so as to distribute equitably the public wealth and to safeguard its conservation.”281 Cárdenas followed up with the establishment of a Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game in 1935, with Quevedo at the helm.282

Quevedo, recognizing an ally in Cárdenas, immediately sought several reforestation projects using the viveros he had established before the Revolution and outlined forest zones to be strictly protected around the larger cities in Mexico. Between 1935 and 1940, the Department of Forestry established 294 nurseries and planted six million seedlings in those areas devastated by the war. These programs employed thousands of Mexicans in desperate need of jobs.283 In 1935, Cárdenas approved of funds to pay for experts in forestry to “police and inspect and be vigilant in order for these

281 Article XXVII, Constitución política y demás leyes fundamentales de los Estado Unidos Mexicanos, 1917.

282 Memorandum relative to the Creation of the Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game, December 28, 1934; México City, Secretaria de Agricultura y Fomento, Registro No. 041774 Vol: 560 Exp: 502/2. The memorandum was attached to the Constitution in response to Díaz’s perceived habit of encouraging foreign purchase and development of Mexican lands and resources, at the long-term expense of the Mexican people.

riches [the forests] to remain." In addition to protecting Mexico’s forest resources, Cádeneras established the Museo de la Flora y la Fauna Nacionales to advance the study of Mexican plants and animals. Quevedo’s programs soon swelled the collections of the Museo with specimens of tropical, desert, and rare Mexican fauna and flora.

As part of the efforts to combat unemployment, the Cádeneras administration invested in the expansion of Mexico’s national parks. Between 1934 and 1940, the Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game established 30 national parks varying in sizes, from 9 hectares (Parque Nacional Lago de Camecuaro) to 246,500 (Parque Nacional Cumbres de Monterrey). These parks differed from their South American and U.S. counterparts, in that they were typically tiny parcels of privately owned land, previously harvested highland forests of the Mexican interior. Indeed, ten of those parks established between 1934 and 1940 were less than 1,000 hectares, eleven were less than

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285 Simonian, pp. 74–75.

286 The expansion of national parks overwhelmed the fledgling Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game (DFCP), which was focused on trying to address problems associated with deforestation, maintaining the viveros, and obtaining sufficient funding. Moreover, department officials were also responsible for the fisheries, a responsibility that required considerable attention (see below). As a result, La Sistema Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas (SINAP) was established within the DFCP to administer and manage the parks in 1937. The foundation of SINAP within the DFCP is outlined in a letter from J.M.F. de Mendoza, official with the Secretaria de Agricultura y Fomento to Sr. Lic. J. Jesus Gonzalez Gallo, Secretario Particular del Senor Presidente de la Republica, October 2, 1944. RG Cádeneras, AGN, MAC, Expediente 523.1/62.

287 Information on the initial parks and the spike in the number of parks during the 1930s can be found in Angel Roldan, "Relacion de los parques nacionales que han sido declarados desde la creacion del Departamento Forestal y de Caza y Pesca hasta el 24 de noviembre de 1939," Mexico Forestal 17 (July–December 1939): pp. 67–74.

288 This information can be found in Presidencia de la Republica to the Ministerio de Agricultura y Fomento, “Relativo a la Creacion del Departamento Forestal, de Caza, y Pesca,” December 28, 1934; RG Cádeneras, AGN, MAC, Expediente 502/2.
20,000 hectares. In contrast, the average park in the United States in 1934 was 360,000 hectares; in Argentina, the average reserve was 338,000 hectares. Moreover, these sites were not chosen for biodiversity or tourist accessibility as in Venezuela, or patriotism as in Argentina. National parks in Mexico were typically located in remote regions where resources had already been extracted, and scars crisscrossed the sides of the mountain plains where foresters had taken their toll. The one connection Mexican parks maintained with others across the Americas was the emphasis on choosing the region for its particular historical, archaeological, and cultural significance. These programs and the extraordinary efforts put forth by the Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game made Cárdenas' six years as president perhaps the most productive in the history of Mexican conservation.

While developing a solid national infrastructure for the national parks and reserves, Mexico made impressive international efforts to afford practical measures of protection to those resources it shared with the United States. Between 1934 and 1940, Mexico and the United States engaged in four international commissions to conserve and protect shared natural resources (one fish commission, one park commission, and two game commissions) and signed a Migratory Bird Treaty. This shared border had always been a source of tension and demanded a nuanced method of dealing with the relationship. The collaboration over these resource issues set the foundation for and shaped Mexico's eventual participation in the Convention. During the 1920s, while the

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289 Simonian, pp. 96–7. There is a useful table on the National Parks of Mexico on these pages.

290 The sizes of Mexican parks was taken from Simonian, p. 95 and the average for the U.S. parks was taken from the National Park Service website, at www.nps.gov (accessed March 2008).
Mexican Government had been occupied with the aftermath of the Revolution, the United States had adopted the Boulder Canyon Dam Act (1928), authorizing the construction of the Hoover Dam on the Colorado River. The construction of the dam exponentially significantly affected the amount of water reaching Mexican soil that, over years, decreased the productivity of northern Mexican farms. At the same time, the California fishing industry had expanded as U.S. fishermen utilized better technology to fish farther out to sea and to penetrate into Mexican waters. The effects of these two issues were felt most significantly in Mexico during the mid- to late-1930s, long after the precedent had been set in the United States and become almost common practice.

A constant and contentious issue in U.S.-Mexican relations involved shared fishing resources. In 1931, a U.S.-Mexican International Fisheries Commission was established, as a joint effort to preserve marine populations in danger of extinction. A similar Commission had been established in 1925, but the effort failed after two years because Commissioners were distracted by various external factors—including U.S. fishermen evading Mexican tax laws and Mexican officials harassing U.S. fishermen, and the Commission did not have the resources or the manpower to focus on tax collection, peace keeping, and conservation.291 Overstretched, the Commission was dissolved in 1927. In contrast, the goal of the 1931 Commission was to develop conservation measures.292 There were two years of relative harmony and solid cooperation, as U.S. and California Fish and Game officials worked with Mexican DCFP officials.

291 Simonian briefly touches on it Defending the Land of the Jaguar, p. 105; nothing additional has been published on U.S.-Mexican efforts to grapple with issues of fish conservation. A wealth of information on the first Fisheries Commission can be found in the U.S. National Archives, RG 22, IFC-U.S. and MX, April 1925–December 1926.

292 Simonian, p. 105.
Zinzer and Joaquin Tena, the Mexican official in charge of fisheries in San Diego, collaborated with U.S. officials in an effort to identify key problems both nations could address. Discussions advanced as far as devising preliminary programs to establish uniform regulations for the size of holes in fish nets, to setting acceptable quotas for tuna catches, and developing protection measures for fur seals. For Zinzer and Tena, however, issues of evasion of licensing fees and taxes continued to present obstacles, while U.S. officials wanted to concentrate on protecting marine mega fauna. In 1934, Mexican officials stopped actively participating given what they considered a lack of interest from U.S. Commissioners in assisting them with tax and licensing issues. In 1935, the commission was up for renewal and neither side reinvested. The U.S. Mexican International Fisheries Commission (1931–1935) experience brought home to Zinzer that the United States could be recalcitrant toward wildlife protection, even while it claimed to be a leader in conservation.

Perhaps the most frustrating issues for Mexico regarding negotiating with the United States over shared natural resources was the Colorado River. Under Porfirio Díaz (1884–1911), foreign investment in Mexico’s economy was encouraged to spur Mexico’s “path to modernity.” As a result, U.S. entrepreneurs bought, sold, and exchanged land, water, and mineral rights to the Colorado River Basin and diverted water bound for Mexico to California’s dry Imperial Valley. The 1928 U.S. Boulder Canyon Act


294 Information on this encounter can be found in Archivo General de la Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores de México, Expediente IV/643(73–47)/2: Caza y Pesca, El Visitador de Consulados de California Sigue La Conveniencia de Adquirir un Barco Ligero para la Vigilancia de Pesca en California.


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authorized the construction of an enormous dam on the Colorado River along the Nevada/Arizona state line without engaging in discussion with officials from those Mexican states of Sonora or Baja California that were to be effected by the dam. In January 1929, the Mexican Foreign Ministry (SRE) requested the establishment of an International Water Commission with the United States to investigate the possible ramifications of the declining supply of water. U.S. officials rejected the request, citing the Harmon Doctrine as absolving U.S. interests from responsibility.\footnote{Information on the tensions between the U.S. and Mexico regarding the damming of the Colorado can be found in National Archives, RG 59, Box 3973, Decimal File 1930–39, From 711.1216M/1091 to 711.129/220; and in Archivo General de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores de Mexico, Expediente 131(III–C)/1, Personal de la Seccion Mexicana de la Comision Internacional de Aguas; su designacion y comision.}

The Harmon Doctrine, articulated in the 1895 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that settled a dispute between the United States and Mexico over the use of the Rio Grande River, determined that, in cases involving international rivers, the nation in which the water originated had absolute sovereignty and retained the right to use the water as desired.\footnote{Stephen C. McCaffrey, “The Harmon Doctrine One Hundred Years Later: Buried, Not Praised” \textit{Natural Resources Journal} 36 (3 Summer 1996); pp. 549–590.}

Regardless of this decision, the Mexican DFCP appointed a commission in January 1929 of three engineers, two geographers, two technicians, and one specialist to investigate the possible effect of the dam on the states of Sonora and Baja California. In their 1935 report to Cárdenas, two officials with the Comisión Mixta Intersecretaria del Territorio Norte de Baja California, Antonio Basich and Bernardo Batiz, encouraged the construction of irrigation systems and the expansion of agriculture in the two states as,
they believed, higher water use before the dam was finished would increase the amount of water that Mexico could negotiate for once the dam was completed.\textsuperscript{298} Cárdenas, embracing a policy of \textit{mexicanización}, connecting the waters of the Colorado to Mexican national heritage, and wanting to continue expanding his programs to address unemployment, authorized the expropriation of land owned by the U.S. Colorado River Land Company in 1937.\textsuperscript{299} Moreover, he authorized the construction of multiple irrigation canals and encouraged the migration to and the cultivation of those lands, as a means of establishing additional rights to those water resources. The end result was tense relations between U.S. and Mexican officials and enormous disruption to the environment.

In his work on the Colorado River Delta, Evan Ward noted that this \textit{mexicanización}:

may have encouraged residents to bring as many hectares under cultivation as possible to establish additional water rights, yet the unwillingness of U.S. officials to provide a reasonable guarantee of water from the Colorado River for Mexico only intensified Cárdenas’s efforts to secure prior-use rights. Conversely, Mexican expropriation of previously American-owned lands in the Mexicali Valley prompted local leaders in the United States to increase their own appropriations from the Colorado River.\textsuperscript{300}

The consequences of this zero sum game were also evident to those officials working at the Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game. When Juan Zinzer, Chief of the Game

\textsuperscript{298} Antonio Basich and Bernardo Batiz to the Comisión Mixta Intersecretaria del Territorio Norte de Baja California, “Aguas Internacionales,” December 24, 1935; RG Cárdenas, AGN, 437.1/413, p. 1.

\textsuperscript{299} The Colorado River Company owned the majority of land in the Mexicali valley, restricting irrigation development in the region by Mexicans and prompting the nationalization of the land.

Department of the DCFP, in particular, looked into the Convention on Nature Protection, he saw an opportunity to possibly address this contentious issue between the United States and Mexico. Mexican officials, approached by American Committee members for support of the Convention, saw Article 6 as a means of gaining some leverage with which to negotiate with in future discussions over the Colorado River.

The question of water supply, however, was ultimately not addressed until February 1944, when the United States and Mexico signed the U.S. Mexico Treaty for the Utilization of Waters of the Colorado River, guaranteeing Mexico 1,500,000 acre-feet of Colorado River water annually. \(^{301}\) The long-term consequences of the dam have been tremendous for Mexico, as elevated levels of salinity in the water by the time the water reaches Mexican soil has had negative consequences for agricultural production and has demanded treatment facilities to purify the water. Ever since 1944, the United States and Mexico have engaged in commissions, discussions, debates, and formal treaties to address the continually growing consequences of the diminished water supply. The issue of water rights therefore shaped how Mexico participated in the 1940 meeting as the United States was unwilling to alter the amount of water reaching Mexico and unwilling to really have any serious discussion with Mexico regarding the issues.

The most successful example of U.S.-Mexican collaboration in conservation concerned migratory birds. \(^{302}\) The first attempts at migratory bird protection efforts were

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\(^{302}\) An additional effort on the part of the Mexicans to cooperate with their North American neighbors involved the protection of land. In the 1930s there had been discussion of a possible joint, international, peace park as a symbol of strengthening relations along the U.S.-Mexican border. Zinzer and Daniel Galicia engaged in an International Parks Commission with U.S. National Parks Administration officials, spending the next two years investigating the possibility of creating an international peace park along the
initiated in 1929 by individuals from the University of California in Los Angeles, but
political and economic upheaval prevented any real discussions.\textsuperscript{303} Quevedo's Mexican Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds used the platform that the severe decline in the population of insectivorous birds had harmed farmers' fields, crops, and forests, and had petitioned the Government to preserve those bird species of utilitarian use. As a result, the Government banned \textit{armadas}, shooting batteries (lines of approximately one hundred guns set off by a triggering mechanism, used by hunters to kill the maximum amount of birds) and demanded enforcement of the prohibitions. This ban was internationalized on February 7, 1936, when the United States and Mexico signed one of the more successful examples of conservation diplomacy between the two nations, the Treaty for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Game Mammals.\textsuperscript{304} This agreement restricted the taking, killing, possessing, transporting, and importing of migratory birds, their eggs, parts, and nests. Additionally it banned the hunting of endangered white-
tailed deer, turkey, and bighorn sheep. This agreement added more than one hundred new species to the list of protected birds protected by the 1916 U.S.-Canada agreement, established a four-month hunting season for migratory birds, banned the hunting of insectivorous birds, and created wildlife refuges to protect game. The ratification of the Treaty for the Protection of Migratory Birds confirmed the belief of the architects of the Pan American Union Resolution 38 that the timing was, indeed, correct for a hemispheric Convention to discuss nature protection. As there was no close friendship between officials in Mexico's DCFP and the American Committee, there were few exchanges one can draw from to chart the effect of these shifts on the U.S. perspective on the Convention. The 1936 extension of the U.S.-Canadian Migratory Bird Treaty also influenced how the government saw the Convention because it meant that the infrastructure necessary for implementing the provisions of the Convention was established, as was a draft of a vanishing species list. In effect, the experience working on and the ratification of the MBT, in the years just prior to the adoption of the 1938 Lima Resolution, led American Committee members to believe that Mexico would continue to engage in such agreements with the United States and that ultimately Mexico was likely to sign the Convention. The AC members then turned their attention to those

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305 There has been little information published on this agreement, see Lane Simonian, *Defending the Land of the Jaguar*, 101.

306 These laws established by the Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Game Mammals, which was signed in Mexico City on February 7, 1936. The treaty was ratified by Mexico on February 12, 1937 and went into force March 15, 1937.

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other nations which might prove to be trickier, and more important for the protection of species, in the long run.\textsuperscript{307}

**Mexico and the Convention**

Unfortunately the 1936 Migratory Bird Treaty was not indicative of strong bilateral relations between the two nations. By the beginning of 1937, the political relationship between the United States and Mexico was strained as the deepening economic depression prompted Cárdenas to expropriate U.S. oil and land interests and redistribute them into Mexican hands.\textsuperscript{308} Soon after, in March 1938, as the global depression spurred revolutionary fervor in Mexico, Cárdenas hoped to promote economic growth by dismantling large, foreign owned, landed estates, and redirecting the land and money into Mexican hands. In an extension of this policy he authorized the expropriation of foreign-owned oil fields in Mexico.\textsuperscript{309} U.S. interests affected by this action immediately demanded action from the U.S. Government. President Franklin Roosevelt, however, concerned by reports that Japan and Germany would find Mexico a willing ally, invoked the Good Neighbor Policy and refused to take action, instead

\textsuperscript{307} The most that is mentioned on the subject just of Mexican participation comes from the minutes of the 1937 meeting of the American Committee which references the passage of the bird agreement and the parks expansion as evidence that the Mexican Government would likely support the Convention.


agreeing to a joint commission to determine compensation for those interests affected by the expropriation.\textsuperscript{310}

Despite strained political relations, Mexican DFCP officials maintained a solid working relationship with U.S. Fish and Game officials and a positive perspective on the Convention. In accordance with the provisions of Pan American Union Resolution 38, Mexican officials with the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores appointed 76-year old Miguel Angel de Quevedo as the representative to the Inter-American Committee of Experts in October 1939.\textsuperscript{311} Quevedo immediately appointed Chief of the Game Protection Service Zinzer and Daniel Galicia, an official with the DCFP, to the Mexican Committee of Experts to assist him in compiling the necessary information.\textsuperscript{312} Given the short window of time between their appointment in October and the Convention in May, Galicia and Quevedo agreed to use the list of those endangered bird and game mammals the Committee for the Protection of Wild Birds had compiled for the Migratory Bird Agreement as their list of vanishing species to bring to the meeting in Washington.\textsuperscript{313} Their primary concern was to investigate whether signing the Convention would require Mexico to change national parks already in existence to fit with the definitions provided in the articles. Zinzer professed that, although he doubted there would be any problem, he wanted confirmation that the Convention would not alter those laws already

\textsuperscript{310} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{311} Luis Quintanilla, Mexican Chargé de Affaires to the United States to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, October 10, 1939; Archivo General de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores de Mexico, Expediente 73–0/370(7:8)/1; No. 5356.

\textsuperscript{312} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{313} Juan Zinzer to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, November 11, 1939; Archivo General de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores de Mexico, Expediente 73–0/370(7:8)/1; No. 5356.
established governing Mexico’s national parks.\textsuperscript{314} He resolved to send an inquiry to the U.S. Committee of Experts, but he need not have worried.\textsuperscript{315} The agreement to protect migratory birds required establishing clearly defined seasons, the restriction of hunting, and restrictions on weaponry, was a more restrictive agreement than the proposed Convention attached to the Governing Board’s survey. Zinzer later received the draft agreement from Coolidge in March 1940, which Zinzer saw as mostly establishing definitions for protected regions and less about requiring actual action.\textsuperscript{316} There seemed nothing additional required since the Department already had a detailed and nuanced set of definitions for protected regions.

Despite his initial concern, Zinzer was wholeheartedly in support of Mexican participation in the Convention. Zinzer believed the Convention’s Article 6 would enhance international collaboration and prove successful in helping the United States and Mexico resolve not just the water issue, but other resource and wildlife problems as well. The proposed article promised that contracting governments would “lend assistance to scientists of the American Republics engaged in research and field study and possibly enter into agreements with one another, or with scientific institutions, to increase the effectiveness of this collaboration.”\textsuperscript{317} Mexico’s cooperation in an agreement such as this, Zinzer noted, could potentially work to Mexico’s advantage as it could be used to address the negative effects of the extraction of shared natural resources. In other words,

\textsuperscript{314} Zinzer to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, October 7, 1939; Ibid.

\textsuperscript{315} I found no such inquiry in the papers of either Alexander Wetmore or Harold Coolidge.

\textsuperscript{316} Zinzer to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, October 7, 1939; Archivo General de la Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores de Mexico, Expediente 73–0/370(7:8)/1; No. 5356.

\textsuperscript{317} Article 6, Convention on Nature Protection.
Article 6 could be used to sponsor scientific inquiries into those areas in Baja California and Sonora affected by the decreasing water supply. A scientific commission responsible for investigating the effect of water reduction on wildlife populations in Sonora and Baja California would almost have to conclude that the “declining water supply will have negative consequences on Mexican wildlife” as the loss of habitat forced wildlife out of the region entirely. Those findings could then be presented in support of Mexican assertions at future discussions regarding the damming of the Colorado. Moreover, if U.S. water companies could not be persuaded to alter their policies to relieve Mexican farmers, and U.S. politicians could not be persuaded to consider the effect their policies would have on Mexicans without an agreement, then an international commission sponsored through Article 6 to investigate the effect of the decline in water resources from the Colorado on wildlife populations in the region could be used, along with the Convention itself, to lend legitimacy to their arguments. Quevedo and Galicia concurred.

In part the result of Zinzer’s efforts, Mexico sent one of the largest delegations to the 1940 Convention. Aged Director of the Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game, Miguel Angel de Quevedo himself made the trek to Washington D.C. accompanied by Zinzer, Galicia and DCFG official Don Justo Sierra. Zinzer and Galicia signed the Convention on November 20, 1940 and returned to Mexico, while they were in the United States Quevedo remained in Mexico to lobby the Mexican Congress for ratification, which it did by the end of the year.

318 Zinzer to the Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, October 7, 1939.
319 Ibid.
This was surprisingly quick and seemingly without opposition, which seems at oddswith the political relationship between the two nations in 1940, but, indeed, it fits well within the context of that relationship. There was no real opposition because the Convention essentially required nothing of Mexico, as Mexico had already invested in the establishment of national parks and reserves and had entered into a more restrictive international agreement regarding the protection of migratory wildlife. There was support for it because the Convention posed a possible avenue for forcing the United States into increasing the amount of water designated for Mexico every year by institutionalizing in the international framework a mandate for scientific cooperation in investigating the health and protection of shared wildlife species. By signing and ratifying the Convention, the Mexican Government had nothing to lose and, at the very least, the possibility of using Article 6 to possibly push the United States into increasing the water flow.

The deposit of the instruments of ratification at the Pan American Union was delayed for two nearly years owing to the dissolution of the DFCP that same year, leaving the management of Mexico’s forests and the advancement of nature protection legislation to the Ministry of Agriculture.  

The Ministry essentially neglected this added duty as World War II shifted its officials’ attention to issues of food and raw material production. The instruments of ratification were finally deposited at the Pan American Union in March 1942 and, with them, Mexico became an official participant.

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320 Miguel Angel de Quevedo to General Eduardo Hay, Mexican Secretary of Foreign Relations, September 13, 1939.

321 For a detailed discussion on this, see Simonian, pp. 107–109.
Unfortunately, by 1942, Mexico's official status with the Convention no longer really mattered because neither Quevedo nor Zinzer were in a political position powerful enough to put the original vision of using Article 6 to support Mexican arguments for additional water rights into motion.

**Conclusion**

Mexican officials attended the Convention in impressive numbers and they were among the first to sign the treaty because the Convention presented an opportunity to cooperate with the United States in an international forum and they believed attending the Convention could only work in the long term interests of Mexican conservation, by advancing knowledge of Mexican programs and by learning about those systems that worked well in other nations. Most importantly, officials in the Mexican Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game saw Article 6 of the Convention as an opportunity to force the United States to respect its water rights to the Colorado River. Because it mandated international scientific cooperation in international wildlife protection, this provision could be used not only to enhance wildlife protection measures along the border, but to raise awareness of the ecological consequences of diverting the river. In this way, the treaty could potentially be used to support Mexican officials arguments that U.S. extraction practices should be considered as a conservation issue as well as the fate of wildlife and migratory bird populations. Unfortunately for Mexico, the dissolution of the DCFP prevented any real implementation of the vision that Quevedo and Zinzer had for the utilization of Article 6. Instead, water rights to the Colorado continued to be an independently and often poorly investigated and addressed issue.
By 1942, the high point of Mexican conservation had passed and, between the ratification of the Convention on Nature Protection in Mexico and 1990, little occurred in the way of nature protection. Over the course of those 48 years, only thirteen national parks were established and, indeed, several of those parks created under Cárdenas were reduced in size to allow private industries to harvest previously protected resources. The vanishing species submitted for the Annex were the same species which had been previously protected under the Treaty for the Protection of Migratory Birds and Game Mammals, therefore offering no protections to species not already covered. Instead of utilizing the extraordinary opportunity at hand, Mexican Government officials failed to advance the conservation of resources and the protection of nature for the next fifty years.

Even though the Convention did not have a significant effect on conservation policies in Mexico in the decades immediately following ratification, perhaps more than any other nation studied in this dissertation, the Mexican case demonstrates the varied uses of conservation negotiations. In Mexico, conservationists did not need the Convention to assist them in the establishment of government departments, nature reserves classifications, or to mandate that the nation itself take part in nature protection. By 1940, it had a well developed system in place for the establishment and management of a varied conservation classification system. It had a wealth of national parks and reserves, and wildlife protection laws to address the more flagrant threats to vanishing species. It had a bird treaty with the United States that established a multitude of protections and identified more than one hundred vanishing species. And, perhaps most importantly, over the course of the 6 years preceding the Convention on Nature Protection, the Mexican Department of Forestry, Fish, and Game had a powerful political
ally in the form of President Lázaro Cárdenas, who worked with Quevedo to use the viveros, the national parks, and agricultural reform initiatives to effectively begin to address social concerns in rural areas. Rather, Mexicans sought to use the Treaty to influence U.S. water use policies. The next chapter examines the actual meeting of the Convention on Nature Protection in Washington, D.C., in May 1940.
CHAPTER VI

NEGOTIATING FOR NATURE: CONFLICTING COMMITTEES, 1938–1942

This chapter examines American Committee efforts to prepare a convention to protect nature during the period between the Pan American Union Conference in 1938 and the meeting of the Convention on Nature Protection in 1940. It focuses specifically on the debates that emerged both within the conservation movement itself, and between governmental and non-governmental interests (the U.S. Inter-American Committee of Experts on the one hand and the American Committee’s Pan American Committee on the other) each determined to see their vision of a wildlife protection regulation regime through to fruition. The outcome of that debate informed the provisions which defined the Convention on Nature Protection and represented the first example of successful non-governmental-governmental cooperation toward establishing a multileveled, multilateral regulatory framework.

