

# The Planet Faces a Biodiversity Crisis

Conservation International's Chairman and CEO, Peter A. Seligmann, Speaks Out on Biodiversity

In recent decades, much of the natural world has been under continuous assault on an unprecedented scale. Mighty rivers are reduced to a trickle by ill-conceived dam projects. Animals are trapped, killed, and exported alive to feed an insatiable trade in everything from bush meat to exotic pets.

Half of the world's tropical rain forests, nature's repository for the richest collections of terrestrial plant and animal species, have been destroyed for timber and for development projects, many unsustainable. The oceans have been plundered by giant industrial fishing fleets to the point where 70 percent of commercial species are over-fished, and 90 per cent of top marine predators like cod, tuna, swordfish, and shark have disappeared.

Tackling a problem of this scale and complexity, often with modest funds, means that conservationists must be able to pinpoint the places where the greatest conservation gains can be made with the wisest investments.

This requires the close study and protection of regions that support the richest varieties of plant and animal species, and also face the greatest threats. Of particular concern are those species that are endemic or native to an area – plants or creatures found nowhere else on Earth and therefore, irreplaceable if lost.

Conservation International (CI) has identified 34 hotspots, places so abundant in biodiversity that they warrant the highest level of protection. More than 800 CI scientists, economists, anthropologists, and other experts – many of them foreign nationals – work in more than 40 countries to safeguard these ecological crown jewels that circle the globe from the Tropical Andes to the mountains of Southwest China. In many cases, CI works closely with indigenous peoples to help them protect their lands that are part of these special places.

The remaining intact portions of these 34 biodiversity hotspots today cover only 2.3 percent of the Earth's land surface, a little larger than the Indian sub-continent. In the pre-industrial era, they comprised 15.7 percent, about the size of the former USSR. Even so, these fragments harbor as many as 50 percent of all vascular plant species, and 42 percent of terrestrial vertebrate species, as endemics.

To qualify as a hotspot, a region must have lost at least 70 percent of its original vegetation due to the impact of human activities. They must also hold at least 1500 endemic plant species because where there is high plant diversity, there is usually high animal diversity.

In a sense, hotspots are nature's emergency rooms where conservationists work to protect and restore to health the most critical patients. CI's reach, however, is far broader. We also work to preserve entire ecosystems

that provide us with a vast array of benefits.

These "ecosystem services" sustain and enrich our lives. They include food, medicines, clean air and water, flood and climate control, energy and raw materials, soil regeneration, crop pollination, disease prevention, recreation, spiritual sustenance, and many others. By protecting ecosystems, CI helps to assure that these natural assets will continue to benefit humankind.

Today, the Earth is facing a biodiversity crisis – one that will affect everyone. In tandem with our partners in the global conservation movement, CI is engaging governments, corporations, funding institutions, indigenous groups, communities, and people everywhere, to set the course for a new age of global conservation and assure that future generations continue to reap the benefits that nature provides for us all.

**Conservation International**  
1919 M, Street, Washington D.C. U.S.A.



Peter A. Seligmann

## Conservation International

Conservation International (CI) believes that the Earth's natural heritage must be maintained if future generations are to thrive spiritually, culturally, and economically. Our mission is to conserve the Earth's living heritage—our global biodiversity—and to demonstrate that human societies are able to live harmoniously with nature.

CI is a global field-based environmental organization that works to protect our planet's fundamental life-support system – biodiversity. Founded in 1987, CI is nonprofit, with headquarters in Washington, D.C., and projects in more than 40 countries on four continents.

CI combines pragmatic hands-on work in the field with some of the most advanced innovations in science, economics and policy to accomplish its mission. By working with partners from all sectors of society, CI has brought about the protection of millions of acres of biodiversity rich lands worldwide, from South America to Africa to Asia.

For more information about Conservation International's mission and work, please visit:

[www.conservation.org](http://www.conservation.org)

**Managing Editor English:**

Alison Murray – amurray@earthfous.org

**Managing Editor french:**

Fiona Dalton – fiona@earthfocus.org

**Youth Editors:**Peter Boerma, Stéfanie Freel, Eva Kooyman,  
Nuria Richard, Axel Sursock, Yannick Van de  
Zee, Gavin Yerxa**Artwork Contributions:**Art Department, La Grande-Boissière,  
Switzerland, Students of Les Marrionniers,  
Seitzerland, Students of La Chataigneraie,  
Switzerland, United Nations Environment  
Programme, Global Painting Competition  
2005 – Green Cities**Founding Editors:**

Barry Gilbert-Miguet &amp; David F. Batten

**Contributing Schools:**Jan Russell, Bandung International School,  
Indonesia, Caroline Ross, Collège de Léman,  
Versoix, Switzerland, International School of  
Sophia Antipolis, 06 France, Ecole  
Elementaire Jean Calas, Ferney-Voltaire, 01  
France, University of Berne, Switzerland  
Gideon Hauser Day School, Palo Alto,  
California, U.S.A.**Design + Art Direction:**

Old City Publishing

**Advertising + Sponsorship America:**Guy Griffiths  
Old City Publishing  
628 North Second Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19123 USA  
Phone: + 1 215 925 4390  
Fax: +1 215 925 4371  
E-mail: guy@oldcitypublishing.com**Advertising + Sponsorship  
Europe & Rest of World:**Nicola Furey, 6,  
Chemin Sous Cherre,  
1245 Collonge-Bellerive,  
Genève, Switzerland  
Phone: +41 22 349 50 05  
Fax: +41 22 349 50 77  
E-mail: nicola@earthfocus.org**Editorial Advisory Board**Robert Boehm, Fiona Dalton, Jenny  
Downing, Guy Griffiths, Duff Gyr,  
Nicholas Hannel, Denise Hazen,  
Richard Heery, Emma Hofmanns,  
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# LETTERS

## TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I am trying my hardest to write an article, but my homework and problems are increasing. I will try, however, to complete one in my spare time, but 6th grade isn't that easy.

Sincerely,

Viktoria

*Dear Viktoria,*

*This is probably how you all feel but once you see YOUR work in print you realise why you tried so hard!! Please all keep trying.*

*Earth Focus Editor*

Dear Earth Focus Readers,

My name is Bertha. I am really interested in children. I love seeing children happy and healthy, I hate seeing them unhappy and sad. AIDS has made children unhappy and sad more than I would ever imagine. Children are left as orphans, uncared for and unprotected due to the existence of AIDS. They are left unhealthy due to the fact that their parents transmit this disease to them.

It is really one of the saddest stories one would ever think of. Lets think of these children - who will take care of them? Please mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, grandpas and grandmas lets all do all we can to eradicate this problem. Lets all stop the ways in which AIDS can affect us so that the future children can be happy and healthy as it used to be in the past.

Bertha Joseph, St. Joseph Seminary, Mwanza, Tanzania







# A Visit to the United Nations in Geneva

**T**his trip we took to the U.N was very exciting for me because I had never been to the U.N and it is a very important place here in Geneva and in the world. The first thing we did was register and fill out some identification papers for the security. Each of us received a card that was the pass to get in but to get in you had to be on a list. One of our classmates could not get in because she wasn't on the list, so she couldn't stay and had to go back to school. I think they should change that. I understand that the security has to be very good in this situation but it was a very stupid thing that they did not permit one person, who is a student - not even an adult to enter just because her name was not on the list.

The purpose of the trip was to listen to a meeting that the World Federation of United Nations (see Editorial in Earth Focus issue 28) that Madame Bruna Faidutti had arranged. The theme of the meeting was "The United Nations (U.N.) and the Future". Four or five different people talked about the changes that the U.N has gone through and what solutions there are to promote social progress and better standards of life. The meeting lasted about two and a half hours at least, including the opinions and questions of the representatives of countries did.

The best speech was from Mr Shashi Tharoor from India. He is the U.N.'s Under Secretary General for Communication and Public Information. The title of his speech was "Creating the U.N. of the 21st century". He talked about some changes the

U.N has gone through in the past and in the present; about the term "reform" and when this term was used and also how the public reacts to the U.N's decisions. One of the phrases he quoted was; "There is no greater folly in the world than despair" by Don Quixote. He liked this idea because he is an optimist and sees things in a positive way. Also, another quote is "You must be the change you wish to see in the world", said by Mahatma Gandhi. The quotations by famous people made his message more profound.

**Jimena Montemayou, 15, Mexico  
La Grande Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**

## A Future for the United Nations

**T**he United Nations (U.N.) is becoming increasingly powerful as a political force, but what is its future? The U.N.'s preoccupation is to achieve its Millennium Development Goals by 2015. The representatives of numerous countries came together to determine the fate of the U.N and what job the Security Council will have. There is a rising worry about terrorism. Certain countries are becoming paranoid because of problematic terrorist attacks. For example, in London it is almost impossible to find a garbage can in public places such as the airport, parks, and museums. The garbage cans are supposedly the places most used to hide bombs and so are dangerous and suspicious. Since the U.N has such powers they have to decide what the Security Council is to do and what it should represent. In this conference one of the speakers said, that there is now a policy that the U.N will protect countries with problems concerning war crimes, genocides, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity.

On average once every eight years the U.N has a "reform". They change what they don't like about the U.N. The most urgent concern now is the great divide in opinions between the different members of the U.N. They say they want to "Create the UN of the 21st Century" to celebrate their 60 years of existence, but how can they change things if the opinions of the members differ from one extreme to the other? Once they have sorted out their differences then they will be ready for a "reform", but for that we will have to wait a while.

