

Global Change Media Briefings

Environmental issues are, far too often, inherently controversial and lacking in simple solutions. How does one weigh the feasibility of building a dam to provide hydroelectric power against the possibility of destroying a river's fragile ecocomplex and its component ecosystems — valued resources for generations? Or clear-cutting a forest to create farmland, resulting in the destruction of a natural habitat? Or importing hazardous waste to boost the local economy to the possible detriment of children's health?

Although most environmental issues, such as solid waste or water pollution, share some universality of nature, each nation and even each community has a unique perspective that needs to be addressed. SIPI's Global

Change Media Briefings provide a forum for in-depth discussion of the questions surrounding environmental controversies.

These briefings, featuring a panel of experts, present an opportunity for international and US journalists to learn about possible solutions to each other's environmental problems. Particular attention is paid to the dilemmas faced by developing nations.

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Royal Leadership and Awards for the Ageing

Age Resource and *The National Council on Ageing*, under the auspices of *Age Concern England*, are proud to announce that HRH The Prince of Wales has kindly agreed to be *Age Resource*'s first President. *Age Resource* is a partnership between major organizations in the field of ageing and other nationally-known groups working in different areas through which the skills and experience of older people can make a valuable contribution. In such matters Britain once again stands out as something of a world leader.

The founding organizations include the two largest of their kind in the United Kingdom, namely the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and the Royal Society for Nature Conservation. The Retired Executive Action Clearing House (REACH) and Shell UK are also participating.

Origins and Objectives

Age Resource came into being through the energies of a small group of people from Age Concern England and Shell UK, getting together with Robert Boote, CVO, first Director-General of the British Nature Conservancy Council. With an influential and committed group of patrons and under Robert Boote's energetic chairmanship, *Age Resource* believes that large numbers of older people have the will and enthusiasm, as well as the skills and ability, to contribute to society's environmental and conservational needs.

One of the initial schemes of *Age Resource* has been the setting up of three pilot projects — in Essex, Sussex, and Lancashire — to encourage the greater involvement of older people in environmental ventures, together with linked research and evaluation. A review of current and potential research activities is under way, with the collaboration of the Carnegie Inquiry into the Third Age, the Volunteer Centre UK, the Age Concern Institute of

Gerontology, REACH, and the Community Development Foundation.

When once *Age Resource* has become firmly established in Great Britain, it is hoped that it will be expanded across Europe, by which time its initiative should serve as a model for the rest of the world.

Age Resource Awards

Age Resource believes that 'you get out of life what you put into it', and so they have established the Annual *Age Resource Awards* (sponsored by Shell UK) to identify the enormous contribution which older people can, and in some cases do, make to life in the UK today. Last year the winners in its six categories inspired thousands of people, of 50 years of age or older, with their activity, enthusiasm, and often unique projects.

This year (1991) *Age Resource* extended the £1,000 Awards to nine categories covering three areas of Voluntary Work (Education, Caring, and Enhancing the Environment), as well as Personal Development, Self-help in the Community, Intergenerational Activity (schemes which bring together older and younger people for their mutual benefit), Campaigning, and Employment, the ninth Award being an open category which involves schemes that do not fit into anything else and thus completes some coverage of just about everything!

The closing day for this year's competition has passed but it is hoped to extend the scheme still further in 1992 and hold the award-winning ceremony again at the Royal Festival Hall in London.

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Circumpolar 'Ecosystems' in Winter

On Friday, 16 February 1990, much confusion resulted from weather delays in Vancouver and Toronto. The travel people at North Star Tours managed to delay the Winnipeg-Churchill flight in order to pick up stragglers coming out of Toronto and elsewhere. However, those people who were many hours late getting into Winnipeg (flying with that other airline) were flown to Thompson and placed on a waiting train to Churchill. These problems were anticipated in advance (as we had planned for northern weather problems) and thanks to North Star, Canadian Airlines, and VIA Rail, we managed to keep running smoothly.

The Symposium got under way with a tour of CNSC and the 'Sundown Walkabout' during one of the warmest days that week, a balmy -34°C with a wind-chill equivalent to somewhere near double this value (-70°C). During the Walkabout there was a full-dress display ranging from seal and caribou (*Rangifer* sp.) all the way to synthetics. The two Arctic Foxes (*Alopex lagopus*) that came on the Walkabout with us insisted on staying for dinner as well. While we struggled through our Char (*Salvelinus alpinus*) dinner with Manitoba Wild Rice (*Zizania palustris*) and French wines, the Centre managed to sell 86 tickets for a draw including Kaufman Sorel