This chapter argues that framers were divided over whether to pursue a more strict, preservationist approach to wildlife protection, by crafting a treaty and seeking the ratification of an agreement that would go further in the protection, indeed the preservation, of wildlife than anything previously envisioned, or to take a more tempered gradual approach that stressed the conservation and management of nature and natural resources. Once the 1938 Pan American Convention adopted Resolution 38, establishing the Convention on Nature Protection, those advocating the more comprehensive approach
were sidelined from the official Inter-American Committee of Experts and established their own Pan America Committee led by Harold Coolidge to maintain involvement and assistance in facilitating the upcoming Convention. Moreover, drafters harnessed the shifting political climate in Latin America to frame the conservation of natural resources and the protection of wildlife as being in the long-term interests of Latin Americans. The international network of interest groups produced a mass accumulation of information and generated popular support in both the United States and Latin America; it also produced a Convention that was designed to develop uniform standardized language for defining nature protection institutions and utilize private, non-governmental interest in the hemispheric protection of wildlife.

The Committees

Although Wetmore had hoped to limit his involvement in the Convention, he found he could not refuse to participate when Secretary of State Cordell Hull asked him to be the U.S. delegate to the Inter-American Committee of Experts (IACE). Hull believed that Wetmore’s work with the Smithsonian and the AC, and his position as the Secretary General of the upcoming 8th American Scientific Congress made him one of the most qualified and most connected candidates for the position. To assist Wetmore, Hull appointed several government officials and prominent members of the conservation community to the U.S. Committee of Experts, including Ira Gabrielson (Fish and Wildlife Service), Victor Cahalane, (Wild Life Division, National Park Service), Homer L. Shantz (U.S. Forest Service), and Samuel Boggs (Department of State). The task

\[322\] Cordell Hull to Alexander Wetmore, September 16, 1939; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, United States Department of State, 1933, 1935–1942.
before it was vast as it had to fulfill the U.S. obligations to the Resolution and draft the
treaty, which mandated the appointment of a Committee of Experts to formulate
recommendations and to “draft a convention of international cooperation among the
American Republics relative to the preservation of fauna and flora.”323 As the United
States had the most diverse protection measures and the most protected areas, it would
take considerable time and effort to compile statistics of the various parks and reserves.
Moreover, the USIACE was also saddled with the responsibility of drafting the treaty to
present at the Convention. The legal responsibility of drafting the treaty seemed daunting
in addition to Committee members’ responsibilities and their respective positions in the
U.S. Government. This challenging workload provided Harold Coolidge an opportunity
to offer the services of the American Committee to assist in drafting the proposed treaty.

Although Hull had chosen not to appoint him to the IACE, Coolidge resolved to
continue his efforts to seek the maximum protection for wildlife throughout the Americas
by offering his services to the Governing Board of the Pan American Union, devoted to
overseeing the Convention, as a private consultant to the U.S. Committee of Experts with
special knowledge of international treaties. As noted in Chapter 2, the Governing Board
had assigned the U.S. Committee of Experts the task of writing a draft of the treaty and
submitting the entire Inter-American Committee of Experts at least two months before
the scheduled Convention. Delegates were to then consult officials in their respective
governments for their comments and be ready to present their concerns at the
Convention. To the Governing Board, Coolidge highlighted the large workload in front

323 American Committee Secretary’s Report, December 8, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating
to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee
Meetings, ACIC.
of Wetmore's Committee that had to be completed before the May Convention—not the least of which was compiling the necessary statistics to fulfill the provisions of the Resolution—as the reason for offering his, and by extension the American Committee's, services. Privately, though, he confided to fellow American Committee member Bill Sheldon his concern that, if left to the U.S. Committee alone, the chances were that they would draft a weak skeletal agreement to encourage governments to make changes, but leave out the necessary meat that would ensure that programs were actually enacted. In doing so, they would lose the opportunity to push the envelope and create the most comprehensive agreement possible. When asked, Governing Board members Diogenes Escalante, Diez de Medina, and Leon de Bayle accepted the offer of assistance and tasked Coolidge with writing the initial draft of the agreement, noting that the U.S. Committee would be hard pressed to both compile all of the data required by Resolution 38 prior to the Convention and draft an adequate agreement. As Alexander Wetmore was both a member of the American Committee and appointed to the U.S. Committee of Experts and as the American Committee had been responsible for Resolution 38 calling for the Convention in the first place, the Governing Board rationalized that Wetmore would have likely enlisted their assistance and would be willing to work with the Committee on acceptable provisions. Once the Governing Board had given its consent to Coolidge, Coolidge sponsored the Pan American Committee, composed primarily of members of the American Committee, in February 1939 to assist him in drafting the most complete agreement possible.\textsuperscript{324}

\textsuperscript{324} Harold Coolidge to Childs Frick, Esq., February 18, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Harper Report Funding.
When informed of the establishment of the Pan American Committee, Wetmore was ambivalent. He was clearly happy to have the responsibility of drafting the treaty off of the shoulders of his committee, allowing them to focus more on compiling the statistics necessary to fulfill the terms of the Resolution. Moreover, despite their disagreement on how to approach wildlife protection, Wetmore and Coolidge had always worked well together and, he believed, there was no reason to think that solid working relationship would not continue. Indeed, this solid relationship between the PAC and the U.S. Committee worked so well, as the two agreed to hold meetings on the same day sharing information, topics, and participants, specifically the AC surveys and U.S. Government perspective on wording the draft agreement, so that members of each were kept apprised of the others' activities. But, Wetmore expressed some skepticism that Coolidge would temper his enthusiasm sufficiently to draft a comprehensive, yet acceptable, agreement to introduce at the Convention, but his misgivings, Wetmore supported delegating the drafting to the Pan American Committee.

Ultimately Wetmore was right, Coolidge did not temper his enthusiasm; nor did Wetmore alter his more conservative approach. Indeed the two men disagreed numerous times over the degree of protection the Convention would be designed to provide. Coolidge, and his Pan American Committee, continued to take a stronger, more active approach to wildlife protection in the western hemisphere, arguing for the treaty to be extended to cover marine life, to ban poisons, and to provide for an team of scientists to monitor endangered wildlife populations. Coolidge’s concern was the protection of

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325 Wetmore to Coolidge, September 6, 1939; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Correspondence with Harold Jefferson Coolidge, 1939–1940.
wildlife and the minutes of the Pan American Committee meetings reflect that more hard
line approach. Wetmore and the U.S. Committee of Experts (primarily composed of U.S.
Government officials) pursued a more conservative approach, encouraging the Pan
American Committee to draft an agreement that would survive possible constitutional
challenges in Latin American legislatures. Once the framework was established, those
conservationists, scientists, and concerned government officials in their respective
countries could utilize that infrastructure to promote additional protection measures. Yet,
instead of hampering the creation of the Convention, these disagreements and these
perspectives worked well together, primarily because neither one ever gave up on what
they wanted. Instead, they kept expanding the various levels of the agreement.

These differing perspectives are due, in large part, to their respective experiences.
Coolidge, as a zoologist focused on African mega-fauna, had encountered the grisly and
brutal slaughter of gorillas, elephants, and rhinoceros in Africa. Witnessing this shocking
destruction during his late teens and early twenties spurred his activism and his
determination to eradicate the needless slaughter of wildlife. Wetmore, as an
ornithologist with the Smithsonian Institution, was equally committed to the cause of
wildlife protection. His more tempered approach had developed over the course of his
career as he observed the political realities surrounding the efforts of U.S.
conservationists to develop legislation for the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916 and 1936
and through his constant correspondence with Latin American conservationists assisting
in establishing constructive, implementable legislation. The Bird Treaty was successful,
but only after surviving a multitude of constitutional challenges to its legitimacy. His
experience extending those protection measures to Mexico convinced him that the only
way to really protect wildlife was to focus on creating laws that would survive potential challenges and be enforced. While the two perspectives provided for some lively debates and several disagreements, the combination of Coolidge's determination and Wetmore's practicality produced an agreement that incorporated both perspectives.

The two committees met, separately, for the first time at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C. on May 22, 1939. The U.S. Committee met in the morning to discuss the responses to the surveys the American Committee had distributed both before and after the adoption of the Lima Resolution. Wetmore and Coolidge decided to enlist the assistance of the members at the IACE with the drafting of the agreement because they were prominent U.S. Government conservationists and would undoubtedly have solid contributions to consider. The two decided to introduce the surveys to familiarize them with the receptivity the concept of the Convention had enjoyed in Latin America and the kinds of concerns officials had presented. The Pan American Committee was scheduled to hold its first meeting that afternoon, and Wetmore and Coolidge determined that the discussion from the earlier meeting could prove useful for the afternoon meeting. As such, members of the U.S. and the Pan American Committees attended both meetings.

**The First U.S. Committee of Experts Meeting: 10 a.m.**

Wetmore called the first meeting of the U.S. Committee of Experts to order at 10 a.m. In addition to the Committee members, Wetmore invited some of the most knowledgeable individuals in the management of protected regions—Arno Cammerer (Acting Director of the National Park Service), A.E. Demaray (future Director of the

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326 The minutes of this meeting are attached to the American Committee Secretary's Report, December 8, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
National Park Service), William Manger (Counselor to the PAU), T. Gilbert Pearson (National Audubon Society), Harold Coolidge and Reid Blair (American Committee) to attend and offer advice on the initial queries raised by the surveys. Pearson, Wetmore, Coolidge, and Manger were to serve as the Latin American specialists on the Committee. The first order of business was to address the responses from Latin American officials and conservationists that the American Committee had gathered when developing its resolution and offered to donate to the IACE. The second, equally important, concern on the agenda was to discuss the feasibility of including a provision to the treaty that required participating states to continually update vanishing species lists.

In response to the American Committee survey discussed in Chapter 2, Latin American scientists, officials, and citizens, as well as U.S. businessmen in Latin America, responded in large numbers and with enthusiasm. Indeed, by March 1939, the American Committee had received roughly 100 responses. Wetmore had summaries of the surveys made and distributed to the members of the meeting. All responses indicated at least some level of interest and illuminated the most pressing concerns for Latin American nations. Certain patterns in the answers were evident immediately. Those from government officials and scientists addressed issues of implementation and resource allocation. Scientists inquired as to who would be responsible for investigating species and the time frame for compliance and submission. Nearly every response requested clarification on what constituted a “vanishing species” and the timeframe within which nations had to compile lists, on the ways in which protection measures might conflict.

327 Special Committee Report to the Secretary, December 8, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC. The Special Committee was formed in late September, although the exact date is unknown.
with national economic priorities, and whether there were to be penalties if their nation failed to comply within the time allotted.

The survey completed by Bolivian Ministry of the Interior (MRI) official Don Carlos Dorado Chopitea indicated the types of obstacles posed to conservation efforts in some Latin American countries. Many Latin American countries suffered from political instability and weak governmental institutions. Dorado regretted that Bolivia had not established national parks, reserves, or game legislation, and did not have a sufficiently developed scientific community to call upon in the compilation of information. Although Bolivia had suffered a good deal of political turmoil following a coup in 1930 resulting in new presidential administrations in 1930, 1934, 1936, and 1938, Dorado was confident that the most recent constitution would stand the test of time. Dorado and other Ministry officials were interested in establishing the institutional infrastructure needed to facilitate the conservation of natural resources and to establish national parks. Indeed, the MRI had recently petitioned officials in the capital city of La Paz to create a national park just outside of the city. For this reason, they were most interested in the prospects posed by the draft Convention. Yet, in his response to the American Committee survey, Dorado stressed that, given the overall political and economic instability over the last decade, he did not believe the Government of Bolivia was prepared to create large national parks like those in the United States. Nevertheless, he and other officials with the MRI wanted to find ways to balance protection measures with political and economic

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328 The Chaco War was largely responsible for the upset in Bolivian politics during the 1930s. Good sources on both the War and Bolivia's political turmoil include Bruce Farcau, The Chaco War (Westport: Praeger, 1996); Carlos Parodi, The Politics of South American Boundaries, (Westport: Praeger, 2002); and Jo-Marie Burt and eds., Politics in the Andes: Identity, Conflict, Reform (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004).
realities by establishing national parks while creating sustainable programs to manage the
copper mining industry. He asked about the level of development allowed inside of the
parks by the U.S. National Parks System. More specifically, Dorado wanted to know if
employing the varying degrees of protection outlined in the American Committee letter
attached to the survey would allow for resource extraction while maintaining scenic
spots. Finally, he requested information on the overall cost of parks management, noting
that it was unlikely that the Government of Bolivia would be capable of investing
significantly in the implementation of protection legislation.329 Other less developed
Andean nations in South America in the 1930s demonstrated similar concerns. Paraguay,
Peru, and Ecuador had all experienced political upset during the 1930s and all were
deeply affected by the slumping global economy.330 Yet, responses indicate that the
national government of each nation had begun to make efforts to establish an institutional
infrastructure, including Ministries of Agriculture and Interior for the purpose of
implementing more efficient, scientific management of natural resources. Government
officials in Ecuador, Paraguay, and Peru had made strident efforts to initiate national
conservation legislation with varying degrees of success.331 All were receptive to the
idea of attending a Convention to discuss protection legislation but skeptical of successful

329 Don Carlos Dorado Chopitea to the AC, July 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to
Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee
Meetings, ACIC.

330 A good source on political upset in the Andean region during the 1930s is Jo-Marie Burt and Philip
Mauceri, eds., Politics in the Andes: Identity, Conflict, Reform.

331 All had established Ministries of Interior and Agriculture between 1934 and 1938 in an attempt to
address those ecological problems associated with farming and natural resource extraction. This
information was found in the minutes of the American Committee meetings for these years. HUA, HUG
(F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28,
Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

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implementation of such regulations due to problems convincing their national congresses to pay for programs initiated by the gathering.

A. E. Demaray outlined a five-part protection program to address Bolivian Ministry official Dorado’s question regarding the degree of development in national parks and the overall cost of parks management. This program categorized the degree of protection from least to most—those areas in which economic use was supervised; those areas meant solely for recreation; those areas in which wildlife and “objects of aesthetic, historic or scientific interest” were strictly protected; areas classified as reserves to protect “superlative” scenery; and, finally, the most strict protection was recommended for those areas containing flora, fauna and geology of particular national interest. This multi-tiered classification system allowed nations unable to devote resources to maintaining a fully protected national park, such as Bolivia, to participate by tailoring the level of protection to meet local political and economic realities. When conditions permitted, those reserves could then be upgraded or downgraded on a case-by-case basis.

The response of a Peruvian scientist with the Instituto del Mar, German Morales Macedo, touched upon a second, equally important, concern—the debate over whether to

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332 American Committee Secretary’s Report, December 8, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

333 Demaray reiterated the points he made at the May 22 meeting in a letter from Demaray to Coolidge, June 6, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
include marine life in the Convention. This had not been discussed at length by members of the AC. There had been some move to include marine mammals, but no one really determined, as of 1939, what to do. Morales note brought the concern to the forefront of the discussion. specifically wanted to know if the Government of Peru should include fish species on the list of vanishing species and, if so, should they include both fresh and salt water species. Morales then noted that, given his experience at the Instituto, he did not believe Peruvian Government officials would be inclined to enact measures that extended protection to marine life, because of the potentially negative effects it could have on the fishing industry. Peru was not the only nation to express concern over the possible inclusion of marine life to the Convention. Ecuadorian and Mexican officials with their respective departments of fisheries also expressed skepticism over the likelihood that their national congresses would support such an endeavor. This theme had been brought up several times by the drafters of the Pan American Resolution who were concerned that including the protection of marine wildlife, specifically the manatee, might be rejected because those protections offered to one marine species might then be transferred to others. They were particularly concerned that those protections would negatively influence the salmon fishing industry.

The debate over whether to include marine life in the Convention reveals the differences between the perspectives of the Pan American Committee members drafting


335 Secretary’s Report, ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
the Treaty and the members of the U.S. Committee of Experts. Coolidge, in early
discussions and exercising a certain degree of control over the draft, kept open the
possibility of including marine wildlife in the Convention, arguing that protection should
be extended to those mammal mega-fauna in the ocean. Yet, even Coolidge
recognized the problems associated in applying regional protection measures to the
vastness of the ocean and he did not want to see the Convention collapse for lack of
agreement on that single issue. For this reason, the American Committee made only a
vague allusion to fisheries protection in the survey while continuing discussions on the
matter with U.S. Government officials.

Acting Director of the U.S. National Park Service Arno Cammerer strongly
recommended focusing the Convention on land-based mega fauna, and leaving the
protection of fish for another international agreement. Not one to leave anything out if
it was possible to include it, Coolidge inquired into the possibility of including a
provision for the protection of freshwater fish, noting that opposition to this proposition
was likely to be less as fresh water fish were not nearly as profitable as their salt water
counterparts. Cammerer disagreed, emphasizing that there was enough overlap between
the two that to offer protection to those anadromos species, fish such as salmon that travel
in both fresh and salt water, would require protecting salt water fish as well. Once fish
reached the open ocean, commercial fishing interests would prohibit the establishment of

336 Ibid.

337 American Committee Secretary's Report, December 8, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to
Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee
Meetings, ACIC.

338 Ibid.
any effective protection measures for fish. The likelihood that nations with lucrative fishing industries like Peru, Ecuador, Chile, Mexico, or even the United States would sign a Convention with a fisheries provision attached was infinitesimal. Coolidge responded that leaving out water-bound fauna jeopardized the chances for protecting vanishing aquatic wildlife, such as otter, mink, and beaver. Cammerer concluded that the Convention was the first of its kind and framers should focus on drafting the least controversial draft possible. Including the subject of fish would significantly complicate the equation. The rest of the committee members were inclined to agree. As a result of this discussion, the question over whether to include fish on the vanishing species lists was solved, and the issue of fish protection was dropped from the agenda of the Convention. Coolidge, however, continued to promote the protection of aquatic species in his meetings with the Pan American Committee.339

The third, most problematic, issue raised by Latin Americans across the board was the issue of the vanishing species lists. The most detailed response questioning the necessity of the vanishing species lists came from Venezuelan ornithologist and sometimes government official, William Phelps, Jr. Phelps inquired as to the proposed timeframe within which nations would have to create a vanishing species list and enact legislation to protect those species. Aware of the difficulties many countries would face, he suggested that perhaps the Convention would enjoy more support without the stipulation requiring species lists at all. To illustrate his point, he submitted a thirteen-

339 Fish never seemed to generate the same type of support that migratory birds and mega-fauna given the low anthropomorphic sentiment surrounding cold-blooded fish. For more information on some of the inherent differences between conserving plants, animals, birds and fish, see Kurkpatrick Dorsey, "Scientists, Citizens, and Statesmen: U.S. Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era," *Diplomatic History* 19 (3) Summer, 1995: 407–429.
page list of both birds and animals in dire need of protection and noted that it was the compilation of nearly two decades worth of work conducted by him and his father, employing the assistance of several friends and multiple foreign scientific institutions.\textsuperscript{340} The Venezuelan scientific community focused on mammals was, comparatively, less developed and it would take considerable time for researchers to put together a substantial list cataloguing mammals.\textsuperscript{341} Phelps’ primary and legitimate concern was that, for these lists to be effective, they would need thorough investigation and yearly updates. In 1939, he feared, most nations in Latin America were ill-equipped to submit lists that would be both complete and accurate. While he could generate a list of birds and plants, owing to his connections through the Servicio de Botanico and the National Herbarium, a provision mandating a general vanishing species list would require significant support. He did not, he confessed, believe that it was feasible for Venezuela to invest in it given the tenuous political situation facing the nation in the late 1930s (and, by extension, Colombia, Bolivia, and Paraguay).\textsuperscript{342}

The Committee then discussed Phelps’ response concerning the compilation of vanishing species lists. Again, the aims of the maximalists like Coolidge conflicted with the political, economic, and institutional realities in Latin America. Indeed, the issue proved to be contentious throughout the proceedings as preservationists like Coolidge

\textsuperscript{340} William H. Phelps, Jr. to the AC, undated; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

\textsuperscript{341} The discussion of Phelps’ response can be found in Secretary’s Report, ACIWLP Ninth Annual Meeting, December 14, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

\textsuperscript{342} Recounted in a memorandum from Coolidge to L Griscom, undated, 1940; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
insisted that these lists were crucial to provide scientists and government officials with the information needed to determine what areas needed more pronounced protection measures. Coolidge and Reid Blair both acknowledged the validity of Phelps' position that nations without solid scientific communities would have a difficult time meeting the requirement, but both maintained their support for the inclusion of vanishing species lists. Without an adequate description of migratory species populations, national hunting regulations and habitat protection, and ongoing threats to those species, they feared it would be more difficult to acquire funding from national governments.

Wetmore, however, believed it would be best to leave the issue of vanishing species for a future conference and, instead, to use this Convention to standardize protection legislation across the hemisphere, which he considered to be a substantial accomplishment in itself. Such lists required infrastructure essential to the study of wildlife, including a solid scientific community to draft plans and programs to manage wildlife populations efficiently. Wetmore proposed using this treaty to get that infrastructure in place and initial protection programs implemented. After this was accomplished successfully, a second treaty could be proposed for cataloguing endangered species. Until that point, Wetmore argued that demanding the submission of vanishing species lists would needlessly postpone the signature and ratification of the Convention. The National Park and Forest Service representatives concurred, but all were reluctant to drop the inclusion of some kind of monitoring list from the treaty entirely. All agreed to

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343 American Committee Secretary's Report, December 8, 1939.

344 Notes for Washington meeting, May 22 at 10 a.m.; HUA, HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
brainstorm the matter with their respective colleagues and to table discussion of the lists until the second meeting. The meeting adjourned at noon.\[^{345}\]

**The Pan American Committee Meeting: 2 p.m.**

That afternoon, the Pan American Committee held its first meeting at 2 o’clock. Pearson, Manger, Wetmore, and Coolidge reconvened after lunch and were joined by NPS officials C.C. Presnall, C.P. Russell, and Victor Cahalane, Bureau of the Biological survey F.C. Lincoln and Bill Sheldon with the American Committee. After presenting the summation of the morning meeting, they turned to the first issue on the agenda—devising a uniform framework for comprehensive nature protection in the form of national parks and reserves that would be acceptable in all American countries. Cahalane introduced Demarray’s five-tiered classification system from the morning meeting.

The first classification was geared toward nations without national parks or developed tourist industries. In these *national reserves*, limited natural resource extraction and some level of economic development would be allowed, providing it was monitored by government officials and targeted those undeveloped areas suitable for recreational activities. These areas would require little in the way of management, as private companies would apply for permits to either the state or national agency responsible for managing the reserves when extracting in those regions and the governments would enter consultation with those companies on an individual case by case basis. These reserves would encourage those nations with no conservation infrastructure to start with these limited measures and, Cahalane hoped, eventually implement greater levels of protection.

\[^{345}\] Ibid.
The next two classifications, national parks and national monuments, required more active protection measures. These areas would be afforded the most "strict protection" with complete "protection and preservation of superlative scenery." Pan American Committee members agreed that national parks would be most attractive to those nations with reserves already established, as opposed to those nations without any form of protected region, as it would provide a framework for essentially upgrading those reserves into the more protected realm of parks. Natural monuments were also thought to be easily implemented for nations just beginning to initiate protection measures as they could be "regions, objects, or living species of flora and fauna of interest to which strict protection is given." This classification could be applied to almost anything and would include protection for at least some habitat.

The fourth classification, a wilderness reserve, was to be afforded the highest level of protection the government could allow. These reserves included a stipulation for the "rigid exclusion of the public accomplished, when necessary, by administrative order." Absolutely no development would be allowed—there would be no roads and limited permits would be issued to people visiting the region. While, Cahalane noted, this type of reserve was the least likely to be established—indeed he privately did not believe any nation other than the United States would ever actually create such a reserves—he included it for the potential long term interests of nature protection. Those nations which had established national parks and advanced nature management programs

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347 Demaray to Coolidge, June 6, 1939. A copy of this letter was attached to a letter from Coolidge to Wetmore, June 15, 1939; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Correspondence with Harold Jefferson Coolidge, 1939–1940.
might one day invest in such a reserve and it was better to include the provision in the treaty than to overlook the possibility that it could one day occur. Pan American Committee members concurred with this. Bill Sheldon argued that the inclusion of such reserves may encourage nations to create some at a later date. Coolidge saw the inclusion of reserves as a benchmark that nations could work toward. These categories were unanimously accepted by the Pan American Committee.  

The final classification applied to migratory birds. As several bird species traveled from the northernmost tip of North America to the southernmost tip of South America, PAC members noted they should be granted the most extensive protections. Wetmore sought to extend geographically the migratory bird agreements set by the United States, Canada, and Mexico in the 1916 and 1936 treaties, without seeking to go beyond their legal frameworks. These migratory bird agreements blanketed migratory bird protection legislation across North America and covered more than a thousand species of birds. He proposed devising a list of those migratory species not covered

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348 Committee notes, May 22, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).

349 Following close on the heels of the Lacey Act (1900) and the Weeks-McLean Law (1913), the United States and Canada signed the Migratory Bird Treaty of 1916, which focused on ending the commercial feather trade which had decimated migratory bird populations and ruled that all migratory birds, their eggs, nests and feathers, were protected, and lists of species articulated which species were afforded protection. The Lacey Act, passed in 1900, authorized the U.S. Secretary of the Interior “to adopt measures to aid in restoring game and other birds in parts of the United States where they have become scarce or extinct and to regulate the introduction of birds and animals in areas where they had not existed.” Lacey Act, 16 U.S.C. § 701, May 25, 1900. The Weeks-McLean Law (effective March, 1913) was aimed at stemming harmful commercial market hunting and illegal interstate shipment of migratory birds, by removing migratory birds from the jurisdiction of the states and placing them in the custody of the federal government. As such, no state could enact gaming or commerce laws which might threaten species within their borders. The Migratory Bird Treaty Act was the international extension of the Weeks-McLean Law, aimed at protecting migratory birds which traveled amidst the United States and Canada. Good sources on these acts are Kurkpatrick Dorsey, *The Dawn of Conservation Diplomacy: U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1998), Part III; and John Reiger, *American Sportsmen and the Origins of Conservation*, (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2001), chapters 6 and 7.
under the existing agreements and making sure that they were covered by the Convention. T. Gilbert Pearson, however, sought more restrictive legislation. Having recently returned from a ten month trip during which he visited nine of the South American countries evaluating bird protection laws and surveying wildlife conditions, he argued for including provisions against the unregulated use of poison. Millions of birds were killed each year, both intentionally and accidentally, he observed, by poisoned water and food supplies.