**Eva Kooyman, 15, The Netherlands  
Le Grande Boissière, Geneve, Switzerland**

# Youth Debate on Urban Sustainable Development *S-Dev, Geneva 05*



Earth Focus Foundation and Geneva Environment Network – UNEP youth debate', took place during the S-DEV Conference at Palexpo, Geneva, Switzerland, the 12th October 2005. Participants included High School students from CES Collège André-Chavanne, the Collège du Léman, and three different campuses of the International School of Geneva. A team of international experts interacted with the participants before, and during the debate.

**The World Organisations - Representatives of the Canadian Development Bank and the Rasta Foundation.**

## *S-Dev 05 Geneva , Switzerland*

From October 11 to October 13, the city of Geneva, Switzerland hosted an international conference on urban development and sustainability. There were many workshops and presentations by various urban governments and international companies and organisations. There was one interactive workshop, which attracted a significantly large audience, the majority of which participated greatly. This workshop was a debate, where youth represented a developing country. Some may say that the concept was purely imaginative and that it was a workshop contributing to the creative mind as opposed to inspiring ideas concerning urban sustainability and urban sustainable development. In some respects, this was true, yet to say that the idea behind the debate was purely imaginary would be incorrect. This debate, which was taken with a

considerable sense of seriousness, allowed for today's youth to originally interpret how would be the best way for the concerning urban area to develop in a sustainable way. The results and conclusions made by the youth were both inspiring and original.

The debate itself was set out as a "conference" concerning the situation in a nation St. Jacques and its capital city Pointe Rouge. In fact, Pointe Rouge and St. Jacques were mainly a model for an existent country with a similar situation. All statistics are exactly the same as those of that country.

Those organising and leading the debate were all given a role to play. Each department of the national government were given a role, but also the mayor of Pointe Rouge was given a role. This was because the debate primarily concerned the urban situation of Pointe Rouge. Each international, domestic, and humanitarian







**The Prime Minister of Pointe Rouge, Saint Jacques.**

organisation was represented by two or three participants. Each of the delegates was allowed to present their ideas and possible contributions to the development of St. Jacques and Pointe Rouge. Julian Azkoul, as the sensible and rational Prime Minister, presented his argument very well and, along with his cabinet members, came to some excellent conclusive decisions. Taking into account all of the various factors and opposing forces, the government came to a fair conclusion, which was also shown by the vote of confidence, in favour of the government.

Yet, there was a slight rebel uprising. I, as the extreme and corrupt mayor of Pointe Rouge, called for the resignation of the Prime Minister and to have myself appointed as Prime Minister. Initially, the idea seemed to sell well within the audience, as was shown by the enthusiastic cheers from the crowd. Yet ultimately, except for the few truly motivated mayoral supporters, the



**The Mayor of Pointe Rouge (pink shirt) and his Aids.**

audience voted for the Prime Minister and his government. The mayor was dismissed from his position! Also, one of the main changes the government made due to this conference, was the appointment of Jean-Marc Pasquet, who had helped us with the preparation, as Minister of Education. This was very much accepted by all due to the intense knowledge he has concerning the situation within the country. Also, some contributions, particularly those of the Global Bank, were very much accepted within the government.

Due to the immense research done by the participants, large oral contributions by the audience, and chaired by Michael Williams, this debate proved to be a great success. The conclusions, made by the Prime Minister and his cabinet, were mature, original, and interesting. Also, the serious, enthusiastic, and sometimes humorous participation by each of the participants added new dimensions to the debate. My own contribution, as Mayor of Pointe Rouge, clearly outlined the potential that this government had. In all, this group effort by today's youth helped generate dynamic ideas, giving hope for a sustainable future.

**Yannick van der Zee, 17, The Netherlands  
Le Grande Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**

For more information and photographs  
[www.earthfocus.org](http://www.earthfocus.org) and  
<http://home.cdi.ch/debates/>



# Students' League of Nations

**12th General Assembly for 300 Students from Around the World**

*A report from a participant at the annual held annually in Geneva, Switzerland in the United Nations*

The Students' League of Nations, named the Students' United Nations at its founding, was founded in 1953 by educators at the International School of Geneva. It is a realistic simulation of the United Nations' General Assembly by students of various schools between the ages of fifteen and twenty, and the only one of its kind to be permitted to take place on the premises of the United Nations Organisation itself. This simulation lets students represent a country, culture, and people that are not their own, concerning important current world affairs.

This particular edition of the Students' League of Nations took place on the 12th and 13th of December 2005, at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The three hundred delegates, messengers, and other participants eagerly listened to the inauguration speech by Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

The five resolutions presented by the various delegations were the following:

- The regulation of the world's mass media by an international committee that would monitor its content and eradicate material that is unduly violent, sexual, profane, or illicit.

*Submitted by the delegation of Saudi Arabia*

The previous resolution was widely accepted within the General Assembly, especially the delegates representing countries in the Middle East.

- The right of the Security Council to disable the nuclear facilities of any country that violates the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty obligations.

*Submitted by the delegation of France*

This resolution initiated a furious debate between those for and against it. Despite the heavy opposition from numerous countries, specifically the Islamic Republic of Iran, the resolution obtained the needed 75% "yes" votes from the General Assembly.

- The avoidance of the imprecise and emotional term "terrorism" in all official United Nations

documents, and its substitution by specific descriptions of the illicit acts in question.

*Submitted by the delegation of Armenia*

This resolution caused much uproar in the General Assembly. Some delegations suggested that it served no purpose and that the world should be eliminating terrorism itself, and not waste time debating about the elimination of the term. Hence, this resolution was widely rejected within the General Assembly.

- An international ban on the migration and trafficking of women for sexual purposes, such as prostitution.

*Submitted by the delegation of the Czech Republic*

This resolution was also widely supported by many delegations. Many delegations found this resolution too directly related to situations in Eastern Europe. Nonetheless, it was accepted.

- The creation by the U.N. of a Committee for the Inspection and Regulation of Prisons that will have the right to inspect prisons anywhere in the world and impose sanctions on countries that do not satisfy the U.N. Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners.

*Submitted by the delegation of Switzerland*

This resolution also was very much accepted within the General Assembly. Many South American, Asian, and African countries were in favour to improve their own prison conditions. The United States was less keen to join. The resolution passed.

The Students' League of Nations was a roaring success. Also, compliments must be given to the steering committee and key note speakers for exceptional organisation and for being the root cause for the maintained decorum and interest within the debate. The participants from all the various schools, particularly those from the International School of Geneva, represented their respective countries with "energy, enthusiasm and intelligence".

**Yannick van der Zee, 17, The Netherlands,  
Le Grande Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**







# Biodiversity Hotspots

**Earth Focus takes a close look at three: Western Australia, the Atlantic Forest in Brazil and South-west China**

**T**he organization, Conservation International, has identified 34 hotspots in the world. Together, these hotspots only cover 1.4% of the earth's surface; however half of all plant species and one third of all the vertebrate species of the world are found in these areas. Biodiversity is the variety of the atmosphere; different plants, animals and microorganisms, as well as their ecosystems. Hotspots are areas which are rich in plant and animal species (especially species which are native to these areas), and which are under immediate threat relating to human impact. Amongst the 34-biodiversity hotspots identified, three are going to be the focus of this article; Western Australia, the Atlantic Forest in Brazil and South-west China.

Australia is one of the most diverse countries in the world when it comes to plant and animal species. It contains some species, which are found nowhere else in the world, amounting to a total of one million species of plants and animals. In fact, around 85% of the flowering plants, 84% of all mammals, 45% of the birds and 89% of all inshore freshwater fish are unique to the country. The Australian Government has identified fifteen national biodiversity hotspots in the country. These areas were identified to raise the public's awareness of the natural habitat at risk and the importance of conserving it.

The hotspot in the state of Western Australia covers a total surface of 356 717 Km. It is situated in the southwest of the state and is one of the five

Mediterranean-type ecosystems in the world. It includes the national hotspots of Fitzgerald River, Busselton Augusta, Central and Eastern Avon Wheatbelt, Mount Leasueur-Eneabba, Geraldton to Shrak Bay sand plains and Carnarvon Basin. Most rainfall occurs during the winter, and the summer is known to be the dry season. The rainfall varies from 635 mm to 1300 mm per year, and is higher near the coast. The soil is very nutrient-poor, and made up mainly of sand. The plants have thus adapted to this type of soil. The vegetation in this hotspot is mainly woody, with forests, woodlands (known as Jarrah and Marri), shrub lands, heaths, and no grasslands. 44% of the Jarrah forest and 90% of the eucalyptus woodlands have already been cleared for logging, agriculture and mining. Native forests retain only 10% of their original natural habitat (310 000 Km) and yet contain 5469 plant species and 456 vertebrate species. Of these 456 vertebrate species, 18 are under immediate threat. There is around 1350 Km of protected surface within the hotspot, divided into three national parks, yet over the last 200 years, 50% of all mammalian extinction has occurred in Australia, of which a large part in Southwest Australia.

The area of Southwest Australia is under the pressure of much human activity. First, broad scale clearing destroys plants, habitats, and local ecosystems, and removes food for species living in this region. It also allows weeds and feral predators to spread, causing, amongst other effects, die back (root rot), which can destroy entire communities.





**Left: *Parantechinus apicalis*, also known as 'Dibbler' is one of the 18 endangered species in the Southwest hotspot of Australia.**

**Top: Jarrah Forest in Western Australia**



**The giant Panda of the mountains of South-western China.**

Deforestation also increases the emission of greenhouse gas and causes soil degradation (i.e. erosion, salinity). Then, land use for agriculture can hinder the hydrological cycle, through increasing water tables in the soil and salinity. Also, overgrazing can damage shrubs and grasses, causing areas to stress on remaining trees. This may cause diseases, excessive firewood collection, chemical run-off and rubbish dumping.

It is thus extremely vital to protect these areas from further damage. In the whole of Australia, over 50 animal species and 520 plant species are nationally endangered, and 180 animals and 660 plants are vulnerable to extinction.

The Mountain of South West China supports one of the world's most endemically rich temperate floras in the world, along with several species which are becoming the most threatened species in this

hotspot. Because of the unique climate and topography, this region has the most botanically rich temperate region in the world. With a vascular plant diversity of about 12,000 species; similarly with birds, China has the richest variety of pheasants. More than 230 mammal species inhabit this hotspot; the giant panda, the most endangered, is restricted to the shrinking forest of this hotspot. This hotspot is also home to a little less than 200 reptiles and 90 different sorts of species; to be included in this is the 90 different species of the fresh water fish.

Despite the restricted access to this region due to its topographic environment, human activity still has a heavy impact. The construction of the Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River, the growing rates of inhabitants and until recently, before the logging ban, the logging industry were the biggest threats in the region. Nomadic tribes bring their herds to the alpine pastures; hence in order to increase pastures for these tribes more forests were cleared. The predictable erosion of steep slopes and siltation of rivers occurred due to overgrazing and logging. Tourism has had a significant impact on the region due to the construction of roads, hotels, cable cars and the presence of large numbers of people, which leads to habitat degradation.

Protected areas in this hotspot cover roughly 14,000 km; the best known and most protected areas are Wolong Nature Reserve in western Sichuan, which is home of the giant Panda and around 4000 other species. Also the famous Emei Shan limestone mountain on the eastern edge of the hotspot (3,099m) is the most botanically diverse mountain in the northern hemisphere. The Chinese government has set up several laws, for example banning the logging industry after the disastrous flood in 1998, the "Land Conservation Program" law which banned forest clearing for shifting agriculture; and also, the ban on agriculture on steep slopes and specific species protection laws. This billion dollar investment, currently underway, has given subsidies to farmers to replant barren slopes, and hence diverse native vegetation has been the result (vegetation has been the result in the hope of expanding a biodiversity friendly habitat throughout the region), in the hope of expanding a biodiversity friendly habitat throughout the region.

In South America, less than 10 percent of the forest remains for 20,000 plant species. More than two dozen critically endangered vertebrates are clinging to survival in the region. Because most of the region's forests have been cleared for 500 years, many bird species are threatened, more than 70 mammals, of over 260 species, are endemic to this region, such as the thin-spined porcupine and maned sloth. There are 133 fish species, 68 of which are endemic.

Forests inland were cleared for timber, which was then traded for cattle to stock the ranches that were expanding along the major rivers. In the northeast, sugar plantations were established along the coast, leading to near total destruction of the coastal forests.

By the early 19th century, forests in Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and São Paulo were being cleared for timber, cattle-ranches and, most especially, coffee plantations. The rapid growth of the population in the region led to urbanisation, an increased demand for charcoal and firewood, and further forest clearing. The final result is that destruction and degradation of the Atlantic Forest over the last 50 years has been at least as severe as that of the previous three centuries. Only about eight percent remains of the unbroken tropical and subtropical forests which formerly covered more than 1,233,875 km.

In order to prevent the extinction of these species the remaining fragments of the Atlantic forest need to be protected immediately. About 230,800 km of the remaining Atlantic forest in Brazil is under strict protection, 4,598km for Argentina, and in Paraguay, there are 8 protected areas totaling 1,393km. The future for the protection of the Atlantic forest looks bright, as there has been a period of renewed interest, especially regarding issue of the search for effective mechanisms for protecting biodiversity. This results in the involvement of non-governmental organisations. Because many of the fragments of the protected areas in the Atlantic Forest are threatened and are too small and isolated to maintain populations of many species over the long term, the establishment of conservation corridors has been an important conservation strategy. These corridors link key sites by means of a matrix of biodiversity-



The Atlantic Forest of tropical South America boasts 20,000 plant species and some of the world's most exotic bird and insect life.

friendly land use and reforestation.

Extinction is the gravest aspect of the biodiversity crisis: it is irreversible. While extinction is a natural process, human impacts have elevated the rate of extinction by at least a thousand, possibly several thousand.

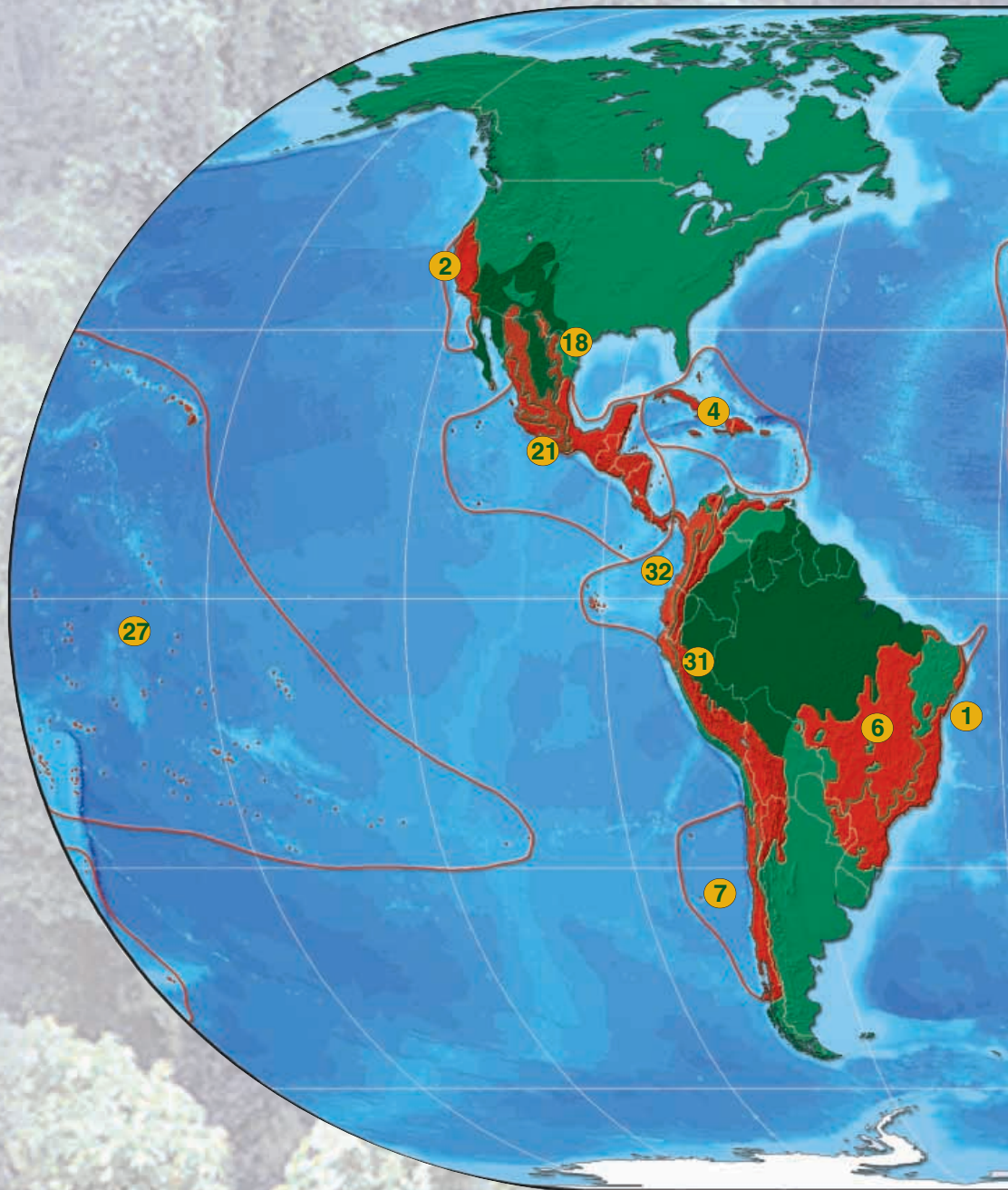
Some species are threatened by specie-specific threats such as hunting, direct exploitation, disease, and predation by invasive species. Conservation responses to these threats will have to be implemented one species at a time, and will likely involve incentives and legislation to reduce hunting pressure, control invasive species, and to introduce captive breeding and propagation.

There are many ways one can help to contribute to the protection and well being of these areas; such as getting information from national or international organizations and informing oneself how to get involved. It is also possible to participate in the annual National Threatened Species Day, as well as joining a group or association and providing them with your help.