This issue proved to be a point of contention between Coolidge and Wetmore. Coolidge supported Pearson’s position and argued for a ban on poison. Wetmore disagreed, noting that including such a specific provision might alienate some national congresses (especially those in Central America and the United States), which might refuse to ratify the Convention on the grounds that poison was used to control crop-eating pests or that it would inhibit future advances in crop technology. Citing the “greater good” of the treaty, Wetmore was “absolutely opposed to the inclusion” of the mandate outlawing poison.\(^{350}\) Coolidge, fearing to miss the opportunity, and Pearson, disturbed over the decimation of bird populations, agreed to leave the poison ban in the skeletal plan. The rest of the Committee agreed that the problem was one worth addressing, as poison not only affected the insects it targeted, but birds, fish, and mammals as well. F.C. Lincoln noted that the U.S. Bureau of Biological Survey had recently compiled a report on the negative effects of poison on wildlife, which he would bring to the next

\(^{350}\) Wetmore to Coolidge, September 6, 1939; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Correspondence with Harold Jefferson Coolidge, 1939–1940.
meeting. C.P. Russell thought that the issue should remain open for future discussions.\textsuperscript{351} As a result of Coolidge’s persistence, the ban of poisons made it onto the first draft of the treaty, where it was subsequently removed by the Governing Board, whose members believed the issue to be too controversial.

The third item on the agenda dealt with the thorny issue of vanishing species lists. The committee took a poll to see who believed the lists should be removed without further discussion. Not even Wetmore raised his hand. The committee then delved into what they considered the problems with the inclusion of a provision for lists. First, did any government institution in the United States have vanishing species lists. Lincoln responded that, while some state game institutions had lists of animals they considered endangered and others had conducted surveys to compile information, there was no uniformity to the lists and no clear definition as to what it meant to be a “vanishing” species. Indeed, there is nothing in the minutes that suggests what the Committee members concretely defined what the term meant. As a result, there was no sense of the accuracy to the compilations. Lincoln proposed developing a provision to provide a unified and categorized system to determine what species were in danger (and to what degree) of becoming extinct. Cahalane proposed a flexible approach which would allow states to attach a list to the treaty whenever the time and money became available, believing an international agreement recommending that nations invest in a national vanishing species list, based on solid scientific criteria, would be an enormous step forward in wildlife protection. Coolidge motioned for members to return to their

\textsuperscript{351} Committee notes, May 22, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
respective institutions and develop what they considered appropriate criteria designating
a vanishing species to be submitted at the second meeting. The motion was seconded by
Lincoln and adopted by the Committee unanimously.

The fourth item on the agenda, the regulation of commercial exploitation of
endangered species, was less straightforward. Many of the members of the American
Committee believed that the failure on this point had been the true tragedy of the 1933
London Convention. It had not been sufficient to declare the rhino, elephant, and giraffe
“protected,” or to designate national parks to protect habitats, without providing for
effective enforcement measures against poachers who continued to harvest endangered
populations regardless of the law. Instead, the draft treaty required nations to enforce
measures to stem the traffic of endangered animals. Coolidge proposed a somewhat
complicated system that would require national governments to finance wildlife
biologists while they conducted thorough inventories of wildlife populations. These
biologists would then structure multiple lists according to the level of protection each
required and the types of industries active in their regions of habitat. They would then
device plans of protection to be presented to national governments for approval.
Economists would then be contracted to study the commercial industries dependent on
resource extraction and develop detailed cost analysis projections on how wildlife
protection programs would affect each industry.352

Wetmore thought this went too far and that Latin American nations would hardly
agree to such a costly and complicated plan that would be virtually impossible to
implement. The goal of this treaty, he asserted, was to create a series of provisions

352 Ibid.
designed to assist nations in the creation of comprehensive nationwide conservation laws, not to regulate international trade. Even if the Pan American Union had the resources and the willingness to invest in regulating that trade in the western hemisphere, there was no global institution capable of regulating trade to other regions. Neither the American Committee nor the U.S. Committee of Experts had the resources to take on that role, nor did he think that it was their responsibility. The issue of international trade of vanishing species was outside of the scope of this particular agreement, and as such the provision should be struck. Although he recognized he was in the minority, he repeated his argument from the earlier meeting that the issue of developing endangered species lists should be left out of this treaty altogether and left for a future convention. If national legislatures wanted vanishing species lists, they could fund scientists to create them, but Wetmore did not think it was worth risking the Convention altogether for a set of lists that would likely not be complete and would require a significant amount of time and resources that could be elsewhere devoted.

Privately, Coolidge pressed the issue. He tried to find assistance in his determination to regulate international commerce of rare species from the U.S. Department of State. Coolidge encouraged State Department officials to consider the trade of rare species a violation of the Monroe Doctrine and suggested using armed force

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353 The international commerce in rare species was an ongoing problem and one Coolidge had tried to find a way to resolve. In August 1937, the Executive Committee of the American Committee received a letter from van Tienhoven noting the number of Europeans returning from tropical vacations in Brazil, the Caribbean Islands, and Central America with exotic birds and animals. He also noted that, without laws regulating the purchase, shipment, and sale of rare animals, extinction of several species was imminent. Phillips, Coolidge, and Wetmore worked together to lobby steamship companies to stop allowing tourists to board with cages. They received thirty “cordial and cooperative” responses promising to keep an eye out for bird and animal cages. I found no additional information on whether or not steam ships ever reported or banned those tourists ‘seen’ with cage-loads of rare animals. Minutes of the Ninth Executive Meeting of the ACIWLP, September 30, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
to stop wildlife smuggling. There is no evidence to suggest any government official ever seriously considered this unlikely proposal, but he continued to use this argument in the draft of the treaty, inserting a provision to connect illegal wildlife smuggling with the Monroe Doctrine. The point was dismissed when William Manger refused to support this provision, noting that the State Department would never agree to it and arguing that such a provision would no doubt alienate those Latin American nations that had been subject to U.S. interventionist schemes.  

The fifth and sixth items on the agenda dealt with legal issues. Wetmore asserted it was necessary to include a provision stating the treaty would not conflict with preexisting international agreements. More importantly, he raised the question of the constitutionality of international protection of non-migratory wildlife. In the event the treaty proved unconstitutional in a given nation after the nation had signed and ratified the agreement, he inquired as to the terms of release. Manger dismissed this as the agreement specifically stated that the treaty would in no way supersede any existing treaty or bolster the power of the national governments.  

The members adjourned the first meeting of the Pan American Committee at 4:15 p.m., after moving to table the discussion over whether to invite the British or French observers to the Convention until the second meeting in October.

At the second Pan American Committee meeting, held on October 2, Coolidge opened the floor to discussion over extending invitations to British, French, and Canadian

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355 Ibid.
observers. Coolidge was in favor of inviting as many representatives as possible with interests in conservation in the Americas to attend the Convention. He noted that U.S. observers had attended the 1932 Conseil International de la Chasse and the 1933 London African Convention. Moreover, Coolidge mentioned Lord Onslow, with the British Society for the Protection of the Fauna of the Empire, had expressed interest in attending the Convention.\footnote{Coolidge to Wetmore, October 4, 1938; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Correspondence with Harold Jefferson Coolidge, 1939–1940.} It was an interesting position for Coolidge to take as he had been one of the prime advocates of backing out of the International Galápagos Committee because he wanted it to be more American in nature and less European. Unlike the IGC, where the British and Americans competed for influence, however, the Convention was devoted to institutionalizing conservation measures across the western hemisphere. Given that these empires had holdings in Latin America, they should be allowed to take part in the agreement. Moreover, in the event that these colonies eventually broke away from the empire, there would be a framework for conservation that the new governments could capitalize on. With that goal in mind, governments could not compete for dominance, they could only cooperate in conservation. By allowing participation on behalf of British Honduras, British Guiana, and French Guiana, the treaty would take advantage of the cooperative environment to advance protection legislation as far as possible.\footnote{There was no mention of participation from those the Caribbean islands still under European rule.} “If the inviting of the British observer to this meeting would help in promoting a favorable atmosphere towards the Convention,” then Coolidge was all for it.\footnote{Committee notes, October 2, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Harold J Coolidge, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).}
Others were not convinced that sending out blanket invitations to whoever wanted to attend was a good idea. Sheldon argued that the natural symbolism of uniquely American cooperation and the uniquely American approach to conservation was at stake, the very essence of what made the western hemisphere different from its Old World counterparts. It was necessary to stress the close cultural connection amongst the American nations. Perhaps eventually, Sheldon concluded, once hemispheric protection legislation was well established and the emphasis on cultural connections secure, the PAU could invite the European colonies in the Americas to sign the Convention, but certainly not until the current political turmoil eased. By the end of the second meeting on October 2, 1939, the dynamic had swung in favor of excluding all governments not members of the PAU as a result of the onset of World War II, concluding that, “our energies can most hopefully be devoted to New World problems.” Wetmore argued that given the war in Europe, inviting the European nations might possibly be irrelevant, as they would not be able to assist in nature protection in the Americas if Hitler was rampaging his way toward their respective homelands.359

A conundrum emerged over the question of Canada. In 1939, Canada, the second largest nation in the hemisphere, was still not a member of the PAU.360 While Wetmore was adamant about not inviting delegates from any European empires, he wanted to include Canada in the meeting. Canada shared the longest border with the United States and the two had worked together successfully to sign the Fur Seal Treaty in 1908 and the

359 Ibid.

360 Canada became a member of the PAU in 1990.
Migratory Bird Treaty in 1916. The PAC petitioned the Governing Board to allow Canada to attend, but the Board denied the request. In an act of good will, the Board extended an invitation to Canadian delegates to attend as observers, but in the end no Canadian representatives attended the Convention.

At the close of the second meeting Coolidge reminded members of the committee that the Convention could not be seen as an attempt to push U.S. park policies on Latin America. Officials should open themselves to Latin American innovations and view this Convention as a chance to further nature protection beyond what had been considered in the United States:

One thing we must keep in mind in preparing this Convention is that we hope to develop an international policy for the Pan American countries that would even be an improvement on our own national park policy.

Furthermore, he warned Committee members not to share the details of the proposed draft with U.S. conservation or sportsmen organizations until the governments of the PAU were consulted. Coolidge believed that “every effort should be made not to give the impression that this draft Convention is a scheme of the American conservation societies to be put over on the governments of the other American Republics.” It was imperative, in this new environment of cooperation and the invigorated emphasis on

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362 Committee notes, November 21, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946.

363 Coolidge to Dr. A.E. Demaray, Acting Director of the NPS, June 16, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946.

364 Committee notes, November 21, 1939.

365 Ibid.
American solidarity, that this Convention be perceived as an American collaboration, not a U.S. initiated agreement. Coolidge even advised distancing U.S. involvement from the Resolution itself. In his correspondence with Michigan Senator Frederic Walcott, also a member of the Pan American Committee, Coolidge warned him not to "give any publicity to the part that Americans have played in sponsoring this Resolution. We must avoid any publicity that might annoy our neighbors to the South." Latin American governments had to identify the Convention as in their interests, not as a U.S. idea exported south, or it would not be implemented on a grassroots level.

Building Support

In June 1940, a mere four months before the Convention, Coolidge was significantly concerned that Latin American officials might not take enough interest in the Convention. In a letter to Wetmore, Coolidge noted:

I am so afraid that our Pan American neighbors will think that this is one more case of a put up job by interests in the U.S. It might even be healthy to have the American delegate... criticize the Convention at the time that it comes up for discussion so that the impression will not be conveyed that as far as the U.S. is concerned the suggested wording of the Convention is entirely satisfactory and has met with the approval of the various divisions of our government who might be involved in the enabling of it....

Wetmore responded three days later: "In our committee we have agreed that we should have some things to bring up in criticism of the draft as prepared for exactly the reason that you give," but his practical nature surfaced in the following sentence when he


367 Coolidge to Wetmore, January 26, 1940; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Correspondence with Harold Jefferson Coolidge, 1939–1940.
cautioned that he wanted to make sure that “the preliminary ideas [were] fairly well shaken down so as to cover as much ground as possible” before offering any criticism that might potentially sink the proposed articles.\(^{368}\) As Coolidge was convinced that any sense of United States dominance would limit the chances of the Convention, Wetmore was equally convinced that the United States must lead the way, as the U.S. model offered by far the most developed methods of wildlife protection. For Wetmore, the U.S. must provide leadership. In any case, to deny that the system introduced was modeled on the U.S. system was tantamount to condescension and would ultimately backfire. Far more important than discounting any relationship between the proposed parks system, Wetmore argued, was not “to include any statement regarding [future] reports since this might arouse some feeling of building up a check on what was being done in other countries.”\(^{369}\) The task at hand was to use language and draft provisions that would frame nature protection in the interests of all Americans.

In this much, Coolidge agreed. He worked relentlessly to advance that rhetoric to promote greater understanding across the Americas of the magnitude of the problem in U.S. and Latin American journals. To facilitate the flow of information, he had sponsored a translator (through the American Committee) from the Works Progress Administration and had all known Latin American conservation laws translated into English in October 1938.\(^{370}\) He published at least twenty-five articles in various sportsmen’s journals, outdoor magazines, and newspapers from these translations,

\(^{368}\) Wetmore to Coolidge, January 29, 1940; Ibid.

\(^{369}\) Wetmore to Coolidge, January 23, 1940; Ibid.

\(^{370}\) The Works Progress Administration was a relief program designed under the New Deal and implemented by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.
detailing Latin American national parks, fauna, and flora, and emphasizing the impending threats. In 1939 alone, he submitted 35 articles to various magazines, newspapers, and journals in both North and South America. In his most detailed article on international nature protection, written for the 1939 PAU Bulletin, Coolidge went to great lengths to praise the protection efforts of the other American nations and made every effort to remove mention of anything that might be interpreted as prejudicial or against Latin Americans.

His first unpublished draft hailed former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt for his exceptional efforts to expand the number of U.S. national parks. Fellow American Committee member, Bill Sheldon, cautioned against this, noting that Roosevelt was:

known in South America chiefly as the proponent of “dollar diplomacy” and the man with the “big stick”. When I have talked about him with a few South Americans I have met, it has always been a little like waving a red flag in the face of a bull.

But Coolidge wanted to invoke an equally powerful figure supporting conservation. He went with the “Great Khan of the 13th Century,” praising the Mongolian military leader as having established a common identity, under a unified leadership, and for implementing enforced hunting seasons in 1211. He then compared this process with the Convention, claiming the conservation of nature reflected a common American

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371 Minutes of the Executive Meeting of the ACIWLP, September 30, 1938; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

372 Bill Sheldon to Coolidge, March 27, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

373 In a letter to Sheldon, Coolidge noted there was little chance anyone would be offended by the reference, as no Latin Americans had been directly affected by Genghis Khan, whereas, undoubtedly many remembered Roosevelt. Coolidge to Sheldon, March 25, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Correspondence, William Sheldon.
identity. At the root of that identity were National Parks, which he praised as an Inter-American phenomenon, not a U.S. institution. Moreover, the Convention was to be administered by the PAU, the symbol of unified and cooperative American leadership.\textsuperscript{374}

Sheldon expressed his views on the uniquely American aspects of nature protection in \textit{A Pan American Treaty on Nature Protection}.\textsuperscript{375} Sheldon debunked the seemingly close cultural relationship between South America and Europe, instead emphasizing the connection between North and South America. Economic relations alone were not enough, the relationship

must be soundly built upon a foundation of intangible bonds... Such a bond is our common heritage of great mountain ranges, rich forests and all the various species of fauna and flora found within. Appreciation among all races of such common gifts of nature is a great stabilizing force.\textsuperscript{376}

While trade had been the tie that bound in the pre-1930s era, nature was the heritage which would connect the Americas from that point forward.

\textbf{Preparing the Draft}

While Coolidge made every effort to draft the most comprehensive treaty and build support in both North and South America, the U.S. Committee continued to meet to compile the data necessary to comply with the Lima Resolution. At their second meeting on November 8, members divided up the task of compiling information for Wetmore to

\textsuperscript{374} Minutes of the Executive Meeting of the ACIWLP, February 28, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

\textsuperscript{375} William Sheldon, "A Pan American Treaty on Nature Protection," undated. I have not been able to ascertain if this was ever published as the copy in the Coolidge papers was a draft. HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 30, PAU & Colleagues & Friends: William Sheldon, Member, Pan American Committee, PAU, 1938–42.

\textsuperscript{376} Sheldon, "A Pan American Treaty on Nature Protection."
deposit with the PAU for presentation at the Convention. Gabrielson was to gather data on the published Federal Laws dealing with migratory birds, state laws dealing with game, and all available data on U.S. wildlife refuges. Shantz was to prepare information on national game preserves, national forests, their respective administrative units, and endangered plants. Cahalane was to collect information on national parks, monuments, and wildlife species in critical danger.377

The U.S. Committee of Experts reconvened on November 21 to examine the draft agreement prepared by Coolidge’s Pan American Committee and to discuss potential constitutional problems in Latin America regarding natural monuments. At the last meeting of the PAC, members considered the inclusion of a provision in the Convention that would enable governments to declare a species a natural monument, thereby bringing those migrating species that had been declared vanishing under the jurisdiction of the national government. This provision, noted Wetmore, might deter possible constitutional battles over whether the state or national government had jurisdiction over wildlife. The concern was that those vanishing species with limited migration routes, specifically those not crossing international borders, would not be sufficiently protected outside of national reserves and parks. Not all members of the Committee, however, believed the provision was workable. Gabrielson thought it might require nations to extend the police powers of their federal governments as a means of enforcing treaties. Shantz questioned if a treaty authorizing a government to protect non-migratory wildlife was actually constitutional in all American Republics. Cahalane noted that dictatorships offered some advantages here.

as they provided strong central systems of government capable of enforcing treaties, whereas in nations with weaker national governments and stronger private and state sectors, commercial interests might hamper the enforcement of the provisions.\textsuperscript{378} All agreed, however, that the issue of the relationship between state and national rights over the use and/or protection of nature, and the creation of an international legal regime to implement the Convention should be tabled until an agreement was finalized.

The third and fourth meetings of the IAEC were dominated by the creation of endangered species lists. The Committee reached out for assistance to private organizations and state institutions in the continental United States\textsuperscript{379} Shantz offered an impressively thorough discussion of National Game Refuges and an "exhaustively complete" report prepared by the Wild Flower Preservation Society on endangered plants. Cahalane and Gabrielson developed a tentative list of endangered animals other than birds which they intended to submit to the NPS for confirmation. Wetmore compiled the list of birds.

Coolidge's committee corresponded regularly between May and December, when the second meeting of the PAC was held, ultimately formulating a draft with language and provisions that were both comprehensive and nonthreatening. In February 1940, the PAC submitted a copy of the draft to Jose Colom, the director of the Bureau of Agricultural Cooperation of the PAU, for review. The response is indicative of the ridiculous obstacles presented by bureaucracy. While Coolidge and Wetmore made

\textsuperscript{378} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{379} The decision was to collect information from the U.S. territories of Alaska and Hawaii after the Convention. Ibid.
every effort to keep each other and everyone else they knew who could be of assistance in the loop, the Bureau of Agriculture had been involved and therefore felt compelled to make a substantial commentary that was essentially a reiteration of everything already covered. Colom, who had been aware of the Convention through his work with the Pan American Union, returned six, single-spaced pages of typed comments aimed at making the acceptance of the treaty more plausible, encouraging the PAC to remove all references to “scenery” in national parks which, he noted, should be created solely for the practical purpose of saving wildlife from complete destruction. He crossed out every word related to “permanent” in the draft and in those sections where permanent referred to national parks, he crossed through it twice. In the margins, he emphasized that the use of the word “permanent” was too forceful and nations would insist upon retaining the right to create and disassemble parks in accordance with national interests. Additionally, Colom removed any reference to the PAU taking responsibility for enforcing the treaty. The PAU was a good forum for conducting negotiations and for connecting with the governmental and scientific institutions in each nation responsible for carrying it forward, but the PAU did not have the capacity enforce regulations. Instead, he asserted, the responsibility to monitor enforcement should belong to the signatory governments. The only article that met with Colom’s full approval was that calling for the protection of migratory birds. He requested that the PAC expand that section and include more specifics on methods of protection, including a list of specific species which migrated from North to South America. Coolidge politely disregarded Colom’s response,

380 Colom to Coolidge, October 16, 1940; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).
reiterating in his reply each one of the arguments the PAC had made in their submission of the drafted convention. His tone was clear, the draft treaty would include references to permanent parks and lists, and the PAU would be the agent of enforcement.  

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By February 1940, the Governing Board had enough information gathered by delegates for the Committee of Experts to compile and distribute a two-volume set detailing vanishing flora and fauna. Part I outlined a list of "vanishing" fauna, those species in danger of extinction, those species to be conserved, and those species which should be observed.  

Part II, a much smaller volume, focused solely on listing existing national parks and endangered flora. The first volume contained information from Argentina, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay, and Venezuela. The Governing Board distributed copies of the compilations and the draft of the treaty to all members on the Inter-American Committee of Experts and to the Foreign Ministries of each nation participating in the Washington Convention, hoping to spur on those Republics which had not sent in their information.  

The drafts were to be reviewed by both those government agencies responsible for the management and administration of the terms of the treaty as well as the federal governments responsible for signing it. All told, the Governing Board published four

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381 Coolidge to Colom, November 5, 1940; Ibid.  

382 Jose Smith to Wetmore, February 7, 1940; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Pan American Union, 1939–1946.  

383 Rowe to Coolidge, June 13, 1940; HUA, HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).  

384 Colom to Wetmore, May 2, 1940; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 99, Pan American Union, 1939–1946.
compilations by April 1940, amassing the most complete study of fauna and flora in the western hemisphere to date.

In March 1940, Coolidge requested that PAC members be granted permission to attend the Convention on Nature Protection. The Governing Board chose not to invite the PAC, noting that "no organization in this country would be invited to send observers or advisors." Because the Convention was being held in the United States, they were concerned that allowing participation by private citizens would allow for multiple interests from the United States to attend. The Governing Board wanted the number of representatives from Latin America to balance the number of U.S. citizens attending the meeting. Diogenes Escalante and de Bayle, in particular, noted that the majority of attendees at the previous three Inter-American Scientific Congresses had been from the United States. With this Convention, they wanted to stress the international nature of the proceedings. Instead of engaging in the tedious process of determining what nongovernmental organization or private consultant would be allowed to attend, the Governing Board decided to exclude all outside participation, in the hopes that delegates from Latin America would be more comfortable expressing their opinions. 385

In mid-April, Coolidge requested that the Department of State appoint the members of the PAC as U.S. delegates to the Convention, thereby allowing them to attend the proceedings. He noted specifically that Latin American governments were free to appoint as many attendants to the Convention as necessary, and as the Pan American Committee had been directly involved in every step of the development of the agreement,

385 Undated memorandum to the members of the Pan American Committee; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.
they should have the chance to be in attendance when the fruits of their labor were debated. Secretary of State Cordell Hull came through by appointing Coolidge, as well as the following private consultants, to serve in collaboration with the U.S. Committee of Experts: Isaiah Bowman, President of Johns Hopkins; C.G. Abbot, Secretary of the Smithsonian; Vannevar Bush, President of the Carnegie Institution; and Ross G. Harrison of the National Research Council. In addition to these individuals, Secretary Hull also appointed Under-Secretary of State Warren Kelchner, Chief Division of Cultural Relations, Bureau of Public Affairs, Ben Cherrington; and Chief Division of the American Republics, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, Laurance Duggan.

Conclusion

By 1938, hemispheric relations had improved, attendance at Pan American conferences was on the rise, and the American Committee had participated in a series of efforts to broaden conservation legislation in the western hemisphere. While some efforts had been more successful than others, members of the American Committee believed they could rectify their mistakes by expanding the size and scope of their proposals. Resolution 38, introduced at the Pan American Conference in 1938, was a model example of non-governmental actors working with government officials toward the common goal of wildlife protection. It was an extraordinary success in that it produced a Governing Board and an Inter-American Committee of Experts with delegates from almost all nations in the western hemisphere who devoted the better part of two years to compiling the information required to hold the Convention.