**Nuria Tef, 17, France/Canada and  
Stéphanie Frée, 17, France/Barbados  
La Grande-Boissière, Genève, Switzerland**



# The World's Hotspots of

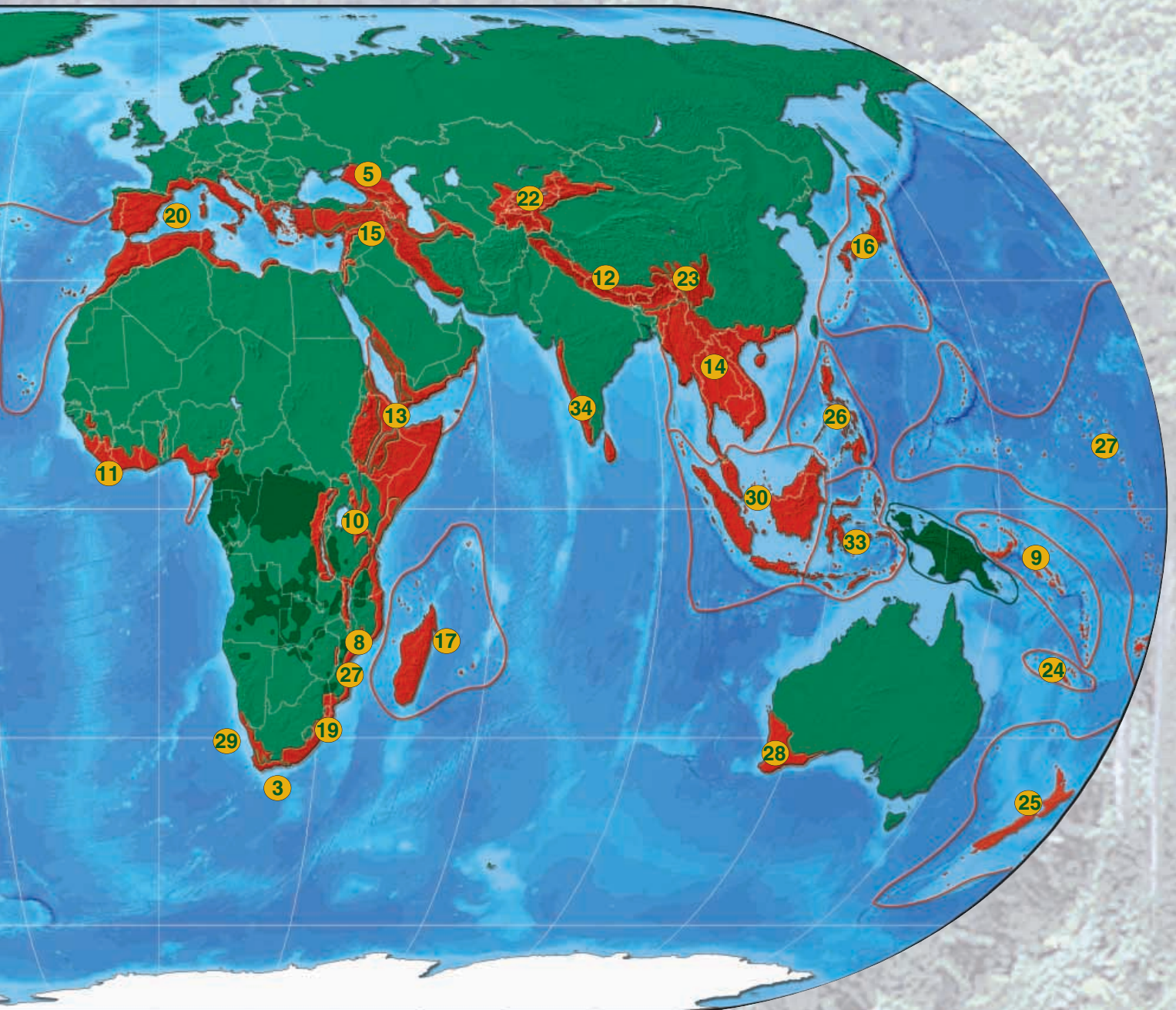


- 1) Atlantic Forest of tropical South America.
- 2) The California Floristic of North America
- 3) Cape Floristic Region
- 4) The Caribbean Islands
- 5) The Caucasus
- 6) The Cerrado region of Brazil
- 7) Chilean Winter Rainfall-Valdivian Forests
- 8) Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa
- 9) East Melanesian Islands

- 10) The mountains of the Eastern Afromontane
- 11) The lowland forests of West Africa
- 12) Himalaya
- 13) The Horn of Africa
- 14) Indo-Burma
- 15) Irano-Anatolian
- 16) The islands of the Japanese Archipelago
- 17) Madagascar and its neighboring islands
- 18) The Madrean Pine-Oak Woodlands of Mexico



# Biodiversity



19) Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany

20) Mediterranean Basin

21) The Mesoamerican forests

22) The Mountains of Central Asia

23) The Mountains of Southwest China

24) New Caledonia in the South Pacific

25) New Zealand

26) The Philippines

27) Polynesia-Micronesia

28) Southwest Australia

29) The Succulent Karoo of South Africa and Namibia

30) Sundaland

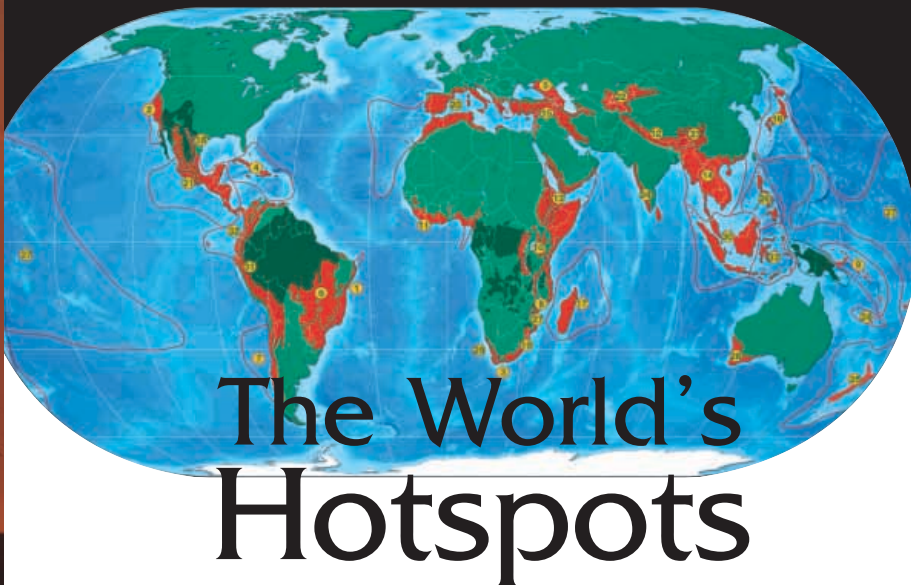
31) The Tropical Andes

32) Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena

33) Wallacea

34) The Western Ghats and Sri Lanka





# The World's Hotspots

**1) The Atlantic Forest** of tropical South America boasts 20,000 plant species, 40 percent of which are endemic. Yet, less than 10 percent of the forest remains. More than two dozen Critically Endangered vertebrate species are clinging to survival in the region, including three species of lion tamarins and six bird species that are restricted to the small patch of forest near the Murici Ecological Station in northeastern Brazil.

**2) The California Floristic Province** is a zone of Mediterranean-type climate and has the high levels of plant endemism characteristic of these regions. The hotspot is home to the giant sequoia, the planet's largest living organism and its taller but less massive relative, the coastal redwood.

**3) Evergreen fire-dependent shrublands** characterize the landscape of the **Cape Floristic Region**, one of the world's five Mediterranean hotspots. Home to the greatest non-tropical concentration of higher plant species in the world, the region is the only hotspot that encompasses an entire floral kingdom, and holds five of South Africa's 12 endemic plant families and 160 endemic genera.

**4) The Caribbean Islands** support exceptionally diverse ecosystems, ranging from montane cloud forests to cactus scrublands, which have been

devastated by deforestation and encroachment. The hotspot has dozens of highly threatened species, including two species of solenodon (giant shrews) and the Cuban crocodile.

**5) The deserts, savannas, arid woodlands, and forests** that comprise the **Caucasus** hotspot contain a large number of endemic plant species. Its rugged landscape is home to the two species of highly threatened Caucasian turs or mountain goats. Recent economic and political crises in the region are intensifying forest clearing for fuel wood, and together with illegal hunting and plant collecting, threaten the unique biodiversity of this region.

**6) The Cerrado** region of Brazil, comprising 21 percent of the country, is the most extensive woodland-savanna in South America. With a pronounced dry season, it supports a unique array of drought- and fire-adapted plant species and surprising numbers of endemic bird species.

**7) A virtual continental island** bounded by the Pacific Ocean, the Andes Mountains, and the Atacama Desert, the **Chilean Winter Rainfall-Valdivian Forests** harbors richly endemic flora and fauna. The Araucaria tree has been declared a national monument in itself, protecting it from logging. Overgrazing, invasive species, and urbanization have all contributed to the destruction of the original habitat.

**8) Though tiny and fragmented**, the forest remnants that make up the **Coastal Forests of Eastern Africa** contain remarkable levels of biodiversity. This hotspot is home to a

variety of primate species including three endemic and highly threatened monkey species and two endemic species of bushbabies.

**9) Once largely intact**, the 1,600 **East Melanesian Islands** are now a hotspot, due, sadly, to accelerating levels of habitat loss, which has been caused chiefly by excessive logging, mining, and unsustainable farming practices. Isolation and adaptive radiation have led to very high levels of endemism, both within the whole hotspot and on single islands.