The process of sorting through the initial surveys illuminated an important difference in perspectives between Coolidge and Wetmore. Coolidge believed that the time was right to advance more stringent protection legislation and the most far reaching agreement he could draft. Like preservationists before him, Coolidge believed that nature, wilderness, and wildlife possessed an inherent value that should be respected and protected. Given the aura of good feelings brought about by the Good Neighbor Policy and the expanding participation at the Pan American Union (PAU), he resolved to push wildlife protection as far as he could. Wetmore, on the other hand, who had been integral to the development of the U.S.-Mexican bird treaty, preferred to focus on drafting legislation that was likely to pass through Latin American Congresses without difficulty, rather than constructing the most comprehensive protection regime imaginable. For Wetmore, the treaty would be the first step in getting legislation accepted, signed, ratified, and implemented. In a few years, providing the provisions survived any constitutional challenges, he believed the American Committee and the Pan American Union could propose additional regulations. By imposing so many provisions Wetmore feared that those national governments that lacked the institutional infrastructure to comply with even the most basic protection provisions would view the more detailed provisions with caution and ultimately not sign the agreement out of concern that their national government could not follow through on the agreement. Moreover, it could potentially take years for some Latin American nations to actually create those departments and invest in developing the necessary infrastructure. For the time being, he believed getting an agreement drafted, adopted, and ratified should be the primary focus.
The debate between Coolidge and Wetmore brought to light the inherent tension that existed at that time within the conservation movement over how best to proceed with wildlife protection. Coolidge, taking what one might call an idealistic approach, was personally invested and utterly determined to push conservation legislation as far as he could even if those limits went beyond the realm of what was politically possible. His more reserved counterpart, Wetmore, having been involved in the construction of international conservation legislation, emphasized a cautious approach, more in tune with current political realities on the ground. He tempered Coolidge’s sometimes more rash suggestions with calm logic and determination. Wetmore preferred vague language, with no rigid time limits, and he encouraged placing the responsibility for the execution of the treaty in the hands of those government officials who were prepared financially, legally, and politically, to enforce the provisions. By working with officials in the Department of State and in the Department of the Interior, Wetmore generated crucial support for the Convention and obtained much useful advice from individuals in both agencies. Coolidge’s successful bid to have the PAC—an entity he created entirely outside of the Convention machinery controlled by the Governing Board—draft the treaty ensured that his proposals would get a hearing, including the controversial requirement for vanishing species lists. Although not all of Coolidge’s proposals were enacted immediately, over the long-term, they provided a goal and a vision of wildlife protection toward which future conservationists could work.

The Convention on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere was held over the course of four sweltering days, May 12–16, 1940, in Washington D.C. The treaty which the Pan American Committee had drafted was
distributed to the delegates, and during the four days representatives from twenty
American nations discussed and debated the issue of Nature Protection in the
Hemisphere. The following chapter addresses the Convention itself, the ratification, the
problems, as well as the successes associated with its early implementation.
CHAPTER VII

THE PRECIPICE OF PRESERVATION: THE CONVENTION ON NATURE PROTECTION AND WILDLIFE PRESERVATION IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE, 1940–1950

This chapter takes a detailed look at the negotiations for the Convention on Nature Protection and argues that the resulting agreement created a workable framework for the responsible management of natural resources and the protection of nature, wildlife, and natural monuments in the Americas. The framers harnessed the growing Latin American interest in conservation, the U.S. Department of State’s interest in promoting Inter-American cooperation and the enormous body of information—compilation of laws in the Americas, vanishing species lists, etc.—gathered to support the Convention during the year and a half between the adoption of Pan American Resolution 38 and the meeting of delegates. First, this chapter discusses how the Convention provided a successful framework for wildlife protection by establishing a uniform vocabulary with which conservationists could describe protected regions and nature protection measures. Second, by making the provisions of the treaty flexible enough to accommodate nations at different stages of development, it allowed nations to tailor protection measures to suit local political and economic conditions, ensuring that all could participate in a Pan American enterprise. Third, by setting an ambitious target for comprehensive protection, the treaty laid the foundation for an effective regime of
nature conservation that could be enacted over time, as political, economic, and institutional conditions permitted. Fourth, perhaps most significant, the Convention represented an example of nongovernmental actors—conservationists, scientists, NGOs, and citizens—working in a cooperative international effort to write a multilateral treaty with limited input from government officials, one which proved to be largely successful and broadly ratified.

The Provisions

The conference for discussing the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere opened Monday, May 13, 1940. For the first time, the complete Inter-American Committee of Experts gathered together—the group of twenty-four representatives from seventeen American Republics met in the cavernous foyer of the Pan American Union.387 Ira Gabrielson, Director of the newly established U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, opened the proceedings with a short lecture on the bird treaties between the United States and Mexico and the United States and Canada, touting cooperation and camaraderie among conservationists, praising the United States for making every effort to protect those birds they “shared” with the Americas, and

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387 Miguel Quirno Lavalle and Angel Cabrera represented Argentina; Carlos Dorado Chopitea served as the delegate for Bolivia; Glycon de Paiva; Glycon de Paiva Texeira represented Brazil; Carlos Uribe Piedrahita was the delegate from Colombia. Costa Rica sent Don Modesto Martinez; Chile sent Eduardo Torrichelli Diaz and Carlos Munoz; Cuban representatives included Mario Sanchez Roig, Carlos de la Torre y Huerta and Abelardo Moreno; representative Julio Vega Battle attended from the Dominican Republic; Manuel Crespo represented Ecuador; Mariano Herrarte attended for Guatemala; Haiti sent Jacques Antoine; Mexico’s Miguel Angel de Quevedo, Juan Zinzer, Justo Sierra, and Daniel Galicia were in attendance; Panama appointed Don Julio E Briceno; Horacio Fernandez attended from Paraguay; Peru sent Morales Macedo; Uruguay sent Daniel Rey Vercesi; and Venezuela appointed Manuel Gonzalez Vale. Jose Luis Colom and Jose Ignacio Smith served as the Secretary and sub-secretary General respectively from the Pan American Union; and Harold Coolidge was included in on the discussions as a technical advisor. Delegates from Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador were not present.
encouraging other nations to do the same. Delegates received a copy of the Pan American Committee draft treaty to read over that afternoon. Alexander Wetmore was appointed the Chairman of the Inter-American Committee of Experts. The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m. The next morning, the delegates returned to the PAU to review the draft of the agreement. The preamble, “proclaiming the desire of the nations of the American Republics to protect and preserve in their natural habitat, representatives of all species and genera of their native flora and fauna, including migratory birds, in sufficient numbers and over areas extensive enough to assure them from becoming extinct through any agency within man’s control,” was approved without discussion.

The actual provisions contained in the draft treaty were as follows. Article I defined protected areas in an effort to encourage uniformity among the various national and provincial codes that characterized parks and reserves already in existence. A national park offered “protection and preservation” of species and habitat, by prohibiting the “hunting, killing, and capturing” of fauna and flora inside of the park boundaries. Borders were to remain static, unchangeable unless the national government ordered a special decree, which included the reason for the alteration. Limited development in the form of recreational, tourist, and educational facilities was permitted for the purpose of generating public interest in nature. National reserves were aimed at the “conservation

388 Untitled speech written and delivered by Ira Gabrielson to the opening session of the CNP, May 13, 1940; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Box 88, Eighth American Scientific Congress, 1940, General correspondence, 1939–1948.


390 Draft, Articles I and III.
and utilization of natural resources under government control,” providing protection to
wildlife within their borders only “in so far as this may be consistent with the primary
purpose of such reserves.” These reserves allowed for monitored natural resource
extraction to prevent large-scale destruction, which the drafters hoped would spark more
sustainable development of resources. *Nature monuments* were regions, objects, or living
species of particular national “aesthetic, historic or scientific” value. Protection afforded
to monuments was to be as complete as possible. *Strict wilderness reserves* were those
spaces “characterized by primitive conditions” and which prohibited all forms of
commercial and transportation development.

Second, the draft highlighted the need to move quickly in enacting the provisions
establishing nature reserves. The treaty articles urged nations to “explore at once the
possibility of establishing” said reserves and in “all cases where such establishment is
feasible, the creation thereof shall be begun as soon as possible.” If it were not possible
to create any reserves immediately, nations were advised to find “suitable areas, objects
or living species of fauna or flora” and protect them “as early as possible.”

Governments were also encouraged to create departments to oversee the implementation
of “suitable laws and regulations for the protection and preservation of flora and fauna”
outside of the national parks. All were to keep the Governing Board, with an office at
the PAU, informed of all currently existing reserves and of efforts to create new ones.

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391 Draft, Article I.
392 Draft, Article II.
393 Draft, Article V.
394 Draft, Article X.
Third, the draft promoted scientific study and education as a means of highlighting Inter-American cooperation and advancing knowledge of conservation across the hemisphere. It encouraged governments to "enter into agreements with one another or with scientific institutions of the Americas in order to increase the effectiveness of this collaboration." A Technical Advisory Board was to be created to facilitate the compilation and dissemination of information.

Fourth, Articles VII, VIII, and IX called for the strict protection of "vanishing" species. Drawing here on the language of Article IX of the London African Convention of 1933, the drafters declared the protection of endangered species "to be of special urgency and importance." They were to be preserved "as completely as possible," to be hunted or killed only under special circumstances for scientific or administrative reasons. In an effort to stop the international trade of endangered species, contracting governments were called upon to "control and regulate the importation, exportation, and transit of protected fauna and flora found within protected regions." Furthermore, nations were required to catalog and submit the names of those species of fauna and flora that, within their borders, were so endangered. The lists were to be attached in an Annex at the end of the Convention.

Finally, the draft addressed migratory birds. Article VII defined migratory birds, as "birds of those species all or some of whose individual members may at any season

\[395\] Draft, Article VI.


\[397\] Draft, Article XIII.
cross any of the boundaries between the American countries.”398 Nations were to adopt appropriate measures to prevent the extinction of migratory birds but to allow for “rational utilization” limiting the use of those species for food, commerce, industry, and scientific study as they saw fit.399 This essentially afforded migratory birds special protection under the provisions of the treaty, extending the provisions of the 1916 North American Migratory bird treaty south to Latin America

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Once the contents of the draft treaty were known, delegates discussed the terms. The first item on the IACE’s agenda addressed the section of Article II regarding the protection of species or those unique geological formations. The delegate from Paraguay, Horacio Fernandez, requested a clearer definition of what a natural monument was, and whether and how the term could be applied to wildlife species. Using the stone idols on Chile’s Easter Island and the pyramids at Mexico’s Teotihuacán as examples, Wetmore explained that the provision was to protect specific objects of national significance that resided outside designated national parks. Indeed, it was intended to protect and preserve unique geological formations, unusual natural occurrences, and, interestingly enough, those remaining formations created by earlier collapsed cultures. While the surrounding land where such monuments resided might not be protected, those specific objects would be offered protection against development, theft, vandalism, or destruction. Monument designation could be granted to anything from a small, specific plant or animal, to mobile yet non-migratory species residing outside of park boundaries. Citing the North

398 Draft, Article I.

399 Draft, Article VII.
American caribou and California condor, Wetmore noted that these species moved within their respective habitats, but intrastate wildlife protections laws were insufficient to safeguard them from extinction. Instead, regulations protecting them needed to be placed under federal jurisdiction. Hernandez accepted this explanation and asked that clearer language be inserted into the treaty. He then proposed an addition to Article V, recommending that legislatures adopt laws to “assure the protection and preservation of the natural scenery, striking geological formations, and regions and natural objects” of Inter-American interest. The Committee of Experts approved this provision with Hernandez’s amendment.400

Next Wetmore raised the issue of scientific cooperation in advancing conservation throughout the hemisphere. He objected to the provision for complete and total protection within wildlife reserves and for endangered species because, as written, such protection was so strict as to prevent legitimate scientific investigation. A provision allowing scientific study permits would expand the type of international scientific cooperation the drafters of the Convention envisioned across the hemisphere.401 He used the example of the five-mile zone on each side of the Panama Canal in which U.S. scientists had studied tropical birds, fauna, and flora and the Barro Colorado Island Research Institute, established in 1923, to advance international interest in tropical sciences. In making this proposal, Wetmore wanted to ensure that the collection of species for scientific research would not be outlawed in reserves established by the treaty.

400 Ibid.

Once the Articles protecting nature were agreed upon, Wetmore introduced three provisions regarding the administration and implementation of the Convention. First, Article 10 established the legitimacy of the Convention by affirming that it did not replace or conflict with any existing international agreement. This provision was first recommended by Department of State officials in the earlier meetings of the U.S. Committee of Experts as a means of circumventing possible questions when the Convention was introduced to Congress. According to the drafters, the agreement written in 1940 did not interfere with any known international agreements; however, State Department officials were, in all likelihood, recommending it to prevent any possible conflict with existing trade (specifically with respect to fish) agreements. Additionally, this article tasked the PAU with notifying nations of “any information relevant to the purposes of the present Convention communicated to it by any national museums or by any organizations, national or international, established within their jurisdiction and interested in the purposes of the Convention.” Article 11 stipulated that the treaty would be translated into Spanish, English, Portuguese, and French, be distributed to all of the American Republics, and remain open for signature until all had signed on or until the Convention had been dissolved. The Convention was to go into effect three months after the fifth ratification was deposited at the Pan American Union. Finally, Article 12 allowed nations to withdraw from the Convention upon written notification and stipulated that if the number of active members fell below three, the Convention would cease to exist.

402 Draft, Article X.

403 Draft, Article XI.
Interestingly, there was little debate regarding any of the provisions. Given the extraordinary amount of anxiety Coolidge and Wetmore experienced over developing the most nuanced language possible to ensure that they covered the most ground without inserting potentially problematic language, then the hours spent in discussion with each other, with State Department officials, with Latin American government officials and conservationists, over how, exactly, to word the provisions of the Convention to hide the rather extensive role played by U.S. conservationists in creating and drafting the agreement and to ensure that the agreement appeared, both on the surface and in reality, to be the product of a multilateral effort, one would have almost hoped that there would have some tangible discussion, or some tense exchange. Alas, for those anticipating an argument, the signing and dating process went smoothly and all provisions were adopted, almost exactly as written. The American Committee had done its job effectively, the survey distribution, the on-going correspondence with officials, the careful and concerned consideration paid off and the Convention on Nature Protection was adopted unanimously by the Inter-American Committee of Experts.

The following day, the IACE met for the final time and approved the document unanimously. It was signed by all representatives present on May 16, 1940. One month later, on June 11, the Governing Board approved the Convention and set October 12, 1940, as the date for signing. By September, five Latin American governments—El Salvador, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, Mexico, and Venezuela—indicated to the PAU that they intended to sign the Convention. On October 12, delegates from Cuba, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Peru, the Dominican Republic, the United States, and Venezuela

met at the Pan American Union and signed the treaty as soon as the doors opened.\footnote{The delegate from Ecuador unfortunately took a wrong turn in Georgetown and arrived half an hour after it opened, signing it promptly thereafter. His misfortune is mentioned in the Minutes of the Inter-American Convention on Nature Protection, January 5, 1942; 5. SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 100, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and undated, Inter-American Committee of Experts on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation, Reports, 1937–1942.}

Two weeks later, the Costa Rican delegate signed, one month later the Mexican delegate signed the agreement, and by the end of the year, delegates from Uruguay and Brazil also signed the treaty. Colombia and Chile signed in January 1941, Guatemala and Haiti in April.\footnote{Charles Barnes, Chief Treaty Division for the Department of State to Dr. Charles Abbott, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution Archives, July 9, 1941; National Archives, RG 59, General Records of the Department of State 1940–44, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186. Hereafter RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.}

On May 19, 1941, Miguel Quirno Lavalle, the delegate from Argentina, signed the Convention on behalf of Argentina, attaching one reservation to Article 3 that mandated permanent and unalterable National Park boundaries. The Argentine reservation allowed for the monitored exploitation of natural resources in national parks established in national territories. Argentina was in the midst of shifting political administrations, as Ramón S. Castillo and the military took power. Given the intensifying European demand for resources, Parks Director Ezequiel Bustillo feared parks established by previous administrations would be appropriated by the military for the much needed funds that could be generated by the sale of natural resources. Bustillo’s interests remained devoted to maintaining the effectiveness of Argentina’s hard won system of conservation; therefore, he wrote an amendment, presented by Quirno, that differentiated between protected parks established in “states” and those in
"territories." Those parks in states would be protected from all development, but those parks in national territories were to remain open to exploitation "sufficient to maintain the principle of regional development according to the needs of each country." In effect, this proposal more closely resembled the category of "national reserve" outlined in the treaty, in which private commercial companies could extract resources under monitored conditions. Parks Director Bustillo was unwilling to change the parks in territories to reserves to suit the Convention or to sign an agreement Argentina would not adhere to. Instead, he encouraged the signature of the treaty only if the reservation was attached noting that, by allowing monitored development in those national parks in territories, national interests in economic progress would be maintained and the parks in states would be protected. Quirno signed the Convention with the reservation attached. The U.S. Committee of Experts discussed the reservation in passing in their January 1942 meeting and no one objected to allowing it to remain. As of 2007, Argentina's reservation remains attached to the Convention, but no other countries have added their signature to the reservation and I have found no evidence that the reservation affected the implementation of the Convention in Argentina.

From Signature to Ratification

In 1941, this Comisión was incorporated into the Ministry of the Interior. Both the Director of the Comisión and the Ministry of the Interior believed this move would be advantageous to both, as the Comisión would have the legitimacy of the Argentinean national government when pitching preservation proposals to other governments and the Argentinean national government would have a fully formed Comisión, already well-versed in international conservation, at its disposal. A. Madalenni's *Evolucion Historical del Parque Nacional Iguazú en Administracion de Parques Nacionales. Plan de Manejo del Parque Nacional Iguazu*, (APN: Buenos Aires, 1988); p. 5.

Final Stipulation submitted by the Representative of Argentina to the Convention on Nature Protection and Wild life Preservation in the Western Hemisphere; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.
By January 1941, the officials in the U.S. Government began the process to ratify the Convention. Charles Barnes, Director of the U.S. Department of State's treaty Division, had sent a memorandum on October 14, 1940 to the Governing Board indicating his desire to put the Convention in front of the U.S. Senate as soon as possible, as "the conservationists will be after me very promptly," to get it done. Before submitting the agreement to Congress for ratification, Barnes wanted the completed Annexes, containing the endangered species lists, from all countries that had signed the agreement to date. That same month, the U.S. Committee of Experts submitted a list of ten "vanishing" species to the Department of State to attach to the U.S. signature on the Convention.

The list had been subject to much debate. The woodland caribou, the sea otter, manatee, trumpeter swan, the California condor, the Whooping Crane, the Eskimo Curlew, Hudsonian Godwit, Puerto Rican Parrot, and the Ivory-billed woodpecker were submitted as the U.S. Annex to the Convention. In previous exchanges, there had been considerably more species, including three species of whale and the American crocodile, but Wetmore, ever cautious, wanted no reference to the oceans and noted that it would be easier to start small and expand, than to start with a large list, encounter problems with ratification, and have to pare down. The shorter Annex was submitted in at the end of January.

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410 United States Annex to the Convention; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

411 Wetmore to Hull, January 27, 1941; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186. The initial list included Cuban almiqui, White Mountain dwarf shrew, Glacier bear, Arizona grizzly bear, Florida black bear, fisher, black-footed ferret, wolverine, southern sea otter, desert and kit fox, Florida
Harold Coolidge responded to Barnes in a memorandum strongly recommending that he not wait for the Annexes before sending it to the U.S. Senate. To do so, Coolidge argued would only “postpone action on the part of the United States for an unpredictable length of time.”

When Barnes replied that he intended to withhold submission to both the Senate and the President until they had a certified copy of the annex, Wetmore responded that the lists were “not to be considered mandatory, but as something to be done at the desire of any of the governments.” Moreover, the lists were to be “of a temporary nature in that they may be modified or changed as conditions warranted.”

Arguing reasonably, Wetmore observed it would be extremely cumbersome for governments to ratify a change each time additions to the lists were made, and “it would be the most unfortunate thing that could possibly happen to the treaty” if it had to be delayed until the Annexes from all the American Republics were prepared.

Coolidge interjected that, if need be, he would include the Caribbean monk seal to the Annexes of

puma, Guadalupe fur seal, monk seal, hooded, seal, Atlantic walrus, eastern fox squirrel, Bryant fox squirrel, Mangrove fox squirrel, Pacific white-tailed deer, key deer, Buttonwillow elk, Sierra mountain sheep, Texas mountain sheep, Florida manatee, gray whale, Atlantic right whale, Greenland right whale, trumpeter swan, whooping crane, great white heron, Eskimo curlew, Attwater prairie chicken, masked bobwhite, California vulture, red-bellied hawk, Everglade kite, Ipswich sparrow, Bachman warbler, Dusky kinglet, Laysan teal, Laysan finch, Cape Sable seaside sparrow, and the American crocodile. North American Mammals and Birds Threatened with Extinction, Bureau of Biological Survey. This list was attached to the Minutes of the Advisory Committee Inter-American Committee of Experts on Nature Protection and Wild Life Preservation, December 11, 1939; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.

412 Coolidge to Barnes, October 24, 1941; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

413 Memorandum to Mr. Barnes, October 31, 1940; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.


415 Ibid.
each country and submit those incomplete lists, rather than wait for nations to comply on their own. Nations could then revise the lists accordingly at their own pace. Coolidge had fought tooth and nail to keep the vanishing species lists in the Convention, long ago sacrificing time limits to keep them in, only to be confronted with the possibility of losing the entire treaty as the result of them. He pointed out that, on Barnes’ interpretation, a prohibitive amount of paper work would be generated for both the Department of State and the Senate in the long run as these lists would have to be resubmitted each time there was an update. Barnes finally agreed sending the Convention to the Senate in November 1940 without the Annexes of other countries. The Convention was ratified by the U.S. Senate on April 7, 1941 and the United States deposited the first instruments of ratification at the PAU on April 28.

With the U.S. ratification, delegates from the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, and State met at the office of the National Park Service in Washington, D.C on January 5, 1942, to form the Inter-American Committee on Nature Protection to oversee the implementation of the treaty in the United States. This Committee was to

416 Coolidge to Colom, November 5, 1940; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

417 Given that the U.S. Forest Service and the National Park Service would ultimately be responsible for carrying out the provisions of the Convention, the Department of State Treaty Division sent copies of the agreement to the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture for approval (Claude Weekard, Acting Secretary, Treaty Division, Department of State, to Secretary of State Cordell Hull, June 28, 1940; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186). Acting Secretary of the Interior A.J. Wirtz responded to the U.S. Committee of Experts with a lengthy memorandum, arguing that development in strict wilderness reserves and National Parks was necessary for tourist development and that the term migratory birds should be changed to migratory game birds to protect those species targeted for sport as well as commerce. (AJ Wirtz, Acting Secretary of the Interior to Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, July 3, 1940; Ibid.) This response was sent to the PAC and the IACE, and both Coolidge and Wetmore noted that Interior representatives—Ira Gabrielson (FWS); Victor Cahalane, (Wild Life Division of NPS); Homer L. Shantz (USFS)—had participated in all of the meetings and had had plenty of time to object before that point. Wirtz retracted his comments and ultimately supported the ratification of the treaty. (Wirtz to Hull, July 27, 1940; Ibid.) With Interior’s support and with no additional comments, the Department of Agriculture added its support to the Convention in mid-July. (Grover B. Hill, Acting Secretary, Department of Agriculture to Secretary of State Hull, July 27, 1940; Ibid.)
meet periodically throughout the years 1942, 1943, and 1944 to ensure U.S. compliance with the provisions of the treaty on both the state and federal levels. Present were C.P. Russell, M. Barton, H. E. Kahler, Ben Thompson, and S. Tripp (NPS); W. C. Henderson, Victor Cahalane, D.J. Chaney, F.C. Lincoln, W.E. Crouch, and H.H. Jackson (FWS); Alexander Wetmore, Homer Shantz (Forest Service), and C.M. Featherston (Agriculture). Minutes of the first meeting reflected the commitment and heralded the United States as the “leader in conservation matters” and its special responsibility to “set a good example for the other countries.”

Russell discussed the effect of the treaty on classification and nomenclature of areas in the United States; considered the extent to which the treaty was self-executing and requiring of no additional legislation; and questioned the degree of implementation. The representatives agreed the nomenclature would not need alteration since the definition list had originally been created by the U.S. National Park Service.

Article 2 stipulated that governments enact appropriate legislation to ensure the enforcement of the provisions of the treaty. Barton noted that the United States had legislation providing for national parks and monuments, but allowed that an additional act was “desirable.” But the consensus of the meeting was that the United States had already complied with the terms of the Convention and “there [was] no need for far reaching action at this time.” The next course of action they decided was to turn the scope and purpose of necessary legislation over to lawyers who were “familiar with statutes affecting conservation.”

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418 Coolidge to Ballard, September 10, 1941; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 29, PAU (1938–42).

PAU Ratification

The immediate responses from Latin American conservationists indicated a positive reception in Latin American nations and the likelihood ratification was imminent. In September 1940, William Vogt, a North American conservationist working with the Compania Administradora del Guana in Lima, Peru, sent Coolidge a clipping from the Peruvian paper, *El Comercio*, on the recent passage of Law No. 9147. This law initiated protection for wildlife within the national boundaries of Peru, and prohibited the hunting and exportation of vicuna, chinchilla, and guanaco. Vogt took the passage of this as a clear indication that Peru was sympathetic to the Convention and wanted to pass that on to Coolidge. The law represented an enormous step forward in protection of Peruvian wildlife and established a one to four-month prison sentence and a monetary fine for violations.420

From Guatemala, Mariano Pacheco Herrarte, Director General of the Guatemalan Ministry of Agriculture, sent Coolidge a copy of the Convention published in the national newspaper *El Diario de Centro America*. The article that followed the text of the Convention reported the establishment of a number of archeological sites as national monuments and stated that the Guatemalan Congress also intended to ratify the Convention.421 The view from El Salvador was revealed by Ambassador to the United States, Hector Castro, who said the Convention indicated the commitment against “thoughtless or selfish destruction” and emphasized that it brought the hemisphere closer together and “thus strengthens all of the unselfish efforts of individuals and governments


421 The clipping of this newspaper was included in a letter from Owen Smith, U.S. Fish and Wildlife official in Guatemala, to Harold J. Coolidge, undated 1940; Ibid.
throughout the countries of the New World." Moreover, he was "gratified that in a world so occupied with questions of grave political and military consequence a body of independent nations voluntarily agreed upon a program aimed only at the peaceful end of protecting the endowments of a bountiful Nature."\footnote{Castro's quote was taken from Jose Colom's article, "Pan American Policy for Nature Protection" National Parks Bulletin, February 1941, p. 5.} Despite this positive rhetoric, by end of August 1941, only eight nations had submitted vanishing species lists and only two nations (the United States and Guatemala) had ratified the agreement.\footnote{Guatemala was one of the fastest to get the Convention through. It signed the Convention on April 9, 1941 and deposited its ratification on August 12, 1941. Secretary's Report, December, 1941; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.}

Fearing the European crisis might push conservation efforts to the sidelines, officials and conservationists in the United States moved quickly to secure the Latin American ratifications needed to bring the treaty into force by drawing once again on the rhetoric of Pan American cooperation. Jose Colom of the U.S. National Parks Association (NPA), also an official with the Pan American Bureau of Agriculture, compiled a series of letters from some of the highest U.S. officials in the Department of the Interior highlighting the importance of ratifying the Convention and encouraging Latin Americans to sign the treaty and submit their lists. He then published this compilation in the National Parks Bulletin, a publication with readership throughout the United States and Latin America.\footnote{Colom "Pan American Policy for Nature Protection" National Parks Bulletin, February 1941.}

In this article, authors urged Latin Americans to support the ratification of the Convention, emphasizing the benefits they would incur as a result. Acting Director of the Forest Service C.E. Rachford encouraged the adoption of the Convention by all of the

\footnote{\textsuperscript{422} Castro's quote was taken from Jose Colom's article, "Pan American Policy for Nature Protection" National Parks Bulletin, February 1941, p. 5.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{423} Guatemala was one of the fastest to get the Convention through. It signed the Convention on April 9, 1941 and deposited its ratification on August 12, 1941. Secretary's Report, December, 1941; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Minutes of Committee Meetings, ACIC.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{424} Colom "Pan American Policy for Nature Protection" National Parks Bulletin, February 1941.}
American Republics to “establish bases for integrated programs of action which would be harmonious, consistent and of maximum effectiveness.” Colom highlighted the Convention as the catalyst of conservation throughout the hemisphere, noting it was “the spark that may arouse to crusading vigor the preservation of superlative examples of nature throughout the Americas.” Indeed, the Convention was another “Yellowstone campfire from which inspired men will go forth to fight destruction of the unique natural assets of the entire New World.” In order for that campaign to begin, however, “Pan American cooperation [was] essential…” This treaty, he argued, would improve hemispheric relations and, as a result, “We shall get to know each other better, and mutual understanding and respect will be one of many benefits.” Executive Secretary of the NPA Edward Ballard agreed that cooperation was essential to the success of the Convention and, as such, he used his section of the article to speak to U.S. conservationists with contacts, friends, and colleagues in South America. He asked them to connect with their counterparts south of the United States and promote their political support—in the form of letters to their politicians—of the ratification of the Convention. Victor Cahalane and Ballard sent letters to Latin American Ambassadors urging them to submit their lists for the Annex and to push for ratification, and contacted government agencies responsible for conservation in the American Republics.

425 Ibid. p. 5.
426 Ibid., p 8.
427 Ibid.
428 Edward Ballard, Executive Secretary of the National Parks Association, to Conservationists, June 12, 1941; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.
encouraging their support for pushing the ratification process. The Director of the Pan American Union, Leo S. Rowe, also added his public support to the ratification of the Convention, calling the Convention “the most important event in the history of western hemisphere conservation.”

The combination of the efforts by U.S. conservationists, U.S. Government officials, and the decisive and dogged efforts of those Latin American civilians and government officials who attended the Convention resulted in ratification by the Venezuelan Congress in late October, which deposited the instruments of ratification with the PAU in November 1941. El Salvador followed soon after, depositing its instruments of ratification in early December. In the midst of the mass mobilization for the Second World War, the fifth nation, Haiti, ratified the Convention in January 1942. The Convention on Nature Protection went into force four months later on May 1, 1942.

The Continuing Question of Canada

Once the ratification process had begun, officials with the U.S. Departments of State and Interior debated extending the Convention to include Canada. In February 1942, Hector Allard, the second Secretary of the Canadian Legation to the U.S., asked

429 Ballard to Felipe A. Espil, Ambassador of Argentina, June 13, 1941; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186. This letter was a copy of the one sent to all representatives.
430 Memorandum from U.S. Department of State, Science and Education Division to Project Committee, Change Order No. 1 for Project B–SE–1676, “Aid to the Pan American Conservation Movement;” Ibid.
Department of State official Warren Kelchner if Canada might sign the Convention. Responses were not favorable. Kelchner wanted to invite Canada to adopt the measures of the Convention, but noted it was not a propitious time "to open the question of Canada's participation in the Inter-American organization," and raise the "slightly embarrassing question of Canada's membership in the Pan American Union." Canada had not been invited to join the Pan American Union at its inception for three reasons—it was not fully independent from Great Britain, it was not a republic, and, according to Douglas Anglin, "except in a strictly geographical sense" it was not American. Although a chair had been reserved for Canada in the Pan American Union's Board Room in 1910, in 1942, Canada had yet to join the Union. Gabrielson thought the whole point was moot, because the United States and Canada had cooperated for years on matters of national parks, reserves, and migratory wildlife protection and the Convention would not add anything to the relationship. Even Coolidge, who was largely in favor of Canadian participation, recommended that the Pan American Union "take no steps to include British Colonies in the Convention until after we have a larger number of ratifications," as he was concerned that allowing a European empire to sign the Convention might alter Latin American nations' decision to ratify. Ideas were tossed around of incorporating

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the Canadians without actually letting them sign it, but they were ultimately rejected as
"the primary Canadian interest in this matter may be to establish a precedent for its
formal participation in arrangements that have heretofore been entirely between the
republics of this hemisphere."\textsuperscript{435} As a result, Canada has remained outside of the
Convention. In 1991, Canada became a member of the Organization of American States
and has continued to work through the years with the United States to advance wildlife
protection. It has not yet signed the Convention.

\textbf{Paying for Protection}

With the problems of successfully drafting and ratifying the Convention solved,
the problem of paying for it came quickly to the fore. As part of Article VI, the Pan
American Union authorized Project B–SE–1676 to fund a Technical Advisory Committee
responsible for overseeing the initial implementation and to facilitate cooperation.\textsuperscript{436}
This Technical Advisory would fund one person to conduct three years of research in
Latin America, lecture on successful conservation programs in the western hemisphere in
both Spanish and Portuguese, and write articles to generate support for conservation. The
field biologist was to "act as a liaison between conservationists of the Northern and
Southern Hemisphere" and to promote cooperative preservation.\textsuperscript{437} The rest of the
Advisory Committee was to make recommendations for the establishment of parks and

\textsuperscript{435} Division of the American Republics, Department of State, to Mr. Bonsal, February 13, 1942; RG 59,

\textsuperscript{436} Wetmore to Rowe, March 2, 1943; SIA, RU 7006, CD 2, Box 99, Organizational File, 1901–1977 and
undated, Pan American Union, 1939–1946.

\textsuperscript{437} Coolidge to Colom, October 15, 1940; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions,
Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 30, PAU: Colleagues and Friends: Chief
Division of Agricultural Cooperation Sec General, Committee of Experts on NP (1934–41).
reserves as outlined by the Convention, compile and publish the nature protection laws in all the American Republics, and organize educational material to assist and train scientists throughout the hemisphere to advance conservation. The U.S. Inter-American Committee of Experts estimated that this would require an annual budget of $15,000 for a period of three years.

Following nearly a decade of economic depression and in the midst of a world war, finding funding was challenging. The PAU’s Division of Agriculture denied the grant request. Leo Rowe and Harold Coolidge then went to the nongovernmental organizations for assistance, requesting a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation in the amount of $12,000 a year, for a period of five years. It was rejected. They had also petitioned the U.S. National Park Service in 1941 just after the Convention had been ratified, but the NPS had recently encountered problems protecting U.S. parks from oil drilling. At the time, it was not feasible to donate money to protecting parks in other nations when there were more demanding pressures at home. Cahalane, Ballard, and Coolidge then lobbied the Joint Committee on Cultural Relations in the U.S. Department of State for the funds to oversee the Convention. In April 1943, the Joint Committee authorized Project B–SE–1676 for “Aid to the Pan American Conservation Movement” providing $15,000 a year for a period of three years to fund the establishment of a

438 G. Howland Shaw to Chairman of the Joint Committee on Cultural Relations, April 21, 1943. RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

439 Coolidge to Colom, October 15, 1940; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 30, PAU: Colleagues and Friends: Chief Division of Agricultural Cooperation Sec General, Committee of Experts on NP (1934–41).

440 Wharton to Coolidge, January 7, 1942; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Correspondence, William Wharton.

441 Ibid.
Coordinating Office in the PAU. The Office was to monitor nations' compliance with the provisions of the Convention and to assist in the dissemination of information, cross-referencing scientists, and the lending of necessary assistance to see the Convention implemented. At the end of three years, the Joint Committee was to evaluate the effectiveness of the Office before renewing the grant. Rowe promised if there were additional work or funds required, "the PAU will be pleased to take the necessary steps to see that work is carried out." 442

The project ran into bureaucratic problems in May 1943. Arthur Compton with the Division of Political Relations claimed that the Joint Committee did not have the authority to grant that sum of money or to give "piecemeal approval of a project for the PAU," without the approval of the Division of Political Relations. 443 Compton was not alone as Percy Douglas, Assistant to the Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs (CIAA), was baffled that the U.S. Department of State wanted to devote resources toward something like preservation in the midst of war. 444 Remy Matteson, also an official with the CIAA, wrote to Joint Committee official John Dreier the following month and encouraged him to postpone the donation for a year, and divert the money "directly to the war." The Convention could wait until the war was over. 445 But the Joint Committee considered the matter and responded that there was no "misunderstanding concerning the

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442 Rowe to Bonsal, April 15, 1943; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

443 Compton to Duggan, May 25, 1943; Ibid.

444 Ibid.

445 Remy Matteson to John C. Dreier, June 22, 1943; Ibid.
method of handling this project,” and that the decision for the donation would stand. The Joint Committee had approved the funds and the Department of State had informed the PAU as to their availability, and as such, “it is our feeling… that the notification to the PAU represents a commitment, and that the good faith of this Government might be put in question if we should now, by unilateral action, attempt to disavow that commitment.”

Compton reluctantly agreed that U.S credibility was at stake and withdrew his objection, even though he was “not too sure the project should have been approved in the first place.”

Once the budgetary crisis was solved, Rowe and Coolidge went about finding a strong leader for the Technical Advisory Committee. Coolidge wrote to the National Parks Association and asked for a recommendation of someone to head the Advisory Committee, specifically someone who was a “botanist, a zoologist, and a National Park man with a solid knowledge of Spanish.”

The initial draft of Project B–SE–1676 stipulated that the field biologist hired to research and lecture in Latin America could be from any of the American Republics that signed the Convention, but a response from the Science and Education Division recommended that the biologist be a North American, “as he would be in an unexcelled position to present influential, intelligent, and stable

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446 Dreier to Compton and Duggan at the Division of the American Republics, Department of State, May 27, 1943; Ibid.

447 Duggan to Percy Douglas, Assistant Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, June 29, 1943; Ibid.

448 Compton to Duggan, June 26, 1943; Ibid.

449 Coolidge to Wharton, May 14, 1941; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.14, General Correspondence, 1928–46, Box 28, Correspondence, William Wharton.
elements in the other American Republics of our proudest accomplishments. Coolidge, who joined the Office of Strategic Services in 1941, was not there to object. The drafters of this response rationalized that there were more well-trained, well-educated biologists in the United States than there were in Latin America, and therefore it would be easier to find a qualified person. Perhaps this was the case, but it was unfortunate. Instead of opening the provision to allow other nations to appoint a bilingual biologist to lecture to U.S. departments on the status of programs in their respective nations, the Science and Education Division stamped a U.S. face on the Convention.  

Once this was determined, a qualified representative had to be found. Rowe asked Wetmore, but he declined and suggested William Vogt in his stead. Vogt, a longtime ornithologist and conservationist, had been an editor for Bird Lore, the National Audubon Society publication, and had spent the last two years studying guano in Lima, Peru. He was well networked among conservationists throughout the hemisphere and passionate about nature protection. Vogt accepted the appointment as Chief of the Conservation Section of the Pan American Union, the official name for the Technical Advisory Committee, in 1943. He immediately wrote to diplomats in those nations that had not ratified the agreement—Ecuador, Brazil, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Bolivia.

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450 Memorandum from Science and Education Division to the Project Committee, Change Order No. 1 for Project B-SE-1676; “Aid to the Pan American Conservation Movement;” RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

451 In all fairness, they did not say the biologist had to be from the United States, only that he had to be a North American, which conceivably allowed one of Mexican descent to represent the Advisory.

Colombia, and Paraguay. He set about collating information and developing education facilities under the supervision of the Division of Agricultural Cooperation at the PAU.

The five years between the authorization of the Conservation Section in 1943 and 1948 were particularly fruitful. Vogt proved to be a motivated and effective leader. He used the Section to assist with the development of the Pan American Highway. The highway, conceived at the Conference of American States in 1923, was to link the U.S. state of Alaska with the southern tip of Chile’s Punta del Este. The Technical Advisory authorized the investigation of conservation zones near the proposed route of the highway and encouraged those nations to establish national parks and reserves along it. They argued those parks, in close proximity to the highway, were likely to experience high rates of tourism. The board helped “make known the attractions of our southern neighbors, and establishing standards for their permanent protection.”

Vogt raised funds from the Rockefeller Foundation, the U.S. Smithsonian Institution, the American Museum for Natural History, and various U.S. State Game Commissions, to advance the study of conservation in Central and South America. Moreover, he networked with conservationists around the hemisphere, maintaining constant contact with members of the Inter-American Committee of Experts in Latin America.

Vogt’s considerable progress came to a screeching halt in 1948 with the publication of his book *Road to Survival*. In *Road to Survival*, Vogt offered a dire—indeed, somewhat alarmist—analysis of the state of the world’s ecosystems. He argued

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453 Memorandum from Science and Education Division to the Project Committee, Change Order No. 1 for Project B–SE–1676; RG 59, Box 2053, 710.H Wildlife/65 to 710.H Wildlife/186.

that the United States was overpopulated and its pattern of mass consumption would ultimately spell the downfall of American society. If mankind did not follow the proverbial "road" Vogt mapped out for survival—environmental conservation and population control—it should "give up hope of a civilized life" and would "rush down a war-torn slope to a barbarian existence in the blackened rubble." 455 His radical prescriptions for protecting the earth and his advocacy of birth control "offended some Catholic ministers on the Board of the PAU." 456 Although Rowe and Coolidge fought to preserve his job, Vogt was relieved of his position by the Board in 1948. Annette Fluger continued the Technical Advisory for a short while, but Fluger lacked the charisma and strong commitment to promoting the Convention. When the Department of State allocation ran out at the end of 1948, the Joint Cultural Commission did not renew funding. Contrary to his promise in 1943, neither Rowe, nor the PAU, found financial support for the Convention. According to Harold Coolidge, the true victim of Vogt's dismissal was the Convention as it "was thereafter totally neglected by the Pan American Union." 457

Yet, despite Coolidge's dim perspective, by 1948 the Convention proved to be an extraordinary accomplishment. In three short years, conservationists throughout the hemisphere worked together with governments in the Americas to negotiate a

455 Vogt, p. 288.
456 Coolidge to Dr. Lynton Keith Caldwell, Dept of Political Science Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, January 8, 1980; HUA, HUG (F.P.) 78.10, Papers relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946, Box 30, Pan American Union: 8th International Conference, December 9–27, 1938.
457 Coolidge to Dr. Lynton Keith Caldwell, Dept of Political Science Bloomington, Indiana, January 8, 1980; Ibid.
comprehensive, yet flexible agreement for wildlife protection. They used their networks to obtain the number of ratifications necessary to enact the treaty and then secured funding from the U.S. Department of State. Moreover, they managed to obtain funding in the midst of the mass mobilization for the Second World War. While the Convention lay somewhat dormant over the next three decades, the provisions were established and were available to those individuals in search of support for conservation in Latin America.

Even in the most unproductive years of the Convention, conservationists in Latin America applied the definitions outlined in the Convention to protected spaces. Venezuelan conservationists used the Convention’s definitions to establish natural monuments in 1947 and 1950. Guácharo Cave, the largest cave in Venezuela, was declared National Monument Alejandro de Humboldt in 1947 to protect the unique formations inside the cave and the rare species of birds which resided there. True to Victor Cahalane’s prediction in the previous chapter, Venezuela used the classification steps in the Convention to move regions up the proverbial protection ladder to offer them higher levels. In 1975, the Cave and the surrounding 15,500 hectares were declared a national park. In 1949, the Venezuelan Congress created Los Morros de San Juan natural monument in the state of Guarico to preserve the unique formations of limestone, which resemble castle ruins from a distance. Finally, six national parks were established in Venezuela during the 1950s and 1960s—Parque Nacional Sierra Nevada (1952); El Avila and Guatopo (1958); Yurubi Yaracuy (1960), Canaima and Yacambú Lara (1962); and
Cueva de la Quebrada del Toro (1969). Even though Colombia never ratified the Convention, the Government of Colombia established a national reserve in the Andean region of San Augustín to protect recently discovered stone idols using language from the provisions of the Convention. Brazil established a resource management program in its San Francisco Valley, and two national reservations. Chile set aside Easter Island and the Juan Fernandes Islands as national parks and established national reforestation programs. Bolivia and Peru took joint action during the 1960s to protect the endangered vicuna populations and invoked Article 6 of the Convention to gain assistance in training wildlife management teams to protect and manage populations.

Perhaps more importantly than the specific monuments created from it, the provisions of the Convention were employed to establish effective nature protection measures and remain relevant to nature protection in the Western Hemisphere to this day. The definitions for protected areas continue to offer guidelines to Ministry officials across the hemisphere. Cooperation in conservation between government officials and those affiliated with nongovernmental organizations has become the most effective method in protecting wildlife and unique formations, as well as for promoting an

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459 The Organ Mountain area, on the north rim of the Rio de Janeiro, was declared a national reserve, as was the colonial city of Ouro Preto. Ibid.

460 Remarks by Secretary of Interior, Steward Udall, to the Inter-American Specialized Conference of Renewable Natural Resources in the Western Hemisphere, October 18, 1965, Mar del Plata, Argentina; HUA, HUG (F.P) 78.10, Papers Relating to Expeditions, Organizations, and Personal Matters, ca. 1928–1946.
ecologically friendly ethos in the far flung reaches of the continent. The article
mandating the vanishing species lists, that proved so frustrating for the members of both
the U.S. Committee of Experts and the Pan American Committee, laid the foundation for
Section 8A of the 1973 Endangered Species Act, which is devoted entirely to advancing
the provisions of the vanishing species article of the Convention in Latin America and
Executive Order 11911, which appointed the Secretary of the Interior to “act on behalf of
the United States in all regards as required by the Convention on Nature Protection and
Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere” and promised U.S. Government
support to see its provisions enacted.\textsuperscript{461} The final chapter of this dissertation explores the
most successful use of the Convention, the case of Costa Rica.

\textsuperscript{461} Public Law 93–205, the Endangered Species Act (7 U.S.C. § 136, 16 U.S.C. § 1531 et seq.) As
327, June 25, 1984; and P.L. 100–478, October 7, 1988; P.L. 100–653, November 14, 1988; and P.L. 100–
CHAPTER VIII

THE CASE OF COSTA RICA

This chapter examines the role the Convention on Nature Protection played in Costa Rica's eventual emergence as one of the leaders in nature protection in the Americas. It looks first at the ratification of the Convention by Costa Rica, the emergence of private nongovernmental organization (NGO) protection efforts, and nongovernmental organization cooperation with the national government to establish a national park at Tortugueru. Second, this chapter examines the ways in which the Costa Rican National Park Service looked to Article 6 of the Convention—which called specifically for inter-American cooperation—as a means of generating financial and technical support from the U.S. Department of Interior and nongovernmental organizations. Finally, this chapter examines the use and evolution of ecologically friendly tourism as a means of making preservation efforts economically feasible and for reviving the sluggish national economy. It argues that Costa Rica's revival of the largely forgotten Convention in 1967 served as a catalyst, rekindling an interest in the Convention in both the United States and among Organization of American States that came to fruition in the 1970s.

The efforts made by Costa Rican national parks officials harnessed the spirit of cooperation and collaboration exhibited by the architects of the Convention. This extraordinary effort encapsulated the essence of both Alexander Wetmore's more
practical, conservationist, approach to nature protection, and Harold Coolidge's more radical propositions for more immediate and extensive preservation, making Costa Rica perhaps most successful implementation of the Convention. Looking to the Convention, Costa Rican government officials collaborated with their counterparts in the Americas and with nongovernmental organizations both in Costa Rica and elsewhere, ultimately developing a national park system that was economically self-supporting and proving that the Convention itself was ahead of its time.

**Recovering the Convention: Costa Rica**

With the end of the Technical Advisory Committee in 1948, the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere lay largely dormant until activists in Costa Rica revived it as a possible means of promoting and funding conservation efforts. Indeed, one employee of the USFWS Division of International Conservation Office recently likened the Convention between 1948 and 1970 to the Peter Seller's movie, *Carlton Brown of the F.O.* (1959), in which British Foreign Service Officer Carlton Brown opened a desk drawer one afternoon and discovered a file that had been forgotten for nearly half a century deeding the mineral rich country of Gaillardia to the British empire. Like Gaillardia, this Convention lay forgotten for the better part of two decades.

Two events relegated the Convention on Nature Protection to the proverbial sidelines of Inter-American affairs during the 1950s and 60s. First, the dismissal of William Vogt from the Convention's Technical Advisory in 1948 removed its most

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outspoken advocate, leaving his office to limp along until it ran out of funding in December of that year, when it dissolved. The loss of the Technical Advisory, however, was compounded by the shift from the Pan American Union to the Organization of American States. In March 1948, representatives from each of the American Republics met at the 9th International American Conference in Bogotá, Colombia. By the end of the Conference in May, participants agreed to dissolve the Pan American Union and establish the Organization of American States, promising an international organization emphasizing the peaceful resolution of conflicts through discussion and democratic proceedings. It was created in part to dispel the perception fostered in Latin America of the Pan American Union as a U.S. dominated institution. The OAS charter stressed the commitment of the American Republics to respect one another’s sovereignty and inter-American solidarity. These two events—the dissolution of the Technical Advisory and the shift to the OAS—left the Convention without any organized, political body to oversee its implementation.

The issue of conservation, however, remained within the scope of the OAS. In 1952, the OAS Department of Economic and Social Affairs created an Environmental and Sustainable Development Unit, responsible for representing the OAS at international conservation conferences and for administering any conservation conventions held in the western hemisphere. In 1965, the Unit initiated the Inter-American Specialized

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464 At the time of its creation, the two Conventions in the western hemisphere were the Convention on Renewable Resources and the Convention on Nature Protection. Conservation Efforts in the Hemisphere Since the Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere, September 10, 1965; Organization of American States, Inter-American Specialized Conference to Deal with Problems Relating to the Conservation of the Renewable Natural Resources in the Western
Conference, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, to address problems related to conservation of renewable resources and to revisit the articles of the Convention. The opening remarks, delivered by U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Stewart L. Udall, encouraged participants to cooperate on matters of conservation and “give new vitality to an agreement made by the leaders of this hemisphere 25 years ago.” Over the course of the conference, participants developed a set of Principles to use as a framework to address the problems of protecting natural resources and concluded that more strident efforts should to be undertaken to ensure the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. The OAS Secretariat responded positively, calling upon those nations in the hemisphere which had yet to ratify the Convention to do so and to submit updated vanishing species lists as required by Article 8.

Costa Rica heard the call and rose to the challenge ratifying the Convention on April 12, 1967, and the timing could not have been better. During the 25 years prior to the country’s ratification a strong, highly international, scientific community had developed and, by 1965, nongovernmental organizations working to protect nature were firmly rooted in the Central American nation and had proved extraordinarily effective at


465 Ibid.


468 Ibid.
both preserving natural areas and generating money for their efforts. By the end of the 1960s, these organizations had cycled several hundred tourists, students, and scientists through their facilities, sparking interest and activism on the part of those who later went on to work for the larger international nongovernmental conservation organizations.

Three activists in particular—Mario Boza, Alvaro Ugalde, and Steven Harrell, all well into their graduate studies at the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Science—began working toward reviving the Convention and taking steps toward political action for protection measures.

The Rise of Nongovernmental Organizations in Costa Rica

Simultaneously, in the mid-1960s, as Costa Ricans took a more vested interest in the long term viability of their national natural resources, internationally focused nongovernmental organizations concerned with conservation, health, food production, and human rights took a more active role in global politics. The sheer number, size, and scope of NGOs focused specifically on issues of nature protection and conservation expanded exponentially during the 1960s as knowledge of social, health, human rights, and environmental problems in developing nations was disseminated among the global community. Officials with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, used the media and fears about environmental destruction wrought by the Cold War to advance the urgency of their message that environmental protection was an important component of global health. Other nongovernmental organizations focused on the protection of nature in the developing world, using the media to disseminate knowledge of the problems facing African and Latin American fauna, generating sympathy and funding from
individuals and governments in wealthy nations. These NGOs became agents for change—donating money, information, and volunteers to the cause.

The roots of nongovernmental organization activity in Costa Rica can be traced to the establishment of the Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Sciences (IICA) in 1943 and its Center for Education and Research in Turrialba, near the capital city of San Jose. In 1948, the Organization of American States created the IICA, "the specialized agency for agriculture of the Inter-American System."\footnote{No author listed, \textit{Brief History of IICA}, http://www.iica.int/eliica/historia.asp, (Accessed March 1, 2008).} As a means of promoting scientific research into improving agricultural practices in the Americas, the Institute sponsored scientists from prominent facilities, specifically the University of Florida and the University of Michigan, to teach semester long courses in agricultural sciences, biology, dendrology, and forest ecology. This scientific exchange generated considerable interest in Costa Rican tropical ecosystems, perhaps most consequentially among scientists from prominent U.S. institutions. This familiarity, along with the country's welcoming attitude toward foreigners, allowed scientists interested in focusing on specific issues—wildlife protection, the prevention of deforestation, environmental education, etc.—to break away and form satellite organizations, the first nongovernmental organizations in Costa Rica devoted to the protection of the environment and expanding research in tropical ecosystems.