**10) The mountains of the Eastern Afromontane** hotspot are scattered along the eastern edge of Africa, from Saudi Arabia in the north to Zimbabwe in the south. Though geographically disparate, the mountains comprising this hotspot have remarkably similar flora. The Albertine Rift harbors more endemic mammals, birds, and amphibians than any other region in Africa.



**11) The lowland forests of West Africa** are home to more than a quarter of Africa's mammals, including more than 20 species of primates. Logging, mining, hunting and human population growth are placing extreme stress on the forests, however, threatening species such as the Jentink's duiker, pygmy hippopotamus, and scattered populations of western chimpanzees.

**12) The Himalaya** Hotspot is home to the world's highest mountains, including Mt. Everest. The mountains rise abruptly, resulting in a diversity of ecosystems that range from alluvial grasslands and subtropical broadleaf forests to alpine meadows above the tree line. Vascular plants have even been recorded at more than 6,000 meters.

**13) The arid Horn of Africa** has been a renowned source of biological resources for thousands of years. One of only two hotspots that is entirely arid, the area is home to a number of endemic and threatened antelope, notably threatened species like the beira, the dibatag, and Speke's gazelle. This hotspot also holds more endemic reptiles than any other region in Africa.

**14) Encompassing more than 2 million km of tropical Asia, Indo-Burma** is still revealing its biological treasures. Six large mammal species have been discovered in the last 12 years: the large-antlered muntjac, the Annamite muntjac, the grey-shanked douc, the Annamite striped rabbit, the leaf deer, and the saola.

**15) Forming a natural barrier between the Mediterranean Basin and the dry plateaus of Western Asia**, the mountains and basins that make up the Irano-Anatolian Hotspot contain many centers of local endemism. Nearly 400 plant species are found only along the Anatolian Diagonal, a floristic line that crosses Inner Anatolia; many of Turkey's 1,200 endemic species occur only to the immediate east or west of it.

**16) The islands that make up the Japanese Archipelago** stretch from the humid subtropics in the south to the boreal zone in the north, resulting

in a wide variety of climates and ecosystems. About a quarter of the vertebrate species occurring in this hotspot are endemic, including the Critically

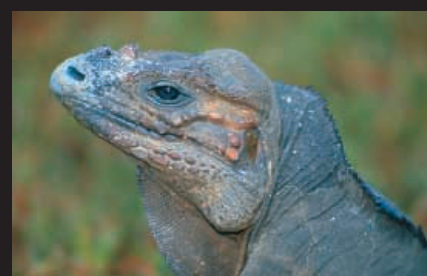
**17) Madagascar** and its neighboring island groups have an astounding total of eight plant families, four bird families, and five primate families that live nowhere else on Earth. Madagascar's more than 50 lemur species are the island's charismatic worldwide ambassadors for conservation, although, tragically, 15 more species have been driven to extinction since humans arrived.

**18) The Madrean Pine-Oak Woodlands** encompasses Mexico's main mountain chains, and isolated mountaintop islands in Baja California and the southern United States. A quarter of all Mexico's plant species are found here, many of them found nowhere else on Earth. The pine forests of Michoacán provide famous overwintering sites for the annual migration of millions of monarch butterflies.

**19) Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany**, which stretches along the east coast of southern Africa below the Great Escarpment, is an important center of plant endemism. The region's warm temperate forests are home to nearly 600 tree species, the highest tree richness of any temperate forest on the planet. The celebrated, bird-of-paradise flower is a distinctive hotspot endemic.

**20) The flora of the Mediterranean Basin** is dramatic. Its 22,500 endemic vascular plant species are more than four times the number found in all the rest of Europe; the hotspot also supports many endemic reptile species. As Europe's vacation destination, populations of threatened species are increasingly fragmented and isolated to make way for resort development and infrastructure.

**21) The Mesoamerican forests** are the third largest among the world's hotspots. Their spectacular endemic species include quetzals, howler monkeys, and 17,000 plant species. The region is also a corridor for many Neotropical migrant bird species.



**22) Comprising two of Asia's major mountain ranges, the Mountains of Central Asia** were known to early Persians as the "roof of the world." The hotspot's ecosystems range from glaciers to desert, and include a highly threatened type of walnut-fruit forest, unique to this region, which contains ancestors of domestic fruit varieties and is an important storehouse of genetic diversity.

**23) With dramatic variations in climate and topography, the Mountains of Southwest China** support a wide array of habitats including the most endemic-rich





temperate flora in the world. The golden monkey, giant panda, red panda, and a number of pheasants are among the threatened species endemic to this hotspot. Illegal hunting, overgrazing and firewood collection are some of the primary threats to biodiversity in this region.

**24)** An island the size of New Jersey in the South Pacific Ocean, **New Caledonia** is the home of no less than five endemic plant families. Nickel mining, forest destruction and invasive species threaten fauna like the kagu, an Endangered bird with a distinctive crest that is the only surviving member of its family.

**25)** A mountainous archipelago once dominated by temperate rainforests, **New Zealand** harbors extraordinary levels of endemic species, including its most famous representative, the kiwi. Today, invasive species pose the most serious threat to the flora and fauna of New Zealand's islands, but habitat destruction, through deforestation and wetland drainage, is also a key problem.

**26)** More than 7,100 islands fall within the borders of the **Philippines** hotspot, identified as one of the world's biologically richest countries. Many endemic species are confined to forest fragments that cover only 7 percent of the original extent of the hotspot. This includes over 6,000 plant species and many birds species such as the Cebu flowerpecker, the Philippine cockatoo, the Visayan wrinkled hornbill, and the enormous Philippine eagle.

**27)** Comprising 1,415 islands stretched across the southern Pacific Ocean, the **Polynesia-Micronesia** hotspot is the epicenter of the current global extinction crisis. Twenty-five bird species have gone extinct here since the arrival of the Europeans 200 years ago, victims of introduced invasive species and over-hunting. The spectacular endemic honeycreepers and other forest birds of the Hawaiian Islands are among those that are seriously threatened but still surviving in this hotspot.

**28)** The forest, woodlands, shrublands, and heath of **Southwest Australia** are characterized by high endemism among plants and reptiles. Its unique vertebrate species include the numbat, honey possum, and the red-capped parrot.

**29)** The **Succulent Karoo of South Africa and Namibia** boasts the richest succulent flora on earth, as well as remarkable endemism in plants, with 69 percent as endemics. Reptiles also show relatively high levels of endemism in the region. It is also one of only two entirely

arid ecosystems to earn hotspot status, and is home to the mysterious tree-like succulent, the halfmens, as well as many unique species of lizards, tortoises and scorpions.

**30)** The spectacular flora and fauna of the **Sundaland** Hotspot are succumbing to the explosive growth of industrial forestry in these islands and to the international animal trade that claims tigers, monkeys, and turtle species for food and medicine in other countries. Populations of the orangutan, found only in this hotspot, are in dramatic decline.

**31)** The richest and most diverse region on Earth, the **Tropical Andes** region contains about a sixth of all plant life in less than 1 percent of it's the world's land area. One of the more unique plant species is an Andean bromeliad that require 100 years to mature. The threatened yellow-eared parrot, yellow-tailed woolly monkey and spectacled bear are all endemic to the Tropical Andes.

**32)** **Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena** is bordered by two other hotspots: Mesoamerica to the north, and the Tropical Andes to the east. Endemic animal species like the bare-necked umbrellabird and the brightly-colored poison dart frogs are characteristic of the region. Ecuador's coastal forests have been reduced to only 2 percent of their original coverage area.

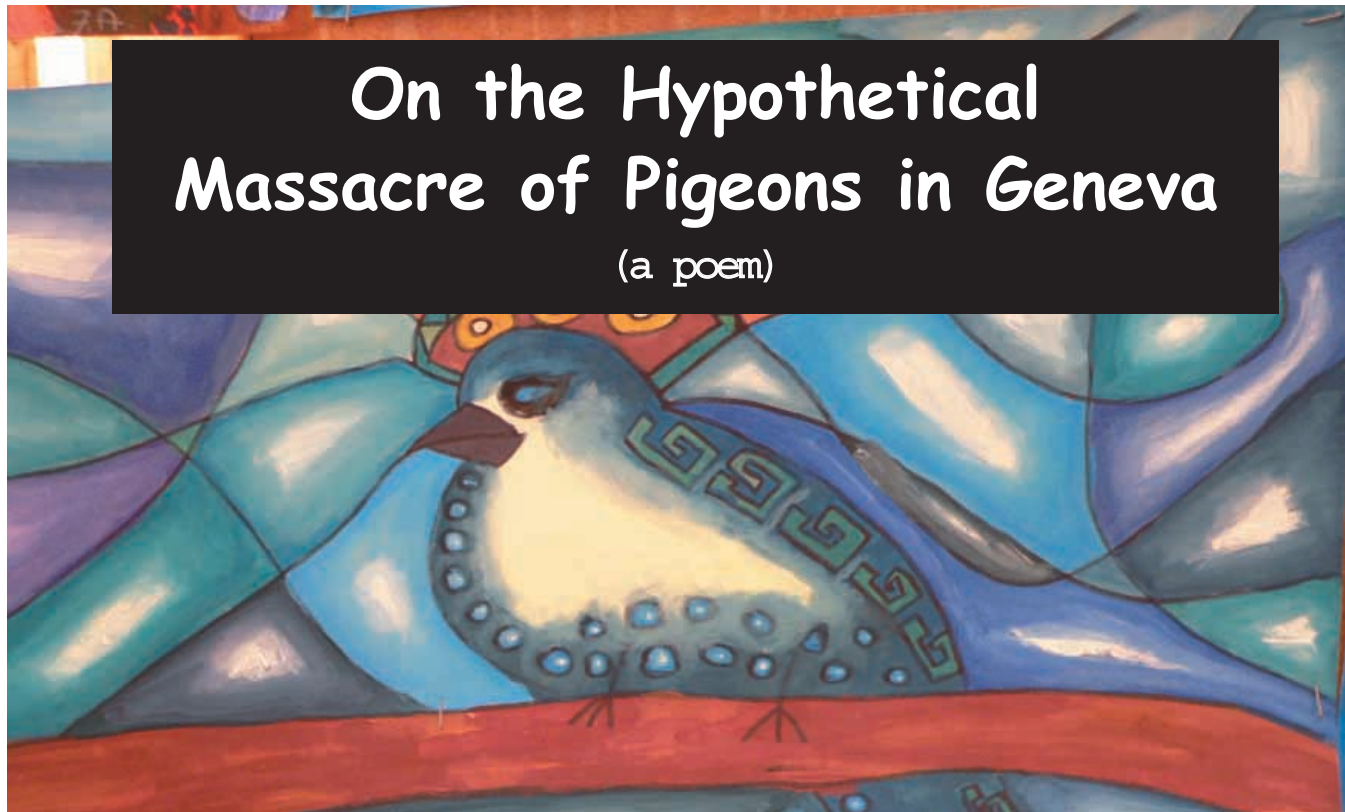
**33)** The flora and fauna of **Wallacea** are so varied that every island in this hotspot needs secure protected areas to preserve the region's biodiversity. The hotspot is second only to the Tropical Andes in terms of bird endemism, which is particularly impressive given its relatively small land area.