The first of such organizations was the Tropical Science Center (TSC). In 1962, IICA scientists Joseph Tosi, Leslie Holdridge, and Robert Hunter founded the Tropical Science Center, a private, non-profit association, dedicated to advancing scientific

In 1963, another set of IICA scientists formed the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS), devoted to environmental education. Between 1963 and 1968, the OTS promoted environmental education in Costa Rica by inviting and funding faculty members from the University of Michigan, Duke University, and the University of Florida to the Universidad de Costa Rica to teach courses in tropical forest conservation, tropical biology, ecology, and natural history.\footnote{Scientists included British orchidologist Carlos Lankester, U.S. born botanist/ornithologist Alexander Skutch, and Costa Rican biologist Rafael Lucas Rodriguez.} The OTS established graduate and undergraduate courses in environmental education to promote research investigation into tropical forest conservation.\footnote{Over the course of the 1970s, this Organization created biological stations to conduct research in the Caribbean Lowland rainforests (1968 La Selva, near Braulio Carrillo National Park, previously owned and operated by Leslie Holdridge TSC), the deciduous dry forests and wetlands of the Pacific Lowlands (1968 Palo Verde, near Palo Verde National Park—funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation), and the southern pacific slopes (1973, Las Cruces, previously a private tropical nursery owned by a pair from Miami, now part of the Amistad Biosphere).} While in Costa Rica several scholars, including University of Florida’s Dr. Archie Carr and World Wildlife Fund’s Michael Wright,
conducted research projects and made sufficient contacts with Costa Ricans at the universities to establish exchange programs. To generate funds for the OTS, scientists connected with various universities in the United States, offered its research stations for undergraduate and graduate course work in environmental education, and tropical forest conservation, as well as to faculty members interested in conducting research in tropical ecosystems. By the mid-1960s, as a result of the work of these NGOs, a thriving network of conservationists and scientists had developed in Costa Rica. This network maintained close ties with researchers and government officials in the United States.

The Inter-American Institute for Agricultural Sciences played a crucial role in forming a generation of leaders devoted to conservation in Costa Rica, responsible for educating some of the most active proponents of protecting of the country’s natural spaces. Some of those who completed degrees under the aegis of the IICA in the early 1960s went on to become extremely influential. They included two directors of the National Park Service, one adviser to the President, and several activists in environmentally focused nongovernmental organizations such as The Nature Conservancy, the Wildlife Conservation Society, and the World Wildlife Fund. For two and a half decades they worked together to promote the public and private protection of Costa Rican ecosystems.

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474 Mario Boza to Wayne King, Curator of Reptiles, at the New York Zoological Park, January 8, 1970, p. 2; Curridadat, Archivo Nacional de Costa Rica, Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería, Parques Nacionales, Box 99. Hereafter AN, PN, Box #.

475 This connection, indeed this network, the initial tenets of which were formed at the IICA, is well demonstrated in the records of the National Parks at the National Archives in Costa Rica.
Reviving the Convention on Nature Protection in Costa Rica

One of the most notable of these students was Mario Boza. A graduate student in the forestry program, Boza completed the first draft of his thesis, *A Management Plan for Volcan Poas*, in 1965. The volcano, located just 25 miles from the capital city of San Jose was surrounded by a region with exceptional biodiversity, including approximately 75 species of birds (most impressive of which is the quetzal), and rare species of squirrels. This plan argued for the protection of both the volcano and the surrounding area as a national park, modeled on the U.S.'s Great Smoky Mountains National Park, which Boza had visited in the early 1960s.\(^\text{476}\) His advisor, Kenton Miller, suggested that Boza incorporate any available international tools—including treaties, organizations, and media forums—as a means of generating additional support for the proposed park. Having recently attended the OAS conference in Mar del Plata, Boza hit upon the idea of using the ratification of the Convention on Nature Protection as a means of harnessing support from the international community, primarily from the U.S. Department of Interior, for training manuals and equipment, and from nongovernmental organizations, such as the World Wildlife Fund, for financial, educational, and informational assistance.\(^\text{477}\)

In early 1966, Boza submitted his revised *Management Plan* to the Costa Rican Congress, encouraging the ratification of the Convention on Nature Protection. He took this action for three reasons. First, he believed the nation needed a solid framework with which to create a multileveled conservation program that would allow for monitored

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\(^{476}\) Boza to Milton, January 14, 1968; AN, PN, Box 59.

\(^{477}\) Ibid.
extraction of natural resources (as opposed to outright preservation). Second, the ratification would connect Costa Rica with Inter-American conservation efforts, contacts which Costa Rican officials could potentially use to assist them in training wardens and purchasing the equipment necessary to ensuring the protection of the parks. Third, the ratification would lend a degree of legitimacy to Costa Rican efforts to raise funds for conservation. Tapping into the larger international conservation community and, hopefully, into resources available from the U.S. Department of Interior, would both advance Costa Rica’s efforts and shift the financial burden off of the shoulders of the government that, while it was willing to support it rhetorically, did not have the necessary funds to support it financially. On October 19, 1966, the Costa Rican Congress ratified the 26 year-old Convention on Nature Protection with the adoption of Law No. 3763. On April 12, 1967, Costa Rica deposited its instruments of ratification at the Organization of American States making it the thirteenth nation to ratify the agreement. That November, the Costa Rican Congress appropriated 1 million colones (approximately $150,000 USD) toward the purchase of land for a national park at Santa Rosa and for the management of the reserve over the course of 4 years.

Unfortunately, a 1954 law allocated all funds for the management of parks to the Instituto de Tierras y Colonizacion (ITC), the Government bureau responsible for managing protected regions. The Institute had a horrible track record for mismanaging

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478 Legislative Decree No. 3763. Attached to its instruments of ratification, was a list of 6 birds, 7 mammals, 1 fish, and 2 reptiles in danger of extinction compiled by a joint effort of scientists with the Tropical Science Center and the IICA. On a copy of the Convention included in the early national parks records, an unidentified hand placed a check mark next to and circled Articles 3 and 5.

479 Boza to Milton, January 14, 1968. This money went specifically toward the purchase of the Poas Volcano region for the purpose of creating a National Park. Law No. 3989.
those regions under its control, leaving the areas unprotected and allowing squatters and poachers to continue their destructive tasks. To make matters worse for Boza, in 1968, the ITC was awarded 5 million colones by the Congress to put toward the study of new parks and the management of existing parks. For Boza, there was no more time to wait. Something had to be done before the new national parks were mismanaged by the ITC.

In addition to this, members of the U.S. conservation organization, the Philadelphia Conservationist Inc., had recently donated Costa Rican agrarian bonds acquired by several of its members to the ITC for the purchase of the land surrounding the initial reserve in an attempt to assist in the promotion of protection in Costa Rica. This generous offer exponentially expanded the size of the reserve, a fact Boza applauded, but he was concerned that mismanagement would alienate potential future

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481 Walter Hine to Harold Prowse, The Conservation Foundation, undated; AN, PN, Box 59.

482 A confidential report for the Directors of the World Wildlife Fund, “The Mystery of El Cabo,” February 27, 1967; AN, PN, Box 903. The region of Cabo Blanco had suffered critically from the lack of management implemented by the ITC. During the mid-1950s, as a means of diversifying its agricultural economy, the Government of Costa Rica encouraged its citizens to move to the Nicoya Peninsula, establish small farms, and grow crops other than bananas and coffee. In return for their efforts, the Government transferred ownership of the land to the individuals. This was remarkably effective in relocating Costariccenes, but not particularly effective in diversifying the economy as the fast denuding of the woodlands resulted in significant erosion and poor crop production. Roughly the same time, a Swedish couple, Nicholas Oloff Wessberg and Karen Morgensen, had moved to a small farm near Montezuma, Costa Rica were alarmed by the rapid deforestation taking place around them. In 1960, the couple purchased the neighboring property that had become available after it had been cleared and subsequent erosion had made the land unsuitable for farming. With the purchase of this neighboring estate, the couple began an ambitious project to replant the acreage and they contacted officials in the Costa Rican MAC as well as conservationist organizations in the United States and Europe, requesting assistance in the protection of Cabo Blanco. Their pleas did not fall on deaf ears as officials with the Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture reported in 1961 that the land distribution program should be stopped, that people be encouraged not to clear the land, and that the region should be placed under protection. In 1963, this effort paid off as Cabo Blanco became Costa Rica’s first nature reserve. In 1964, the Government passed additional forestry protection legislation to protect the reserve.
donors from making similar gestures. On April 23, 1965, the Costa Rican Government, the Philadelphia Conservationists, Inc., and the Instituto de Tierras y Colonizacion (ITC) signed an agreement to protect the Cabo Blanco Reserve and the island just off the coast of the reserve, Isla Blanca, permanently. The ITC was responsible for employing the appropriate number of "competent, interested, and honest" guards to protect the reserve and used bonds donated by the Philadelphia Conservationists to enlarge the Reserve to its "natural boundaries." In return, the Philadelphia Conservationist Inc, expected annual progress reports on replanting projects from the ITC. Unfortunately for the Cabo Reserve, the ITC had no experience in managing national reserves and, consequently, between 1963 and 1968, little was done to protect the reserve as frequent changes in the ITC directorship and top-level administration officials left the Cabo Reserve without any management or protection.  

In 1965, TSC scientists, Joseph Tosi, Leslie Holdridge, and Robert Hunter reported their concerns for the Cabo reserve to the Ministry of Agriculture. The report called for the construction of a fence around the reserve to keep stray cattle out as livestock were a key source of disruption to those areas disturbed by fire and deforestation, and competed with wildlife for food resources. It called for the end of the use of burning as a method of clearing land on those corn and banana plantations that bordered the reserve. As there was no fire break to stop the fires from burning those trees on the reserve, fires often raged onto the reservation. The TSC proposed planting a row of mango trees as a means of stopping the fires, proposed hiring wardens, and promised to provide periodic inspections. The plan was not accepted by the MAC and the ITC.

483 Ibid., p. 1
maintained responsibility for the Reserve. Between 1965 and 1968, little was done to protect the reserve as frequent changes in the directorship and top level administration officials left the reserve without any management or protection.

When the Philadelphia Conservationist Inc. had not received any progress reports by 1967, the organization sent its president, Allston Jenkins, and Dr. Maria Buchinger of The Nature Conservancy to Costa Rica to ensure that their money was being well spent. Neither made it to the reserve. Following his failed trip to Cabo, President Jenkins appealed to the World Wildlife Fund for assistance in finding out what was being done at the reserve. The WWF sent Phillip Crowe to the ITC office in San Jose and in a confidential report to the Director of the World Wildlife Fund in February, Crowe noted that, at the ITC office, he could not find “anyone … who has been there or, in fact, knew anything about [Cabo].” After a few days of investigation in San Jose, Crowe wrote to the Directors of the WWF that the “only man in San Jose I could locate who did have some first hand knowledge of the area was Dr. Joseph Tosi Jr.,” with the Tropical Science Center. Tosi gave Crowe a copy of the TSC report and informed him that the ITC had actually hired one guard to oversee the park, but, noted that one person alone was not sufficient to patrol a 3,000 acre reserve; particularly his primary interest appeared to be the imbibing of alcohol. Upon hearing this, Crowe charted a plane and flew with Tosi to the Cabo reserve. The two flew in low circles over most of the reserve and observed the amount of human activity inside of the boundaries, including two corn fields, two moderate sized banana plantations and four huts with people milling

\[484\] Ibid., p. 1.
outside.\textsuperscript{485} Tosi underscored the importance of immediate action as, by TSC estimates, only 25 percent of the reserve was covered by original forest cover jeopardizing spiny cedar, gumbo-limbo tree, lemonwood, balsam and chicle tree populations. Moreover, as evidenced by the huts inside the boundaries, squatters still inhabited the park farming small parcels of land and collecting guano from the smaller island off the coast. As the U.S. Peace Corps had several operatives on the peninsula of Nicoya, Crowe encouraged the WWF to request the Embassy send some of them to the reserve to develop a fuller picture of what was going on. The situation in the Cabo Reserve slowly improved with the attention of the WWF, outspoken advocates maintaining consistent pressure on the Costa Rican Government and the nongovernmental organizations to address the worsening situation there. By the 1970s, as the Government of Costa Rica began passing increasingly strict regulations against deforestation and as the National Park Service was established and gained much needed support for the protection of Costa Rican ecosystems, it assumed responsibility for the reserve and undertook the measures crucial for its protection. The Cabo Reserve was converted to a national park in 1973.

\textbf{Creating the National Parks Department in Costa Rica}

Given that the ITC had no management plan for the parks and the Government had only allotted 4 years worth of funding, Boza immediately turned his attention toward the creation of a National Park Department. He submitted his \textit{Management Plan} to the Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture, arguing for the establishment of a national parks system as a separate governmental department. While Ministry of Agriculture officials appreciated Boza's perspective, they returned his proposal noting that, given that the

\textsuperscript{485} Ibid., p. 3.
country's economic base was founded almost entirely on the forest industry, coffee, and banana production, it would be difficult to persuade the Government to establish such a department in the absence of any obvious economic incentive or benefit. Indeed, they claimed nature preservation was not economically feasible in a nation dependent on resource extraction and farming.

In fact, Costa Rica was in the midst of an economic crisis that both the previous Trejos administration (1966–70) and the current Figueres administration (1970–74) sought to address. While the abolition of the military in 1948 and the increased number of social welfare programs had drastically improved national literacy rates and national health care programs, problems associated with tax evasion, political gridlock, and the large and growing national debt led to a startlingly poor economic situation. Moreover, by the 1960s, a growing consumer demand for “near-luxury” items—e.g. televisions, automobiles, and appliances—resulted in a public debt of $160 million and a budget deficit of $18 million dollars, the largest in the five-nation Central American Common Market area. *The New York Times* reported that, in 1967, the economic situation was “so precarious that the United States and international agencies held up more than $70 million in development funds” until Trejos enforced a 24.4 percent income tax law and a 5 percent sales tax as a means of generating revenue to pay for his programs. In light


488 Ibid.

489 Ibid. For additional information on Costa Rica’s economic situation, see Henry Giniger, “Slowdown Sweeps Central America,” *The New York Times*, p. 64.
of these economic problems, Boza and his followers had to frame nature protection as a solution, emphasizing the potential economic benefits of establishing well managed and maintained national parks.

In their report proposing the creation of a National Parks Department to Congress, Boza and his colleague Alvaro Ugalde emphasized protection as both patriotic and economically beneficial. Boza highlighted the “stunning scenic beauty” of historic sites and encouraged the commemoration of “heroic exploits of the past and, in areas of demonstrated importance,” protection.490 Appealing to Congressional officials’ sense of patriotism, Boza linked the protection of nature with national glory in Costa Rica. Most dramatically, Boza proposed expropriating a section of land along the Nicaraguan border, owned by former Nicaraguan dictator Anastasio Somoza, and turning it into the first national park. The region had particular historical significance to Costa Ricans as it was the site of battles fought both against U.S. filibuster William Walker in 1856 and against Nicaragua in 1955.491 Perhaps most importantly, Boza and Ugalde were mindful of the need demonstrate some national economic benefit. Boza proposed the establishment of Punta Cahuita as a national park, located 25 miles south of Puerto Limon, as an alternative to Santa Rosa because it might be more attractive to international visitors. Cahuita was one of the most unique coral formations in the Caribbean, extending across 240 hectares, and the only coral reef along the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica. Teeming with wildlife, this scenic spot was also the site of two pirate wrecks, believed to be

490 Stephen Harrell, Parks Administrator, to William G. Conway, General Director, New York Zoological Society, March 26, 1970; AN, PN, Box 99.

491 Ibid.
Spanish and French. Boza argued the Government could market the park as a location of particular interest for wealthy divers. The merging of historical, scenic, natural, and economic value, Boza hoped, would make the idea of national parks an easier sell to the Congress.

The combination of patriotism and economics proved to be an effective strategy. Ministry of Agriculture officials approved the draft in September 1969. With this approval, Boza submitted his proposal for the establishment of a national park at Santa Rosa and Cahuita and for a government department to manage them to the Costa Rican Congress. In December 1969, Congress approved the proposal and the historic region of Santa Rosa was converted into the nation’s first national park. Later that year, the Congress approved the purchased of an additional 22,500 acres for $422,000 (USD) which was to be managed by a plan written by Kenton Miller, then a UN FAO Specialist with the IICA. In 1970, a section of land in the Santa Rosa region, a place of cultural importance to Costa Ricans, was set aside and a superintendent, along with a few guards and 3 U.S. Peace Corps volunteers, were stationed there to protect the park and to distribute information on the ecological importance of the area. At the opening ceremony for Santa Rosa National Park—the first national park to be established Costa Rica—on March 20, 1971, the Parks Department invited reporters, Congressmen, and members of

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493 Costa Rica had declared the reef a National Monument in 1969 and requested funding for a biological station to research the region, a boat to patrol the water, and travel expenses for students and technicians. In 1970, the region was declared the first historic park. Mario Boza, “Conservation in Action: Past, Present, and Future of the National Park System of Costa Rica,” Conservation Biology, volume 7, No. 2, June 1993; p. 240.

494 Harrell to Conway, March 26, 1970, p. 4; AN, PN, Box 99.
global conservation organizations to attend, and lauded the park as a symbol of Costa Rica’s commitment to its national identity. In 1970, the Legislative Assembly of Costa Rica, referring to the Convention on Nature Protection, adopted the Law for the Conservation of Wildlife, No. 4551, declaring it in the public interest to protect wildlife as part of the natural renewable resources of the nation. It declared wildlife as property of the nation, to be protected, and administered by the Committee to Protect Wildlife.

To manage this new park, the Congress established a National Parks Department as a principal division within the Ministry of Agriculture’s Division of Forestry, appointing Boza as the first director. While the Congress had been generous with the allocation of 1 million colones for the administration of the parks and the purchase of land, it did not give the new Department a budget of its own, forcing it to compete with the four other bureaus within the Division of Forestry for funds for salaries and the purchase of land and equipment. Boza, and his assistant directors, Alvaro Ugalde and Stephen Harrell, recognized that they would have to search for funding for almost every aspect of running the Parks Department from outside sources.

\[\text{Vernon Cruz, “National Park Service of Costa Rica: Four Years of History,” 1973, p. 1; AN, PN, Box 1360. The connection between nationalism and nature was extraordinarily effective. A study conducted by Amigos de la Naturaleza and ASCONA in 1975 polled 300 people in the San Jose province about concerns facing the nation. The study found that 17 percent of the people polled considered environmental concerns to be critical, and noted that a “striking correlation was found between environmental concern and nationalism.” Jo Ann Myer, “Attitudes Toward Natural Resources in Costa Rica,” December 1975, p. 4; AN, PN, Box 1360.}\]

\[\text{Decree No 4551, La Gaceta No. 95, April 28, 1970; AN, PN, Box 1024.}\]

\[\text{There were quite literally hundreds of requests for funding that were distributed from the Parks Department to various nongovernmental organizations and national governments. This particular discussion of the larger budget issues in Costa Rica can be found in Stephen Harrell’s March 26, 1970 letter to General Director of the New York Zoological Society William G. Conway, p. 4; AN, PN, Box 99.}\]
The Convention on Nature Protection and International Cooperation in Costa Rica

In seeking assistance from international sources, Boza turned to both national governments and nongovernmental organizations, looking once again to the Convention on Nature Protection. Article 6 of the Convention called upon signatories to cooperate in protecting the natural environment of the Americas. Invoking this principle, Boza and his colleagues looked to the United States Government—particularly the National Park Service and the Department of the Interior—for training and advice on building a sustainable and economically feasible national park system.

Officials in the United States responded to Boza’s call both with help for training and well-considered advice for making Costa Rica’s park system economically viable. The U.S. National Park Service provided pamphlets and ideas for interpretive centers designed to assist in the initial stages of development. While this initial assistance was useful and much appreciated, Boza pushed for more. In 1970, he began requesting funds to cover the costs for Costa Rican officials to attend training programs in the United States. Boza himself had attended the 1968 Fourth International Short Course on Administration of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves, sponsored by the U.S. NPS Office of International Affairs, the University of Michigan, and The Conservation Foundation. This 4 ½ week program was designed to give students a crash course in the development and management of national parks, with specific sections on tourism,

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498 Vernon Cruz, “National Park Service of Costa Rica: Four Years of History,” 1973, p. 2; AN, PN, Box 1360.

499 He returned again in 1970 to take part in the Introduction to Park Operations, held at the Horace M. Albright Training Center, in the Grand Canyon National Park. Boza transmitted a copy of his curriculum vita in a letter to Gordon Fredine, Deputy Secretary General, Second World Conference on National Parks, July 31, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.
national heritage, and public education. Boza hoped others in the new parks department could benefit from these courses, designed to train those interested in the maintenance, management, and leadership in national parks, and in the stewardship of natural resources.

Eventually Boza was successful in obtaining training funds. Thinking again of Article 6, he applied for financial assistance in covering the travel expenses and course fees for Costa Rican park officials to attend three training programs in 1972. As a result, during the summer of 1972, three Costa Rican park officials traveled to different parts of the United States to attend very different training facilities. Ernesto Crawford, a biologist and park warden with Santa Rosa National Park, applied to attend the “Communications: Visual Aids Course” at the Mather Training Center in Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. The U.S. NPS approved this request and funded Crawford’s trip. Vernon Cruz, the superintendent of Parque Nacional Volcan Poas, attended a course focused on reforestation programs for tropical ecosystems at the Caribbean National Forest in Puerto Rico. Uriel Barrantes, a biologist at Parque Nacional Tortuguero, attended a course for

500 Prowse to Boza, October 18, 1968; AN, PN, Box 59.

501 Memorandum from Tom Thomas, Stephen T. Mather Training Center, to Ernesto Crawford, Biologist, Santa Rosa National Park, March 2, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137. In 1964, the Mather Center, named after the first Director of the National Park Service Stephen T. Mather, became the first interpretive research and training institute established for Park Rangers and Managers. In 1970, within the Mather Center, the NPS created an Interpretive Design Center to focus specifically on creating and using media products (publications, exhibits, wayside exhibits, and audiovisual and interactive presentations) to assist National Park interpreters. Professionally trained park employees created a variety of programs for interpretive planning, audiovisual equipment, repair, conservation of objects, replacement of wayside exhibits, graphic research, and the revision and reprinting of informational brochures. By 1972, the center offered two week courses in the training of parks officials in the areas of park management, interpretive competency-based training, and the development and production of interpretive media.

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national park rangers at Grand Canyon National Park. The three officials returned to San Jose and held training seminars for their colleagues in Costa Rica.

In late September 1972, Boza sought funding to attend the Second World Conference on National Parks held in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. The goals of the conference were to encourage private interest in public protection and foster international exchanges of information. The program included sessions devoted to the effects of tourism on protected areas; “social, scientific, and environmental problems within national parks in wet, tropical, arid, and mountain regions,” as well as a session designed to demonstrate techniques to foster environmental awareness among the public. Additionally, there were sessions directed toward improving international training opportunities, expanding the global park system, and discussing ways to generate public support for national parks and reserves. In his funding request, Boza noted that attending this conference would boost morale and knowledge amongst his team of parks officials, ultimately improving the management of Costa Rica’s existing national parks. Moreover, attending the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the first national park would be symbolically important for a country just establishing its own national parks.

502 Boza to Sutton, August 11, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.


504 C. Gordon Fredine, Acting Secretary General of the Second World Conference on National Parks to Mario Boza, April 5, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137. The second meeting was jointly sponsored by the National Parks Centennial Commission, the U.S. Department of the Interior and its National Park Service, and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Immediately after the 1962 First World Conference in Seattle, Washington, the USNPS established the Office of International Affairs to facilitate an information exchange to assist other nations in the establishment and management of their parks.

505 Fredine, Deputy Secretary General of the Second World Conference on National Parks, to Mario Boza, July 31, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.
parks. He also highlighted the ways in which officials from smaller nations, like Costa Rica, could contribute to the overall discussions, bringing with them the practical problems and using that forum to search for solutions. Connecting with experts on national parks from around the globe would provide an excellent opportunity to generate both interest in Costa Rica’s parks and possible avenues for assistance in the future. The National Parks Centennial Commission (NPCC) reviewed the request and former Governor of Minnesota, and member of the NPCC, Elmer Anderson, who had spent a considerable amount of time and had invested in several business ventures in Costa Rica, donated the funds for Boza’s travel. Boza’s attendance proved to be well worth the trip, as he attended most of the sessions, spoke to multiple people, and even received an award for outstanding leadership to the National Parks of Costa Rica from the National Parks Centennial Commission.

Following the Conference, Boza traveled to the National Park Service regional office in Denver, Colorado, to tour the Office of Planning and Design. This Office, established in November 1971, was devoted to designing low impact building facilities, roads, and services, in and around national parks. Boza was particularly interested in learning about sustainable methods of park development to protect against possible degradation due to overuse. He was welcomed warmly by Associate Director of the

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506 Norman R. Kallemeyn, Agricultural Attaché to Costa Rica, to Fernando Batalla, Costa Rican Minister of Agriculture, May 2, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.

507 George Hartzog, Jr. Director National Parks Centennial Commission, to Mario Boza, October 16, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.

508 It was later renamed the Denver Service Center.

Denver National Park Service Office Donald Benson, who gave Boza the VIP tour—
introducing him to office employees and spending an afternoon strategizing possible
programs that Boza could apply in Costa Rica. Indeed, Benson was so impressed by
Boza’s energy and enthusiasm that he gave Boza copies of the proposed plans for
Hawaii’s Haleakala National Park, Oregon’s Crater Lake National Park, and the
wilderness reserve plan for Wisconsin’s Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, in the hopes
that Boza could apply some of the recommendations for these very different ecosystems
to those similar sites in Costa Rica.\textsuperscript{510} He also included an Interpretive Prospectus for
Arkansas Post National Memorial to use as a framework when proposing national
historical markers in Costa Rica.\textsuperscript{511}

Boza’s experience in the United States—and the warm welcome he received—
demonstrated that the spirit of Inter-American cooperation as embodied in the
Convention on Nature Protection was alive and well. Boza had succeeded in establishing
a partnership with his more well-funded colleagues in the U.S. National Park Service—a
partnership he hoped could help get Costa Rica’s nascent park service up and running on
a sustainable foundation. Given that the resources available in the United States through
offices such as Planning and Design vastly outstripped anything available in Costa Rica,
Boza believed it extremely important in the early phases of the Costa Rican Parks Service
development, to draw as much as possible on any resources available through the U.S.

\textsuperscript{510} Donald Benson, Associate Director, National Park Service, Denver, Colorado, to Mario Boza, October
18, 1972; AN, PN, Box 137.

\textsuperscript{511} Ibid.
Department of Interior. Toward this end, Boza could call on the principle of cooperation enumerated in the Convention.

In addition to seeking assistance from the U.S. Government, the Costa Rican Park Service drew on the spirit of the Convention on Nature Protection to promote government cooperation with nongovernmental organizations. Department officials requested donations from a variety of nongovernmental organizations to get the park system on its feet. In 1970, they wrote a detailed proposal outlining several places in need of investment. In this proposal they described the efforts of the Costa Rican National Park Service in the field of wildlife management and the dilemmas they faced as a fledgling government department. They discussed specific regions in need of protection within the five ecological zones in Costa Rica and the 1967 list of endangered species that had been attached to the Convention on Nature Protection. Emphasizing regions like Volcan Poas and Tortuguero as places of international importance, worthy of international attention and funding, the proposal drew upon the same arguments that had proven so effective in promoting the protection of Santa Rosa and Cahuita to the Government of Costa Rica. More specifically, the Park Service requested money for published materials on wildlife management and interpretation; equipment for research; funding for administrative staff;
funds to construct tourist and visitor services; funds to purchase land, buildings, equipment, supplies, uniforms, medicine, and fuel; and funds to pay for staff training. In their proposal, Boza and Harrell attempted to connect the Costa Rican Park Service with the nongovernmental organization movement. The case of Tortuguero National Park demonstrates the effectiveness of their effort.

Creating the Park at Tortuguero

The creation of the National Park at Tortuguero provides an example of successful governmental/nongovernmental cooperation at the highest level. Tortuguero proved to be one of the most popular destinations in Costa Rica for international tourists and the effort to create a park was successful for two reasons. First, the project had the support of President Trejos, who was persuaded that ecotourism could help Costa Rica improve its poor budgetary situation, and who began to take an interest in the development of National Parks. Concerned about the costs of development and hoping to attract wealthy U.S. and European tourists, Trejos believed the idyllic Caribbean location and the existence of a transportation infrastructure made Tortuguero an ideal location for a National Park, as converting a private reserve into a national park would require little money in development. The private reserve had already developed facilities that could be converted into tourist facilities at minimal cost and had constructed roads into the region that could be used initially, then developed later. Moreover, he believed that it would be likely that tourists would want to visit Tortuguero, given the beach

destination. In this assessment, Trejos proved to be correct and his support was a key factor in the decision to convert the region into a national park in 1970.

Second, Tortuguero was successful because an NGO was already at work there gathering and dispensing information on the critical state of the green turtles. In 1959, Archie Carr, University of Florida zoologist, founded The Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC), to engage the University of Florida in taking a more active role in protecting the turtles. The organization built a research station on the beach at Tortuguero to advance the study of sea turtles in 1962, and invested in turtle tagging equipment to study behavior and to conduct a series of repopulation experiments. Because it was privately owned land, the CCC was able to restrict human activity considerably along a 20-mile stretch of prime turtle nesting habitat, creating the first protected site. Even with these enormous steps taken toward protection, however, the CCC believed more stringent legal restrictions were necessary to protect species outside of the reserve. Over the course of nearly a decade (1962–1971), the CCC continually argued to the Government of Costa Rica that turtles were an important component of the overall health of the shoreline ecosystem and, as such, the Government should restrict hunting and egg gathering. But the Government of Costa Rica did not have the financial or human resources to devote to turtle protection. Working on the local level, the CCC invested in educating Costa Ricans in the vicinity of the nesting grounds about the

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514 Ibid.

515 Dr. Archie Carr, founding member of the Caribbean Conservation Corporation and former employee of Harvard’s Museum of Comparative Zoology where he worked closely with the likes of Thomas Barbour and Harold Coolidge, worked endlessly along the Caribbean coastlinecharting migration patterns and developing a research station. While the turtles had received international attention at Tortuguero, the region was also home to manatee, tapir, howler and white faced monkeys, all of which were in danger. The offshore waters were breeding grounds for commercial fish such as tarpon, shark, and snapper.
importance of maintaining and protecting turtle populations. Toward this end, the CCC constructed an informational center in the village of Tortuguero that served to educate both Costa Ricans and tourists about the turtles, their habitat, and those harmful human behaviors that had a negative effect on the tortugas. The CCC also invested in the local economy by hiring villagers to patrol the beaches, counting turtle tracks, monitoring behavior, and removing trespassers, as a way to offset the loss of local income generated by turtle hunting.

In their proposal to nongovernmental organizations, the Costa Rican Parks Department declared that they wanted to expand on the work begun by the CCC at Tortuguero by building a public reserve around the private one, adding and extending protections to the turtles. The Parks Department had successfully petitioned the state of Limon to convert 50,000 acres abutting the private preserve—including an additional 20 miles of prime turtle nesting habitat—into a National Park in 1969. In 1970, however, they lacked the funding to effect the conversion. The funds required—including those to hire wardens, build facilities, and purchase equipment to patrol the border—were estimated at $5,000 USD, an amount neither the national government, nor the state government of Limon could provide. Boza’s colleague at the Parks Department, Alvaro Ugalde sought help from the UNFAO, the World Wildlife Fund, the Conservation Foundation, UNESCO, and a laundry list of U.S. conservation organizations—including the Mississippi Flyway Association, the Audubon Society, the New York Zoological


517 Ugalde to Ken Thelen, Organization of American States, International Affairs Division, May 31, 1976; AN, PN, Box 1282.
Society, and the Wilderness Society. In 1971, the New York Zoological Society made
the first pledge of between $3 and 5,000 (USD) as “seed money” to assist the Parks
Department.\textsuperscript{518} They were not the last. By 1976, the Costa Rican National Parks
Department received $30,000 (USD) in donations, all of which were applied to the
purchase of boats, ranger stations, and other facilities at the national park in
Tortuguero.\textsuperscript{519}

The CCC and the Costa Rican National Parks Department maintained a solid
working relationship over the next four years and, in 1975, with the adoption of Law No.
5,680, the two cemented their relationship as a means of ensuring the protection of the
nesting site and the green turtle by merging both the private and public reserve into the
National Park.\textsuperscript{520} The CCC submitted a petition in 1976, supported by the Park Service,
requesting the prohibition of sea turtle capture inside all protected areas. In 1977, the
Government of Costa Rica made the proposition law.\textsuperscript{521}

This first effort at governmental cooperation with nongovernmental organizations
was a resounding success. By working together in the spirit of the Convention on Nature
protection, the Costa Rican Parks Department and the CCC proved that NGOs and
government officials could cooperate successfully to protect Costa Rica’s native tortugas.
The CCC recognized the benefit of working with the government directly to gain support

\textsuperscript{518} William Conway, General Director for the New York Zoological Society to Mario Boza and Stephen
Harrell, March 4, 1970; AN, PN, Box 99.

\textsuperscript{519} Ugalde to Ken Thelen, May 31, 1976; AN, PN, Box 1282.


\textsuperscript{521} Rolando Castro, “Protection of Sea Turtles: Putting the Precautionary Principle into Practices,”
for the protection of the turtles and to gain reinforcement for their private efforts to promote legislation prohibiting egg gathering and hunting. In working to merge their respective reserves into a single national park, they hit upon a very successful formula for nature protection.522

**The Ecotourism Moment**

Although Boza had succeeded dramatically with the creation of the parks at Santa Rosa and Tortuguero, the nascent Parks Department was in a quandary. In the first place, it needed funding for operating expenses, training, and equipment. Second, it needed to expand the number of parks quickly to lure both tourists to Costa Rica and to indicate progress to the Government of Costa Rica. As he suggested in the proposal to Congress, Boza believed a healthy national park system could pay for itself if wealthy tourists could be attracted to Costa Rica. The country needed, therefore, to quickly invest in a tourist industry. But Boza wanted assistance in devising a means of striking a balance between

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522 Interestingly enough, the relationship with the Tropical Science Center was not nearly as smooth. Tension emerged in 1974 as the Costa Rican National Parks Service began to assert that some private reserves should be "passed into the hands of the State" (Boza to Budowski, May 29, 1974; PN, Box 202). The TSC requested a sizable grant from the IUCN in 1974 to advance the Monteverde Project and purchase additional land. The IUCN informed Parks Director Mario Boza and asked for any pertinent information available on the reserve. Boza replied that while he supported IUCN/WWF providing funds for the protection of the reserve, he argued the region should be transferred to the National Park Service for protection, noting that the Park Service of Costa Rica should not compete with private reserves for funding from international organizations. Indeed, actions such as this seriously undermined the Department's ability to protect its parks (Boza to Budowski, May 29, 1974; AN, PN, Box 202). Director General Gerardo Budowski agreed and encouraged the TSC to turn the reserve over to the Costa Rican Park Service "after a relatively short time (one year or perhaps two)" (Budowski to Boza, September 5, 1974; AN, PN, Box 202). The TSC responded that it was a private organization, which received no money from the State and was not a drain on the national resources. As a private organization, it was in a better position to protect the park as it owned the land outright and invested all of the money generated from the reserve into its protection. If the Monteverde reserve was given to the National Parks Service to administer, it would have to compete for resources with the other parks from a limited budget, and all of the good that had been accomplished in the park would be lost. Boza disagreed, arguing that the protection of this space was part of the national heritage and the Park Service and all of the parks could benefit from the revenue generated by the Cloud Forest. Although Boza was outspoken in his argument that the Reserve should be turned over to the National Park Service, the TSC maintained, and continues to maintain, control of the park.
the necessary development of national park facilities and protecting them from overuse.

In working to create an effective ecotourism plan, he sought and received assistance from international sources, both from nongovernmental organizations as well as from government officials in United States. Two reports in particular, one written by Stuart Keith, chairman of the International Council for Bird Preservation (ICBP), and one written by Myron Sutton, of the U.S. National Park Service Office of International Affairs, helped the Parks Department frame the early stages of Costa Rican investment in ecologically-friendly tourism.

The possibility of connecting the improvement of the gross national product with revenue generated from a boost in international tourism became possible only in the 1960s and 1970s. During the 1950s and 1960s, opportunities for travel had improved exponentially with the mass production of commercial jet liners capable of transporting hundreds of people across oceans. The booming U.S. economy during the 1950s and 1960s had produced an increasingly consumer based society, providing millions with disposable income, allowing families the luxury of international travel. As a result of these changes, a tourist industry evolved, advertising package getaways and short, affordable vacations to exotic places. By 1967, travel was big business, generating some 30 billion dollars in the United States alone. Of course Boza and his colleagues recognized the potential of generating resources for the Parks Department through tourism, but they realized they could benefit from advice. In January 1970, Boza and Harrell wrote to Dillon Ripley, President of the International Council for Bird

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Preservation with a description of Costa Rica’s Parks Department, a discussion of the effort to create a national park at Tortuguero, and explanation of the difficult funding situation facing the country, asking for “financial and technical assistance.” Boza saw “no reason why tourism can’t become an important part of the Costa Rican economy,” but he wanted to ensure it was “compatible with wildlife management.”

Although ICBP lacked resources to provide funding, Stuart Keith, Chairman of the ICBP, responded to the request for assistance by traveling to Costa Rica to “study the status of bird conservation” and wrote a detailed report suggesting the Government of Costa Rica could offset the cost of nature protection by promoting ecotourism, that is, by making visiting bird-watchers pay for the experience.

Entitled the “Endangered Avifauna of Costa Rica,” Stuart’s report was distressing. It listed 49 rare species of birds—including the quetzal, the black guan, the dusky nightjar, and the white-throated Wood Quail—in danger of becoming extinct due to shrinking habitat as the result of deforestation from expanding agricultural practices and lumbering operations, and recommended that the Government establish habitat protection reserves and specific hunting seasons. Moreover, Keith encouraged a ban on the capture and transportation of rare tropical birds for sale on the international market as the practice had had a devastating effect on bird populations, particularly in the Rio Macho region. Indeed, Keith described witnessing, in one afternoon, “whole jeeploads of

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524 Boza and Harrell to Dillon, January 12, 1970.

525 Stuart to Boza and Harrell, July 30, 1970.

526 Stuart Keith, “Report on the Endangered Avifauna of Costa Rica;” AN, PN, Box 105. See pages 2 and 3 for the complete list.
Because capture was so stressful for birds, Keith hypothesized that hundreds did not survive the journey, which only encouraged bird-catchers to obtain as many birds as possible, drastically depleting populations of rare birds already threatened. He predicted that, if laws were not enacted to protect the quetzal, the national bird, it was not likely to survive. Once his recommendations were in place, Keith argued that the laws would have to be strictly enforced by trained professionals as “it is no use establishing a Forest Reserve and putting up signs prohibiting hunting etc., if you cannot enforce the law. If there is no warden around, people the world over simply come in and take what they want.”

Recognizing that funding was a principal concern, Keith suggested ecotourism as a means of extracting income from visitors, particularly birdwatchers. He estimated that there were more than 5-million birdwatchers in the United States, many of whom traveled outside of the United States on bird-watching expeditions every year. These feather-seeking foreigners traveled to Africa, Australia, and parts of Europe, to catch a glimpse of exotic birds, spending millions of U.S. dollars on hotels, tours, and supplies. Costa Rica had great potential in this regard, possessing “a very rich bird life, much better than Europe or Japan” and, as it was geographically much closer to the United States, it would be an ideal spot for North Americans. But he noted that the national parks in the United States had experienced some “headaches” with tourism in the form of unwanted fires,

527 Ibid., p. 4.
528 Ibid.
529 Ibid., p 1.
litter, and the disturbing of wildlife. He therefore advised Boza that it was essential to work out a plan as to “how visitors can be organized and controlled.” A staff of park wardens would be required to patrol the parks and tourist facilities constructed. Keith also noted that few birdwatchers visit Costa Rica “simply because there is not much information about where to go to see birds and not many places to stay.” If the Government, and its respective institutions, expanded the number of national parks, and invested in the construction of tourist facilities, he believed many travel agencies would offer bird tours to Costa Rica for their bird tours.\textsuperscript{530}

Myron Sutton, of the U.S. National Park Service Office of International Affairs, recognized early on the economic potential of ecologically-centered tourism to provided a means of generating revenue in countries with limited internal resources available for nature protection. In a report to the IUCN, “How the International Travel Industry Can Promote Conservation,” Sutton argued that if a small nation, such as Costa Rica, could tap into the tourism market, “millions” of people would come “flooding your way,” helping fund protection measures in Costa Rica and actually improving the overall economic strength of the nation in a way that resource extraction never could.\textsuperscript{531}

In 1972, Sutton sent Boza a copy of his report along with some specific recommendations for ways in which Costa Rica could harness and benefit from the new market for ecotourism. In the first place, Sutton encouraged Boza to embrace this development early on so that he would be able to shape the coming wave of ecotourism development early on so that he would be able to shape the coming wave of ecotourism development early on so that he would be able to shape the coming wave of ecotourism development early on so that he would be able to shape the coming wave of ecotourism

\textsuperscript{530} Ibid., p. 2.

in an environmentally friendly manner. In his note to Boza, Sutton lamented the dilemma of those seeking to protect places in the developing world. He noted the unfortunate tendency of conservationists to seek total exclusion of humans from protected reserves because their victories were typically won after long battles with industry and industry-supporting governments. Whereas industries typically sought to open land to unrestricted development, preservationists became equally impassioned about the opposite, total and complete preservation, to the point where human presence was totally restricted to protect wildlife. While it seemed contrary to trade one evil—industry—for another—overuse by tourists, Sutton argued that the best way to ensure protection both for those hard won areas and for future regions was in fact to invite humans in to experience and be awed by wildlife. Over time, income generated from tourism would boost local, state, and national economies, making the conversion of land to protected areas more attractive to communities and municipalities. But to see results, the Costa Rican Parks Department would have to gain control over development in and around the parks from the beginning, not allowing private developers free rein. To point Boza in the right direction, Sutton outlined a possible program for development in which the Parks Department could begin to initiate this change.

In terms of specific recommendations, Sutton built upon those definitions outlined in the Convention on Nature Protection. He encouraged the Parks Department to keep construction inside the park to a minimum and advocated all recreational facilities be built outside of park boundaries. He then recommended that the Government consider legislation prohibiting all aircraft from flying above the parks as the noise might disturb fauna within the park. Finally, the Parks Department should investigate the establishment
of national parks in the "basic and well traveled areas that characterize the Republic of Costa Rica" and emphasized the importance of environmental education for both young people and adults. In doing so, Costa Rican officials could offer something of interest for everyone. To encourage travel and to protect biodiversity in all parts of Costa Rica, Sutton encouraged the Parks Department to establish national parks in each geographic region of the country, particularly along the Pan American Highway, which would provide convenient access for international travelers. Recommending an appeal to patriotism to generate government support, he suggested casting the creation of parks as a means of preserving the native Spanish heritage.

Sutton also offered ideas on how to better market Costa Rica as a tourist destination. He encouraged the Costa Rican Board of Tourism to harness the talents of travel agents to direct their advertisements toward a particular group of consumers who would have both the disposable income to travel and an appreciation of nature that would dovetail with the image of Costa Rica as an ecological oasis. The Board should paint a picture of Costa Rica's parks as "irresistible travel destinations" for those seeking the peace, tranquility, and exoticism only nature could bring. At the same time that the Board of Tourism was focused on promoting the image to tourists, the Parks Department should invest in the expansion of the number of parks, refuges, historic sites, and

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532 Sutton to Boza, July 14, 1972, p. 3; AN, PN, Box 137.

533 Ibid. He also encouraged the Park Service to name the parks after famous Spanish explorers, artists, writers, and humanists—including Cristobal Colon, Juan Vazquez de Coronado, Juan Rafael Mora, Jose Joaquin Rodriguez, Julio Acosta, and Braulio Carrillo. Sutton suggested that the section of the San Juan River that served as Costa Rica's border with Nicaragua, and which had been the source of significant tension between the two countries, be protected as a national park and that the Costa Rican Government work with the Government of Nicaragua to create an international park, as a means of reducing international tensions and of protecting both sides of the river. While most of Sutton's ideas were well received by Parks officials, the sentences outlining a possible international park were circled and an unidentified handwritten notation in the margin reads: "No."
recreation areas, and seek the passage of a variety of laws to protect endangered tropical species. With the passage of these laws, the Board of Tourism could then prepare travel oriented films and booklets in multiple languages, and create package tours aimed at families (which emphasized hiking, fishing, and photography) and at adventurers highlighting their experience in “the real back country,” where they could view a rare quetzal or stroll the beaches with the green turtles. Finally, he encouraged the Ministry of Agriculture and the IICA to sponsor scientific conferences to generate scientific interest in traveling to Costa Rica.534

The combination of the nongovernmental organization reports and Sutton’s how-to guide to ecotourism sparked considerable interest in the Government of Costa Rica. The Ministry of Agriculture and the Board of Tourism promoted the application of a conservation theme to all advertisements for travel to Costa Rica. In 1972, the Board of Tourism mandated the placement of “Help conserve our lands” slogan at the bottom of all advertisements and assisted in training national parks officials to be interpretive tour guides to educate park visitors about the unique aspects of each place. The Costa Rican Congress devoted money to the construction of museums, cultural centers, and facilities to exhibit the natural culture and character. Beginning in 1973, the Costa Rican Board of Tourism embarked on an impressive advertising campaign, marketing Costa Rica as an ecological paradise. The New York Times, the Chicago Tribune, the Los Angeles Times,

534 It was based on these recommendations that the IUCN/WWF submitted the third report to the Park Department. In this Joint Project report, entitled “New Costa Rican National Parks Legislation” the IUCN and WWF recommended that Costa Rica hire a legislative expert to assist the Parks Department in updating laws designed to protect and manage natural areas, national parks, and historical sites in Costa Rica (IUCN/WWF Joint Project Operations, New Costa Rican National Parks Legislation, Environmental Law, issue 1, May 1972; AN, PN, Box 202). This report inspired so much support both in Costa Rica and in the IUCN/WWF that in 1972, the organizations funded a Joint Project and sent a legal expert to San Jose to assist in the construction of sound legislation for nature protection. (Ibid.)

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the Wall Street Journal, and the Washington Post all ran ads sponsored by the Board of Tourism, beckoning tourists with phrases like: “There is no country lovelier or more peaceful than Costa Rica;” and “There are no beaches more superb than Costa Rica’s Pacific Coast and as unspoiled…” Others asked: “Truly, wouldn’t you like to run away?” and “Where are the beautiful people?” answering “In vacationland Costa Rica.” In addition to the ads, LACSA, Costa Rica’s airline, listed Costa Rica as a nation with “sun, mountains, volcanoes, jungles, beaches, flowers, beautiful people, fishing, golf, tennis, delicious food, fine hotels, resorts and,” just in case they left anything out, “MORE!” Between 1969 and 1979, these major U.S. publications all advertised flights, cruises, and vacation packages to the rich coast no less than 40 times per year.535

In 1974 when the BBC film series “The World Around Us,” offered to do a film segment on the Tortuguero National Park, newly appointed Parks Department Director Alvaro Ugalde responded enthusiastically. Videographers spent two months, December 1974 through January 1975, in Costa Rica, filming “The Great Turtle Mystery” inside of the park. The film included impressive shots of the stunning Caribbean shoreline and a mass nesting of turtles. Fifty days later, filmmakers returned to the beach and captured the tiny hatchlings emerging from the sand to make their frantic journey to the sea. The show aired on June 6, 1976 in Europe, and viewers watched anxiously as the tiny torts braved attack by vultures, iguanas, and crabs, only to be swallowed up by the crashing waves. This truly moving piece of cinematography was so popular that the series producers returned to Costa Rica to film the “Forest in the Clouds” in late 1976. In the fifty minute film, which premiered in February 1977, the producers captured the rarely

535 Count conducted by author.
seen howler monkeys and quetzals, and focused on bringing the rainforests of Santa Rosa National Park into living rooms worldwide. These documentaries were such successes that, in 1978, Ugalde and Eduardo Lopez Pizarro, with the Department of Resource Evaluation of Continental and Marine Fauna, invited *Time-Life* to do a filming project on all of the wildlife refuges in Costa Rica. The hour long film featured 6–10 minute narrated segments, with music ranging from Spanish singer Jesús Bonilla to British band Pink Floyd to the 19th century French composer Claude Debussy. The segment that aired in early January 1979 was, according to Arthur “Tex” Hawkins of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, a “huge success” for Costa Rica.

The airing of these films illustrating the most beautiful and rarest of tropical wildlife dovetailed with Costa Rican Parks Department officials efforts to develop a tourist industry rooted in the protection of nature. The collaborations between Costa Rican government officials, representatives of those nongovernmental organizations, and officials with the U.S. Department of Interior that resulted in the immediate and dramatic expansion of the number of national parks, the advertising of Costa Rica as a nature oriented getaway, and the genuine effort made by the Government of Costa Rica to institute solid measures to protect its future meal ticket. This effort to launch this endeavor required the cooperation of the three key groups the American Committee members envisioned being active in nature protection—governments, individuals, and

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536 The segments featured Volcan Poas (10m), Santa Rosa (10m), the Beaches of Manuel Antonio (6m), Tortuguero (10m), Cahuita National Monument (8m), Rincon de la Vieja (3m), Corcovado (10m), and Chirripo (3m). Discussion of the specifics was first articulated in the National Park Department in a report titled “Documental Cinematografico Sobre Los Parques Nacionales de Costa Rica,” AN, PN, Box 468. The project, estimated to cost approximately $8.00 per minute, was postponed in 1977 due to funding limitations. The program was then given to *Time-Life* documentarians in 1979.

537 Arthur Hawkins, Jr. to Eduardo Lopez Pizarro, January 16, 1979; AN, PN, Box 288.
nongovernmental organizations. Moreover, the cooperation led to more restrictive protection legislation and a national plan that defined nature protection as in the long term interests of the nation.

**Conclusion**

In 1967, Costa Rica ratified the Convention on Nature Protection and used its guidelines to create a patchwork of parks across the nation, adopting each of the levels proposed by the Convention—parks, reserves, wildlife refuges—and investing millions of *colones* each year to protecting natural spaces. Costa Rican officials referred to Article 6 of the Convention in requesting U.S. assistance in the form of training manuals, funding for conference and training programs, and Peace Corps volunteers to assist Costa Ricans in constructing facilities in the national parks and refuges, studying wildlife populations, and developing programs to protect fragile ecosystems and endangered species. Moreover, U.S. officials and NGOs representatives provided ideas for making Costa Rica’s national park system economically self sufficient by suggesting the potential of ecotourism. The Parks Department invoked the Convention in its discussions with The Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society, and the World Wildlife Fund, extending its reach to the larger, global environmental protection movement. These organizations donated money, equipment, and people to assist Costa Rica in cultivating a tropical paradise image, advertising Costa Rica as an ecological paradise destination for those seeking escape from the trials and tensions of Western living, generating millions of dollars in tourist revenue through the 1970s and 1980s. As a result, Costa Rica is now one of the leaders in American nature protection, having established one of the most
popular and lucrative tourist destinations, one that combines conservation with preservation in the interests of both man and nature.