**34)** Faced with tremendous population pressure, the forests of the **Western Ghats and Sri Lanka** have been dramatically impacted by the demands for timber and agricultural land. Remaining forests of the Western Ghats are heavily fragmented; in Sri Lanka, only 1.5 percent of the original forest remains. The region also houses important populations of Asian elephants, Indian tigers, and the Endangered lion-tailed macaque. Freshwater fish endemism is extremely high as well, with over 140 native species.



# On the Hypothetical Massacre of Pigeons in Geneva

(a poem)



Pigeons, pigeons, falling from the sky.  
All they have time to do is screech  
before they die.

Bullets fired, shredding beaks and  
wings. Tearing into all those,  
cuddly helpless things

I can't stop it - goodness knows I  
have tried

Trying to avenge those harmless creatures  
that have died.

They keep dying, dying by the score.

All those brutal farmers seem to want is killing more.

I am helpless - I can't interfere.

All that I can do is stand and watch in deathly fear.

Where's it going - where will it end?

Trying to control a pest, we've almost lost a friend.

I go walking down the street at night.

I can see the pigeons that were killed without a fight.

I can see them, lifeless on the street,

They aren't even noticed by the passing pairs of feet.

In the gutters - some are not yet cold,

When their killers steadfast aim in publicly extolled.

What are pigeons? Feathers on a frame.

All that they are good for is for farmers taking aim.

We just watch them - watch them hit the dirt.

Powerless to wrap the dead or try to treat the hurt.

Bloody, moldy, pierced right through the shot.

We can see the bodies that have just begun to rot.

Harmless creatures, they've done nothing wrong  
Now a pigeon's life, it seems, is hardly worth a song  
Some may fly or even try to hide -

Anything they try to do will end in suicide.

I am outraged at the human race.

Who are we to take a life? It never was our place.

Bah! They're pigeons I can hear them say.

Laughing while they raise their gun  
to send one more away.

They don't see the damage they can do.

Whether someone lives or dies is never up to you.

Pigeon, human - leather next to shoe.

Evolution doesn't change the closeness of the two.

Its inhuman, evil coming through.

Laws like this are made and there is nothing we can do  
More are dying than were ever born.

English Class, La Grande-Boissière  
Geneva, Switzerland





# The Development Gap

## A Comparative Look at the Development Gap Between Switzerland and the African Nation of Chad



**D**evelopment is a complicated term used to describe the economic and social state of nations. It refers to the quality of living that a country gives its people. Countries that have a high development rate have mostly wealthy people, while countries with a low development rate have mainly poor people.

The Development Gap is one of the most important dilemmas facing the international community. This problem is created due to both social and economic reasons. The inability of poor nations to repay their loans to more developed countries is the main provoker of this predicament. In order to stabilize their economy, many poor nations borrowed money from developed countries, nevertheless, none of this money played a role in economic stability because it is used to repay overdue loans. This creates an inescapable circle of borrowing and repayment without any benefits whatsoever to the developing nations; thus, leading to the creation of the development gap.

There are also historical reasons that render a nation unable to economically prosper at an appropriate rate of growth. When a country is invaded and controlled by another, more commonly referred to as colonisation, it becomes accustomed to international intervention. So when the colonisers grant the nation independence, it faces problems regarding economic transition from a centrally planned economy to that which is more liberal. In addition environmental issues also contribute to the lag in development. A capricious climate which may include drought or flooding can provoke economic instability to nations which rely on agricultural industries. Moreover, a growing strain on the country's natural resources may induce a shortage in amounts exported to the international community.

### Development Indicators for Chad

Life expectancy at birth (years), 2001	44.6
Adult literacy rate (% age 15 and above), 2001	44.2
Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%), 2000/01	33
GDP per capita (PPP US\$), 2001	1,070
Life expectancy index, 2001	0.33
Education index, 2001	0.41
GDP index, 2001	0.40
Human development index (HDI), 2001	0.376
GDP per capita (PPP US\$) rank minus HDI rank	-8

### Chad's Development Rate 2003

Population, total (millions)	8.6
Population growth (annual %)	2.8
GNI (current US\$) (billions)	2.4
GDP (current US\$) (billions)	2.6
GDP per capita (constant 1995 US\$)	247.7
Life expectancy at birth, total (years)	48.4
Mortality rate, infant (per 1,000 live births)	117.0
Surface area (sq km) (thousands)	1284.0

*Source: World Development Indicators*

### Development Indicators for Switzerland

Life expectancy at birth (years), 2000	78.9
Adult literacy rate (% age 15 and above), 2000	88.2
Combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (%), 1999	84.0
GDP per capita (PPP\$), 2000	28,769
Life expectancy index, 2000	0.90
Education index, 2000	0.94
GDP index, 2000	0.94
Human development index (HDI) value, 2000	0.928
GDP per capita (PPP US\$) rank minus HDI rank, 2000	-5





#### Switzerland: Quick Facts 2004-2005

Population:	7,489,370 (2005)
Population growth rate:	0.49% (2005)
Birth rate:	9.77 births/1,000 population (2005)
Death rate:	8.48 deaths/1,000 population (2005)
Infant mortality rate:	4.39 deaths/1,000 live births (2005)
Life expectancy at birth:	80.39 years
Unemployment rate:	3.4% (2004)
GDP - real growth rate:	1.8% (2004)

The various charts compare the development gap between a rich country and a less fortunate country. The wealthy country in this case is Switzerland while the poor country is Chad. It is shown that there is a shockingly wide gap between the two nations. It is quite clear to see that Switzerland is far more developed than Chad.

The Gross Domestic Product for Chad is not very high. Annually, a citizen of Chad only makes \$1,070. That shows that the people of Chad are living below the absolute poverty line. Many of Chad's people are illiterate making it impossible to start industries or factories due to the lack of skilled workers. This is due to the fact that many people are uneducated, leading to a small workforce.

From the tables you will also see that a Swiss citizen makes \$26,769 on average per year. This is almost twenty six times the money that Chad makes annually. Not only that, but Switzerland has many industries and factories that are filled with educated, literate workers.

Chad's population is growing rapidly every year. Unfortunately, the life expectancy is not

very high. People are only expected to live until the age of 48 or 49. This causes an augmentation in the death rate. The death rate in Chad is 16.41 deaths/ 1,000 people. However, Swiss birth and death rates are incomparable with that of Chad's. The average Swiss person is expected to live until the age of 80 or 81. That is almost twice what is expected of a Chadian person. The death rate is lower in Switzerland as well. The death rate is 8.48 deaths/ 1,000 persons.

Overall it is quite clear that the development gap is becoming wider each year. The successful countries are continuing to develop further and further as the poorer countries are struggling to keep up. Moreover, as the less fortunate countries are close to being more economically developed countries, the thriving nations are constantly increasing economic prosperity leaving behind a large gap unable to be filled by lesser developed nations.

**Nancy El Attar, 13, Egypt  
Collège de Léman, Geneva, Switzerland**



# 850 Million Still left Hungry

**H**unger is a global problem. It affects developed countries, countries in transition and developing countries. The number of hungry sits at 4 million people a year and does not seem to be decreasing.

Evidently, throughout the world, there is an abundance of food. Every human being could easily be supplied with the basic 3,500 calories a day. Since, the production levels of food have not decreased. Food prices have fallen drastically during the past few years which would suggest that the world has sufficient food. Since the quantity of food in the world is not a problem, there are other aspects that need to be looked at.

In the Darfur region of the Sudan, there seems to be a constant food crisis. Sudan is a food-deficient country that has been ravaged by civil war. Harvests have drastically been reduced due to increasing water scarcity. Civil war has displaced thousands and all this has an impact on food. War promoted insecurity throughout the region and has resulted in a lack of distribution of food to the remote, rural areas. Many find themselves hungry and unable to work out a solution. It is estimated that 1.2 million people within the Darfur region will require food assistance by the end of 2005.