The actions of Costa Rica provided a catalyst for the most far reaching implementation of the principles of the Convention on Nature Protection to date, and one which finally realized Harold Coolidge’s dream of effective protection of endangered species. On December 28, 1973, in response to mounting domestic pressure to advance and improve the protection of vanishing species the 93rd Congress passed and President Richard M. Nixon signed the Endangered Species Act, which, among other things, authorized the President to “designate those agencies [to] act on behalf of and represent the United States in all regards as required by the Convention on Nature Protection.”

This exponentially raised the effort and awareness of the ways in which the Convention was being used in Latin America in the United States Government and, as the result, increased funding opportunities within the Department of Interior for employees dedicated solely to the Convention as well as those financial opportunities available to Latin American governments to train professionals in regional management strategies.

By 1976, the actions of the Costa Rican National Park Service prompted both the United States Government and the Organization of American States to take a new look at the old agreement. In doing so, it could be argued that Costa Rica really made a sort of pact with the devil in the form of ecotourism, inviting tourists to Costa Rica required considerable development in the form of hotels, hostels, roads, and restaurants; it demanded an

increased number of vehicles transporting people around and across the country; and it exponentially expanded the number of people hiking, biking, and backpacking through the regions these laws and parks were established to protect. That is certainly a credible argument, but given the alternatives, the emphasis on ecotourism as a method for sustainable economic development was less destructive overall to the ecosystems and to wildlife than the alternative of unregulated deforestation or mining. Moreover, while there was a core group of concerned citizens with connections to international organizations, and while those organizations were actively cultivating the protection of nature and marketing those regions as a tourist destination, there needed to be a credible and viable economic incentive in order for politicians to invest in the protection of the environment, especially in a nation in the midst of an economic recession. President Trejos invested in the protection of Costa Rican natural spaces because of the economic incentives to do so, and, thankfully, that investment paid off. Although ecotourism has created significant problems of its own, the reality is that ecotourism allowed the national government to legitimately invest in long-term protection measures for its forests and its lands, indeed those resources most economically valuable, over the immediate influx of cash.
CONCLUSION

The Convention on Nature Protection as it exists today retains the original spirit of its framers, advancing a comprehensive, flexible, and malleable agreement that laid the foundation for effective nature protection across the Americas. Its two key architects, Harold Coolidge and Alexander Wetmore, had very different views on the initial direction of the treaty. Wetmore wanted a loosely framed agreement that encouraged governments to develop protection measures based on the principle of the conservation of natural resources and the protection of wildlife. Coolidge envisioned a more multidimensional approach, in which private citizens, nongovernmental organizations, and government organizations could participate in developing the most comprehensive preservation laws as rapidly as possible. These two highly motivated experts in the field of international wildlife protection differed frequently, and at length, ultimately developing an extraordinarily broad, all encompassing agreement that had the potential to fail miserably.

The difference between these two perspectives produced a nearly decade long difference of opinion over the best ways to protect wildlife in the Americas. Coolidge wanted a binding, comprehensive, agreement to advance nature protection as far as possible. He insisted on the inclusion of the vanishing species lists and regulations restricting trade of endangered species, and sought to ensure that the Convention provided clear and detailed definitions of protection categories and programs. Wetmore argued that a less binding, more flexible, agreement, coupled with those steps that had
been applied in the 1916 Migratory Bird Treaty—scientific collaboration, legal advice, etc.—would encourage governments already considering, and capable of, investing in legislation to do so. This more reserved approach might take more time, but would, in the end, he believed, prove to be more enduring and less likely to get mired in domestic politics. Moreover, he was aware that most Latin American governments, while willing, were not necessarily capable of adopting strict protection legislation as they did not have the infrastructure, they had not had the constitutional debates, and they likely did not have the popular support (especially during an economic depression) to adopt a bill imposing penalties or large scale measures through the national congresses. That said, the two perspectives are not mutually exclusive. Coolidge and Wetmore needed each other, just as conservationists and preservationists needed each other to promote comprehensive, appealing, and workable agreements.

Given their great differences, the treaty they crafted could have been a lopsided, misshapen document, but the end result proved to be an eventual success. The framers were visionaries, laying the groundwork for effective and extensive measures that could be implemented, if not immediately, in the future. It was visionary in that they included provisions for wilderness reserves and the protection of vanishing species the framers knew no nations, outside of the United States, were likely to enact in the foreseeable future. They realized most nations could do little at present to implement the provisions owing to the unfavorable economic conditions and lack of governmental infrastructure, as well as complications associated with coming war. Yet, they included them because they believed that national protection programs would evolve over time, improving as local political and economic conditions became more favorable. In this belief, as in others,
they proved to be correct. Many nations including Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Chile now have wilderness reserves similar to those in the United States.

Perhaps most consequentially, thanks to Coolidge’s persistence, the framers included a provision for the creation of vanishing species lists. While this controversial clause appeared to be a pipe dream to many of Coolidge’s contemporaries, ultimately it proved to one of the most farsighted and significant steps ever taken in the cause of wildlife protection. Coolidge’s vision of protection for endangered species could not be realized in his day, yet he pursued his vision relentlessly and provided subsequent conservationists with a goal toward which to work—a goal most dramatically realized with U.S. President Richard Nixon’s signature of the Endangered Species Act in December 1973, which made direct reference to the 1940 Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere. Six months before Nixon signed this historic wildlife protection measure, Coolidge himself attended the first meeting of the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species held in Washington, DC. At the signing ceremony for the Endangered Species Act, Nixon noted:

This important measure grants the Government both the authority to make early identification of endangered species and the means to act quickly and thoroughly to save them from extinction. ... Nothing is more priceless and more worthy of preservation than the rich array of animal life with which our country has been blessed. It also puts into effect the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna signed in Washington on March 3, 1973.\textsuperscript{539}

Although it took more than 30 years, an older Harold Coolidge witnessed the cause to which he dedicated his life, finally and dramatically realized.

The framers of the Convention on Nature Protection envisioned nongovernmental organizations, like the American Committee, as crucial participants in conservation efforts, both on the local and diplomatic level. Article 6, calling for cooperation among scientists, conservationists, and nongovernmental organizations with government officials has proven instrumental to nature protection in the Americas. Small organizations with a specialized membership like the American Committee were the precursors of such groups as The Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund which developed broad public appeal and mass memberships. Over the years, dozens of internationally focused non-government organizations emerged, cooperating with locals and government officials to protect nature across the Americas. The case of Costa Rica provides a dramatic example of this cooperation as nongovernmental organizations like the Caribbean Conservation Corporation (CCC), the Tropical Science Center, and the World Wildlife Fund worked in concert with the Costa Rican Ministry of Agriculture and its National Parks Department to purchase equipment, provide training for park wardens, and, in some cases, pay salaries. At Tortuguero, for example, the CCC worked in concert with locals and government officials to promote legislation outlawing the hunting of turtles. In the spirit of Article 6, universities in the United States established exchange programs with their sister facilities in Latin America, advancing the awareness of Latin American ecosystems among U.S. students and exposing Latin American students to U.S. national parks, reserves, and the administration of those facilities. Ultimately, these types of exchanges contributed to the creation of a thriving international network of individuals
committed to the cause of nature protection within the Americas, forming crucial bonds between officials and educators in the United States and various Latin American nations. Overtime, the involvement of a growing number of students and individuals ultimately transformed the conservationist movement from an enthusiasm of the elite to a more middle-class phenomenon in the United States, opening up greater financial resources, typically in the form of donations from nongovernmental organizations and greater political support for conservation-friendly legislation. Although there is no way to measure either Coolidge’s or Wetmore’s overall expectations for the Convention, I believe that the Convention, as it exists today, lives up to their vision, as its provisions continue to be used to advance wildlife protection across international lines and throughout the western hemisphere on a grassroots and governmental level.

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In addition to Costa Rica, a number of the Latin American countries expanded nature protection measures during the 1970s as a result of the renewed interest in the Convention on Nature Protection. In 1970, Ecuador adopted Decree No. 818, “Law of Wildlife and Ichthyological Resources Protection,” regulating national and international trade in wildlife and their products, as well as regulating hunting and fishing. The following year, Ecuador adopted Decree No. 1306 “Law for Protection of National Parks and Reserves” mandating cooperation between the Forest Service, the National Tourist Office, and the General Fisheries Directorate to protect the parks. Finally, the Conocoto Forestry Training Center expanded its course offerings to include a Program

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540 Gary Wetterberg, Maria Tereza Jorge Pádua, Angela Tresinari Bernardes Quintão, and Carlos Ponce del Prado, “Decade of Progress for South American National Parks” (Washington: USDI/NPS, 1985); p. 33. In this work, the authors attribute these successes directly to the Convention on Nature Protection.
for Management of Natural Areas and Wildlife to train officials for the recently established nationwide System for Conservation of Natural Areas.\textsuperscript{541} In 1974, the Bolivian National Congress adopted Decree No. 11686, which provided the legal framework for classifying, managing and protecting forested areas. In 1975, Bolivia adopted Decree No. 12301, providing for the management of National Parks, Wildlife Reserves, Refuges, and Sanctuaries, and Hunting Reserves.\textsuperscript{542} In 1977, neighboring Peru adopted Decree No. 158-77-AG, enacting a strict ban on commercial gains from hunting endangered animals and Decree No. 17816, enacting sanctions against vicuña poachers.\textsuperscript{543}

Other nations employed the use of cooperative educational programs to train conservation officials in proper management techniques for protected regions. The University of Chile’s School of Forestry Sciences referred to Article 6 of the Convention in expanding facilities for training professional national parks and forest reserve administrators and managers. Between 1972 and 1978, 450 students from a variety of Latin American nations enrolled in the School of Forestry Sciences and 200 students enrolled in the School of Forestry Engineering.\textsuperscript{544} In 1977, Paraguay’s University of


\textsuperscript{543} Ibid., p. 49.

Asunción established cooperation programs with the University of Chile, to expand its curriculum to include the management of natural resources. These programs facilitated additional courses in environmental education, journalism, tourism, and business, taking a more holistic approach to nature protection.545 Also in 1977, the Government of Argentina devoted $190,000 (USD) to expand and improve the training facility in Bernabé Méndez Park Ranger Training Center and opened its programs to parks department officials in all South American nations.546

In the spirit of Article 6, the United States stepped up assistance to Latin American conservationists during the 1970s and 1980s. Even while the Convention spurred national governments to enact laws focused on the protection of nature, those conservation measures enacted in the capital cities were not always carried out in more remote regions. To compound the problem, funding did not always trickle out to remote areas, creating personnel limitations and critical delays in the implementation of protection measures. In 1983, a series of amendments were attached to the U.S. Endangered Species Act, which further defined the responsibilities of the Department of the Interior with regard to the Convention and provided additional assistance in inter-American conservation efforts. The U.S. Congress devoted an annual budget of $150,000 (USD) to see the provisions of the Convention calling for inter-American

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cooperation realized. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Office of International Affairs used that allocation to establish the Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean (WWB) program. Its primary focus was to provide assistance to nongovernmental organizations working to promote conservation in local communities in Latin America and to educational facilities for the purposes of establishing foundations to address conservation concerns. In routing money to those organizations directly involved in local communities, instead of through national governments where it was likely to be lost in bureaucracy, funds are used more efficiently to effect change.

In addition, the WWB assisted in educational effort in Latin America creating six programs designed to promote the conservation of resources and the protection of wildlife in individual Latin American communities. “Centers for Excellence”—established in universities in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Venezuela—focused on graduate training in wildlife, biodiversity, and parks management, sustainable development, and environmental education. The “Winged Ambassadors” program

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548 These programs include Promoting Protection Through Pride in Costa Rica, Bat Control and Education Program in Venezuela, the Belize Audubon Society, the Rainforest Alliance, as well as the Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad and the Comisión Nacional de Áreas Naturales Protegidas in Mexico.

549 These Centers include Wildlife Management Master of Science Degree Program, Ecological Principles for Sustainable Development in Latin America, Interdependence—Economic Development and Environmental Concerns in Tropical Countries at the Omar Dengo Campus of the University of Costa Rica; the Biodiversity Management and Environmental Education Graduate Programs and In-Service Training at Venezuela’s University of the Western Plains; the Master of Science Program in Wildlife Management and Reserve Manager Training at the National University of Argentina, as well as the Park Warden Training at Argentina’s National Park Service; the Graduate Program in Ecology, Conservation, and Wildlife Management at Brazil’s Federal University of Minas Gerais and the Reserve Manager and Park Warden Training at the State Forestry Institute of Minas Gerais; finally, the Wildlife Conservation and Management Master of Science Degree Programs at the Institute of Ecology in Xalapa, Mexico, the Reserve Manager Training at Ducks Unlimited in the Yucatan, Park Warden Training at the Institute of Natural History in
promoted migratory bird protection legislation, hunting regulations, the protection of habitat, and the prevention of pesticide poisoning in those same countries.\textsuperscript{550} The “Green Diamonds” program focused on identifying regions with high biodiversity and promoting within those communities habitat and species protection.\textsuperscript{551} The WWB also supports organizations fighting to help pull vanishing species “Back from the Brink” of extinction, working in concert with and donating money to nongovernmental actors in the interest of protecting Latin American ecosystems.\textsuperscript{552} Its “Conservation Through Pride” programs have emphasized local education, action, and involvement in fostering a conservation ethic in communities and, perhaps most importantly, it has encouraged the development of conservation principals and programs that emphasized Latin America’s unique heritage and special role in conservation.\textsuperscript{553} Here the flexibility of implementation

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Tuxtla, and In-Service Training at the National Council for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity of Mexico in Monterrey. Additional information on these centers can be found in the booklet, \textit{Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean}, pp. 11–19.

\textsuperscript{550} Winged Ambassador Programs include Research on the Mortality of Wintering Ospreys at Boise State University (U.S.); Impacts of Pesticide Use on Swainson’s Hawks at the Instituto Nacional de Tecnologicia (Argentina). Additional information on these programs can be found in the booklet, \textit{Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean}, pp. 21–22.

\textsuperscript{551} This includes the CAMRIS (Computer Aided Mapping and Resource Inventory System) for Wildlife and Reserve Managers at the Rainforest Alliance (Costa Rica); the Protected Area Research Program (Paraguay), and the Green Action in Haiti program a the Florida Museum of History (U.S.). Additional information on these programs can be found in the booklet, \textit{Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean}, p. 23.

\textsuperscript{552} This includes the sponsorship of research at the Cincinnati Zoo, Center for Research of Endangered Wildlife (U.S.), the Smithsonian Institution’s Conservation and Research Center (U.S.), and to the Association for the Rescue and Conservation of Wildlife (Guatemala). Additional information on these programs can be found in the booklet, \textit{Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean}, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{553} These programs include working with nongovernmental organizations in the promotion of local environmental ethics, specifically with the RARE Center for Tropical Conservation “Promoting Protection through Pride: A Conservation Education Campaign for the Northern Zone of Costa Rica;” the Belize Audubon Society in “Identifying Indicator Species in Belize;” and Bat Conservation International in “Bat Control and Education Program in Venezuela. Additional information on these programs can be found in the booklet, \textit{Wildlife Without Borders—Latin America and the Caribbean}, p. 27.
provided for in the Convention proved to be visionary, allowing the WWB to create
unique programs aimed at the local level where they could be most effective.\textsuperscript{554}

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The role of highly determined individuals, both private citizens and government
officials willing to fight for the cause of conservation, cannot be understated. While the
protection of megafauna often inspires sentimental popular support, it is most often one
committed individual, or a small group of people, who devote their lives to seeing
protection legislation through the political obstacle course to become a reality. In the
United States, this was the case particularly with early legislation efforts, as supporters
had to overcome the opposition of politically connected wealthy business interests. The
same has been true in Latin America. In Argentina, Francisco Moreno donated his time,
money, and land to see that Argentina’s natural wealth was protected. Ezequiel Bustillo
spent his entire career promoting the protection of nature, walking a fine line between
respecting the necessity for economic growth and the protection of ecological systems,
and often accepting compromise legislation and small successes for his personal sacrifice.
In Mexico, men like Miguel Angel de Quevedo and Juan Zinzer spent their careers
fighting political battles to save Mexico’s forests and wildlife. After decades of service
establishing and expanding the Department of Forestry, and witnessing the first
institutionalization of protection legislation in the form of national parks under Cárdenas,
Quevedo lived just long enough to see politics destroy his life’s work. In Venezuela,
Henri Pittier spent the better part of his life entangled in a constant stream of political

\textsuperscript{554} Since 1983, the budget has increased from $150,000 to approximately $1,000,000 to advance
battles to protect Venezuelan ecosystems. His students, Marcus Gonzalez Vale and William Phelps, Jr., embraced his passion as their own and spent years traveling to distant corners of the nation to inspect areas, writing to international organizations for assistance, and representing Venezuela at international conferences. All of this was done with little or no compensation for their efforts and at extraordinary sacrifice to themselves. Although, all too often, their efforts were thwarted, these individuals worked to usher the Convention through their respective government processes to achieve ratification. The process was uneven. Costa Rica, for example, did not have any outspoken conservationists willing to shepherd the Convention through their national congress in 1942. As a result, it was left signed, but not ratified, until 1967 when three individuals—Mario Boza, Stephen Harrell, and Alvaro Ugalde—arrived on the scene and devoted tireless energy to securing ratification and applying the principles of the Convention to Costa Rica.

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The Western Hemisphere has benefited greatly from the diplomatic efforts made in 1938 by the members of the American Committee and the international agreement they conceived, wrote, and carried doggedly through to ratification in 1942. The Convention on Nature Protection has provided inspiration for conservationists and the framework for subsequent conservation legislation in all signatory nations. As such it was perhaps the most significant step toward comprehensive nature and wildlife protection in the Western Hemisphere during the 20th century. Those who came after Coolidge and Wetmore demonstrated great commitment and determination to the cause, but they were building on the foundation created by the original Convention. Although the Convention itself
was a imperfect agreement—a comprise between competing visions—it has remained relevant, providing an essential guide to conservation efforts throughout the hemisphere and an indispensable framework for the evolution of nature protection over the last six decades.
APPENDICES
APPENDIX A: ACRONYMS

ACIWLP (AC), American Committee for International Wild Life Protection

BAAS, British Association for the Advancement of Science
BGC, British Galapagos Committee, 1933–1938
BSPFE, British Society for the Protection of Fauna of the Empire
BCC, Boone and Crockett Club

CIAA, Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs
CNP, Convention on Nature Protection and Wildlife Preservation in the Western Hemisphere
CPN, Comision de Parques Nacionales (Argentina)
CNPFS, Comision Nacional para la Proteccion de la Fauna Suramericana (National Commission for the Protection of South American Fauna), established 1929

DPN, Direccion de Parques Nacionales (Argentina)
DTN, Department of National Territories (Argentina)

IACE, Inter-American Committee of Experts
ICPN, International Conference for the Protection of Nature
IOPN, International Office for the Protection of Nature in Brussels
IOU, International Ornithological Union
ITCO, Instituto del Tierras y Colonizacion (Costa Rica)

MCZ, Museum of Comparative Zoology, Harvard University
MRE, Ministry of Foreign Relations
MRI, Ministry of the Interior

NPA, National Park Association
NPS, National Park Service

OAS, Organization of American States

PAC, Pan American Committee of the American Committee for International Wild Life Protection
PAIGH, Pan American Institute of Geography and History
PAU, Pan American Union
PCZ, Panama Canal Zone

SCA, Sociedad Ciencia de Argentina

U.S. FWS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
APPENDIX B: LIST OF PERSONS

Alonso, Marcelo, Director of the Department of Asuntos Científicos, Costa Rica
Atwood, Wallace W., President of the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (PAIGH); International Galápagos Commission, 1934–1936

Barbour, Thomas, Director of Harvard’s Museum of Comparative Zoology; U.S. delegate to first (1908–09), second (1921), and third (1924) Pan American Scientific Congresses
Barnes, Charles, Director of the U.S. State Department’s Treaty Division (1942)
Benson, Donald, Associate Director of the Denver National Park Service Office (1972)
Blair, Reid, member and Secretary of the American Committee from 1929
Boggs, Samuel, Department of State representative to the Pan American Committee (1939)
Boza, Mario, Director of the National Park Service; Special Assistant to the President from 1978
Bustillo, Ezequiel, Argentinean conservationist; Director of the CPN from 1934

Cabrera, Dr. Angel, founder of the Comisión Nacional para la Protección de la Fauna Suramericana (National Commission for the Protection of South American Fauna or CNPFS)
Cahalane, Victor, official U.S. National Park Service Wild Life Division representative to the Pan American Committee (1939)
Cammerer, Arno, U.S. National Park Service Acting Director, 1937
Carr, Archie, Founder of Caribbean Conservation Corporation from 1959
Castro, Dr. Hector David, official with the El Salvadorian Ministry of Interior; Vice Chairman of the Convention’s Governing Board, 1939
Cherrington, Ben, U.S. delegate to the 1938 Pan American Convention in Lima, Peru
Chopitea, Don Carlos Dorado, Bolivian Ministry of the Interior official (1938)
Coolidge, Harold Jefferson, Executive Committee of the American Committee from 1929 to 1979; Director of the Pan American Committee from 1939 to 1941
Crowe, Phillip, IUCN/World Wildlife Fund representative (1973)

De Bayle, Leon, Nicaraguan official with the Ministry of Interior; co-secretary of the Convention’s Governing Board, 1939
Demaray, A.E., U.S. National Park Service representative to the Pan American Committee (1938)
Díez de Medina, Charge d’Affaires of Bolivia; co-secretary of the Convention’s Governing Board (1939)
Duggan Laurence, Director of the Division of the American Republics in the U.S. Department of State (1939–40)
Escalante, Diogenes, Venezuelan ambassador to the United States, 1939; chairman of the Convention’s Governing Board (1939–40)
Figueroa, Jose, President of Costa Rica, 1970–74

Gabrielson, Ira, Assistant Director of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1942
Gomez, Juan Vicente, President of Venezuela, 1908–34

Harrell, Stephen, Parks Administrator, Costa Rican National Park Service from 1970

Holdridge, Leslie, founder of the Tropical Science Center (Costa Rica)
Hull, Cordell, U.S. Secretary of State, 1933–44

Ibarra, Velasco, President of Ecuador, 1934–35

Keith, G. Stuart, Secretary of the American Museum of Natural History, and Chairman of the U.S. National Section, International Council for Bird Preservation, 1973–
Kelchner, Warren, Director of the Department of State’s Division of Latin American Affairs, 1945

Kidder, Alfred “Teddy,” American Committee representative to the 1938 Pan American Convention in Lima, Peru

Macedo, German Morales, Scientist with Peru’s Instituto del Mar, 1939
Manger, William, Counselor to the Pan American Union, 1940–48; Assistant Secretary General of the Organization of American States, 1948–1958

Moore, Robert, Director of the International Galápagos Commission, 1935–1938
Moreno, Francisco P., Argentinean conservationist, donated land for the first national park at Lake Nahuel Huapi in 1901
Moreno, Isidoro Ruiz, Director of Argentina’s Departamento de Territorios de Nacionales, 1903

Oduber, Daniel, President of Costa Rica, 1974–78

Phelps, Jr., William, representative to the Venezuelan Committee of Experts (1939)
Phelps, Sr. William H., member of American Ornithological and International Ornithological Unions; introduced bird protection legislation (1939)
Phillips, John, founder of the American Committee, 1929
Pittier, Henri, founder of the National Herbarium and conservationist with the Ministry of Agriculture in Venezuela

Quevedo, Miguel Angel de, founder of the Mexican Department of Forestry
Salomon, Dr. Hugo, founder of the Argentinean organization the CNPFS
Shantz, Homer, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service representative to the Inter-American Committee of Experts (1939)
Sutton, Myron, Assistant Chief of the Division of International Affairs, U.S. National Park Service, from 1970

Tosi, Joseph, founder of the Tropical Science Center (Costa Rica)
Trejos, José Juaquín, President of Costa Rica, 1966–70

Ugalde, Alvaro, Director of the Costa Rican National Park Service, from 1974

Vale, Marcus Gonzalez, Venezuelan delegate to the Inter-American Committee of Experts in 1939
Vogt, William, Chief of the Convention’s Technical Advisory, 1943–48

Wells, Sumner, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, 1937–41
Wetmore, Frank Alexander, Assistant Secretary to the Smithsonian Institution (1925–44); member of the American Committee from 1931; Secretary General of the 8th American Scientific Congress; U.S. delegate to the Committee of Experts (1939)

Zevallos, Estanisla, co-founder of Sociedad Cientifica Argentina and MRE official
Zinzer, Juan, Chief of the Mexican Game Division, 1936; Mexican representative to the Inter-American Committee of Experts (1939)
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Zinzer, Juan, “Informe de los principales trabajos desarrollados por la jefatura del Servicio de Caza de acuerdo con lo establecido por el plan sexenal,” *Boletín del Departamento Forestal y de Caza y Pesca* 4 (December 1938–February 1939); pp. 94–95
Zuloaga, Guillermo, “Palabras de elogio al Dr. William H. Phelps en la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales,” *Boletin de la Sociedad Venezolana de Ciencias Naturales* 111 (1967); pp. 196–208

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