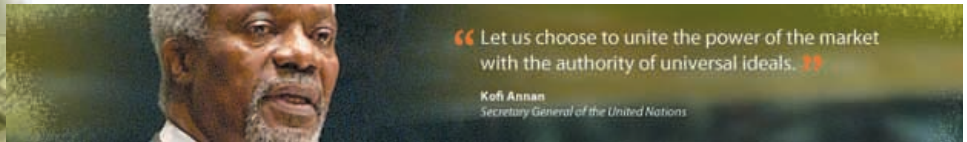
Within many the countries of the world, there have been problems associated with food, due to several factors, such as lack of education, economic support and health. Without fair economic support, it is impossible for individuals in third world countries to afford education which would give them insight into their occupations and teach them what they need to do to be successful amongst the people of the world. Along with economic support, comes health. If these individuals are not healthy, then it is unlikely they will succeed in life as they are unable to attend school, and unable to perform their jobs. If these needs were met, this would already be one step forward to

eradicating hunger. Yet, sadly, it is known that developing countries often have enough food to feed their population, but this food is only available to those who can afford it.

The global economy does not promote equality. Not everyone in the world is offered the same opportunities and, due to large corporations that dominate world trade, we see peoples' rights to resources and free markets decreasing. In some cases these multinational corporations take over local markets and stop individual purchasing power. Because such mass amounts of food are being produced, local farmers are being heavily subsidised. This guarantees local markets with nothing but low incomes, for subsidies ensure that their products will be sold to next to nothing. If no change is seen between local markets and the multinational corporations, a cycle will continue where poor individuals will remain poor, and in turn, more and more people will find themselves suffering from hunger.

There seems to be a lack of freedom for the less wealthy people of this world. Freedom in a sense relates directly to our economic status, for if we do not have enough money to feel secure then we can find ourselves slaves to the multinational companies. This should not be the case, as we are all individuals and should be treated as equals. For there to be any change in the hunger trends, there needs to be a compromise. Before we become selfish individuals, there needs to be a realisation that, above all, basic needs have to be met. Basic health and education are rights that every individual is entitled to and none should have to fight for their own rights just because they are in economic constraint.

**Amanda Molaro, 17,  
International School of Sophia Antipolis, France**



# The Problem of *Tainted Money*

**T***ainted money* is an issue becoming ever more present in today's world. Governments and individuals are donating more than ever to those less fortunate than themselves. However, with this increased philanthropy comes a dilemma for NGO's and other charitable organizations. Should organizations accept this so called "tainted money", money coming from organizations that clash with the fundamental goals of the NGO's in question? To find answers, we enlisted the help of two experts in their field, both with interesting views on the subject. In addition, we asked members of the student body their opinion. We hope that this article will help increase awareness on the important issue of "tainted money".

"Tainted money" poses several significant ethical questions. It is more than just a question of accepting money. If a company donates money to a cause, it is possible that the publicity could overshadow the harm their product is doing. Similarly, if an organization that operates outside the boundaries of politics accepts funds from a corporation with a particular political agenda, it is easy to see that a conflict of interest could arise. On the other hand, there are groups desperately in need of money to save lives and they are rejecting the money on moral grounds alone and yet there are many companies donating large funds that do not wish to make their aid public knowledge.

We interviewed two knowledgeable individuals, one in the tobacco business, and one for a non-governmental organization (NGO) named International Conference of Volunteers to see how their businesses felt about "tainted money".

Of the total profits made by one tobacco company, between .8% and 1% were donated to worthwhile charitable causes. The company has adopted a global philanthropist theme, meaning they give money to organizations around the world that then distribute the money where it is most needed. The tobacco company feels that their business is legal, and although harm done to users is unfortunate, the risks are well advertised. They understand that the product is unhealthy, but one representative feels that the World Health Organization (WHO) is "walking their talk in an extreme way." They believe that to reject all donations from a tobacco company out of hand is a bit extreme, when the money can genuinely help people.

One member of the International Conference of Volunteers sees things differently. The ICV is an independent NGO, "regardless of race, nationality, religion, sex, education or physical ability." It is completely "neutral" and "non-partisan", so cannot accept donations from political parties or groups furthering their own agenda, or companies whose funds may have been generated illegally. A tobacco company has approached the ICV in the past, but members of the ICV decided, quite early on, that the idea of accepting tobacco money was problematic. The basic sentiment was that accepting money from a tobacco company went against the basic principles of the ICV. However, the ICV does wish to express that co-operation with the private sector should not be immediately rejected, and progress will only made through joint efforts.

We decided to ask the student body at the International School of Geneva for their opinion on "tainted money" (*see our questionnaire that follows and send us your ideas*).

Students feel that each situation should be carefully considered. They generally believe that money available from wealthy corporations should be used to help solve important problems facing the world. However, they recognize that there are some circumstances where NGO's should reject donations because the products of the corporation violate the principles of the NGO.

In conclusion, the issue of 'tainted money' will no doubt heat up in the years to come as the world faces global challenges with limited funds. Students understand that if the world is going to resolve its most pressing problems, better partnerships between governments and corporations will need to be formed. But first, these ethical dilemmas need to be solved.

We hope that this article will help inspire the debate on 'tainted money', an issue that will only become more important in our ever-changing world.

**Pieter Boerma, 17, The Netherlands and  
Gavin Yerxa, 17, U.S.A.,  
La Grande-Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**



# Tainted Money Questionnaire



**T**his questionnaire deals with the issue of so-called "tainted money."

The problem of "tainted money" is one that confronts many charitable organizations as well as corporations which donate large sums of money, specifically tobacco companies, arms manufacturers and other companies whose products can be viewed as harmful.

There are two schools of thought on the issue. Some believe that tobacco companies and arms manufacturers should be able to make charitable donations. By doing so, they will counteract some of the harm they are doing and help organizations raise needed funds.

Others feel that charitable organizations should not accept these donations because it gives the companies good publicity and overshadows the harm they are doing. Many feel it is hypocritical for groups like the American Lung Association to try to stop lung cancer and then accept large donations from the tobacco companies.

The issue is an extremely divisive one, and we need your input on it. Please answer the 5 short questions below.

**1. Do you think that tainted money should be:**

☐ Accepted    ☐ Rejected    ☐ Depends on  
the Situation

**2. Do you think there are specific companies from which donations should be automatically rejected?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No

**3. If so, please identify those groups from which donations should be rejected.**

☐ Tobacco    ☐ Arms  
☐ Pharmaceuticals    ☐ Other

**4. An environmental organization needs funds to help fight pollution in a local river. One of the largest polluters in the area offers to donate a large sum of money. Is the organization justified in accepting the donation?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No

**5. A group trying to save children dying of malnutrition receives a donation of over 100 million CHF from a large arms company responsible for providing weapons to local rebel groups. Should the group accept the money?**

☐ Yes    ☐ No

## Ten Principles of Global Compact

### **Human Rights**

Principle 1: Businesses should and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights within their sphere of influence

Principle 2: Businesses should ensure that their own operations are not complicit in human rights abuses

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

### **Labour**

Principle 4: Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour

Principle 5: Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour

Principle 6: Businesses should eliminate discrimination in respect of employment and occupation

### **Environment**

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility

Principle 9: Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies

### **Corruption**

Principle 10: Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery

# Genocide in Rwanda

## Who was responsible?

Rwanda has two major tribal groups; the Hutus and the Tutsis. Tribal tensions in Rwanda date back to the late 1860s, when the king left all external relations in the care of the German Empire. Later, this would lead to the annexing of many Hutu kingdoms in the Northwest of the country, thus creating a powder keg of ethnic tension. Relations between the two groups were further strained when Belgium gained Rwanda as a colony, as they tended to favour the Tutsis over the Hutus. Tutsis, (although in a minority) were given better land and jobs and Tutsi schools had better facilities. Belgium finally ceded control of the Congo and Rwanda in 1959 and with this the Tutsis found themselves without a 'protector'. The Hutus rebelled and were able to place a Hutu in power. Tutsis were exiled and within a year there were over a million refugees in neighbouring countries. Ethnic tension continued in 1972, which saw the 'Burundian genocide', when Tutsi militias massacred about 200,000 Hutus, a dreadful precursor of what was to come. The position of the Tutsis continued to decline in the decades that followed but the final piece in the jigsaw of genocide occurred on 6th April 1994, when President Juvenal Habyarimana's plane was shot down, killing all on board.

Just a few hours later Hutu militiamen started hunting down Tutsis with whatever weapons they could muster, including machetes, knives and clubs. The Irish Examiner quoted that a plan was put in action by the Hutus to 'kill all the remaining Tutsis in a country of seven million' (the Tutsis made up an estimated 14% of the population). In the 13 weeks that followed April 6th 1994, almost 1 million people perished in Rwanda.

Several countries such as Burundi, Zaire (modern day Congo) and Tanzania were involved in helping with the flow of Tutsi refugees.

However, other countries stood by and watched as hundreds of thousands were massacred. It was left to the Red Cross and a small United Nation's peacekeeping force to deal with the situation.

This genocide was a result of a deliberate act by a group who felt the need to promote hatred and fear in order to maintain control of power. They believed that the extermination campaign would restore solidarity of the Hutu people and so improve the chances for peace in the country, in the long-term.

European and U.S. rulers were aware of the atrocities faced by the Tutsi tribes and yet failed to take any preventative action. It would have required a relatively small degree of political and military force to stop the genocide when it was still in the planning stages. Not only did these foreign political powers turn a blind eye to the issues of the Rwandan people, they also declined to use their political and moral authority to challenge the legitimacy of the "genocidal" government that followed. Some have blamed the inaction of western governments on the legacy of earlier African crises such as Somalia, where United State's forces faced tremendous difficulties when they tried to intervene. Furthermore, a recent case of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia had proved extremely difficult for the international community to stop.

Much of the blame must rest with the French government of the time, who had supported the dictatorial Hutu regime from 1990 to 1994. They knew about the preparations being made for a genocidal attack on the Tutsi minority. The French government even supplied the Hutu government with weapons and protected the killers. Belgium also knew, as early as 1992 that a mass killing was being prepared. Furthermore, there was no attempt made to stop the government radio broadcasts during the massacres that called the Hutus to action. Unfortunately, a sense of apathy



in the international community was also to blame: the media portrayed the genocide as a case of 'provoked' aggression and led the world into believing that as long as 'ethnic divisions' existed in the country there could be no peace. Such simple and small precautions would have weakened the strength of the authorities that were planning and orchestrating the murders.

Our first reaction could be to blame those who committed the slaughter, but then we may choose to reflect on those who knew of the situation but refused to act to prevent it. When we, as individuals, have no control of our governments' actions, we are put in a situation of helplessness. All we can do is try to change the future, through education and by learning from the mistakes of our predecessors.

Ultimately, it is the duty and responsibility of the world's strongest countries to prevent future world disputes.

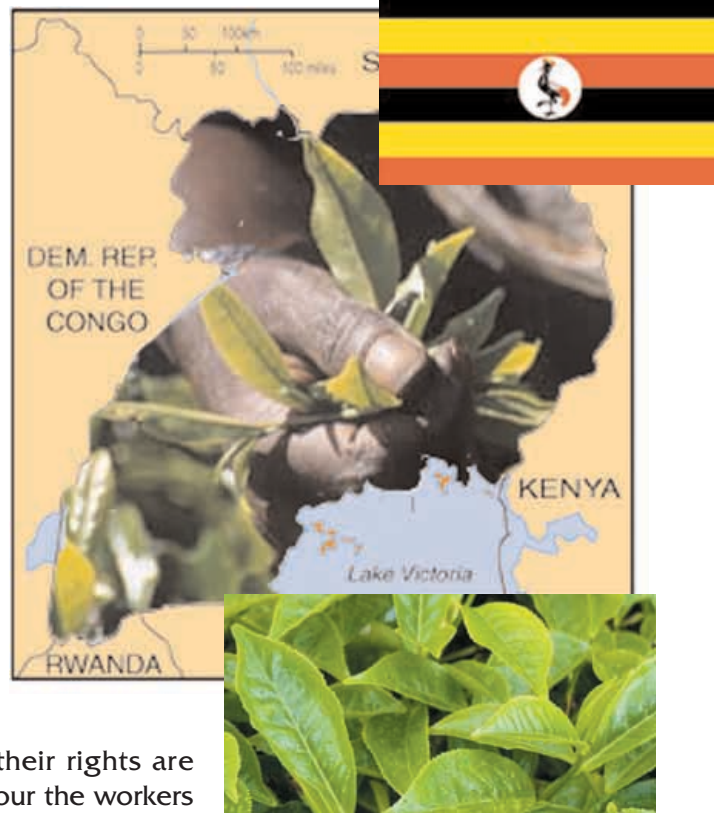
**Kristen Livingston, 16, Canada, Gezile Daka, 17, Zambia and Hannah Griffiths, 17, U.S.A., La Grande- Boissière, Geneva Switzerland**



# Fair Trade and Ugandan Tea Workers

Many people are concerned that producers in Developing-World countries are not getting a fair price for the goods they produce. This is why the issue of fair trade has arisen in many countries around the world. The fair trade movement was established when the horrible conditions endured by some private sector workers were reported. In 1998, the ILO adopted the Declaration of Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, which supports and encourages fair trade.

In the case of Ugandan tea plantation workers, their rights are minimal or non-existent. To provide the cheapest labour the workers





are recruited in many parts of the country, then brought to tea plantations, which are often in remote areas many miles away from their hometowns. The workers often bring their families with them to work as well, because the salary of each worker depends on the amount of tea picked each day (so the more tea picked, the higher the salary). This can cause problems for the family, as the wages are not regular.

The families are often discriminated against, both in the towns in which they work and at work. Access to housing, schooling and basic health care services is difficult because the areas are so remote.

The conditions in which the labourers work threaten their health. Many of the tea plantations in Uganda use dangerous chemicals in the pesticides sprayed on the tea. The chemicals endanger the lives of fetuses causing many miscarriages and deformed babies. They also endanger the health of all the workers who inhale the pesticide fumes. The pesticides also ruin agricultural land nearby, poisoning rivers and soil that are used to produce essential foods for the country.

Child and forced labour are also very common in tea plantations in Africa. Young children are recruited on very small wages and some workers pay off debts by working in the horrible conditions of the plantations.

Fair trade movements all over the world have aroused concern over the conditions faced by many workers in the developing world. Many companies promote fair trade in their plantations and factories. However, there is a small price to pay to ensure that the environment is not contaminated by pesticides or other chemicals, that no child or forced labour is used and, most importantly, that the work is paid fairly. Fair trade tea is a little more expensive, but what does a little more money mean to us in exchange for an improvement in the quality of life of an entire community?

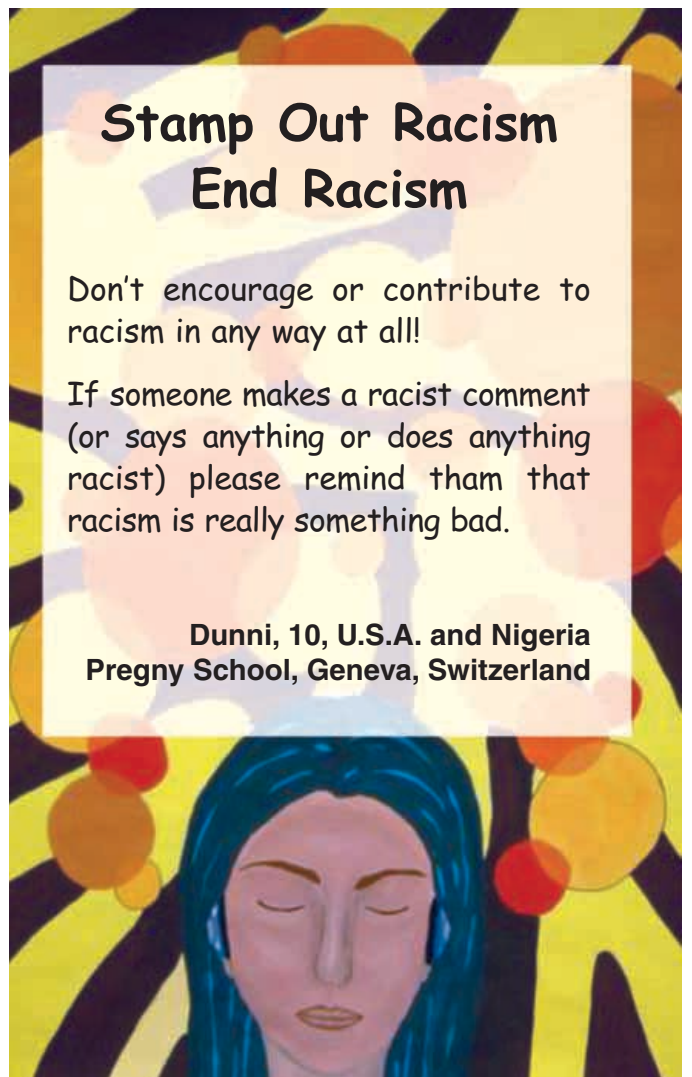
**Klara Zak, 16, Swiss**  
**La Châtaigneraie, Geneva, Switzerland**

## **Stamp Out Racism** **End Racism**

Don't encourage or contribute to racism in any way at all!

If someone makes a racist comment (or says anything or does anything racist) please remind them that racism is really something bad.

**Dunni, 10, U.S.A. and Nigeria**  
**Pregny School, Geneva, Switzerland**





# The J.O.M. at WBCSD

Journée Oser tous les Métiers at World Business Council for Sustainable Development

**Y**ou must be asking yourself what on earth is the J.O.M. This is, in French, a special day called J.O.M. for "Journée Oser tous les Métiers" (in English – the day to dare to try all professions) this is when schoolboys and girls have the opportunity to spend a whole day at work with their father, for the girls, and with their mother, for the boys. Until last year, it was a day only reserved for girls! The boys had to stay at school.

The WBCSD, is a member organization and is short for the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. This is a group of large business organizations wishing to do business but conscious of the need to preserve the environment and to have a certain social ethic.

What is the connection? You are asking yourself. Well, the J.O.M. 2005 was spent for two boys named Jérôme Crettol and Laurent Obertholzer, at WBCSD. We will describe our day in detail.

We began by having a meeting with Mrs. Nicola Spafford Furey, who is one of the people responsible for the magazine you are reading at the moment, Earth Focus. She told us about the beginnings and history of the magazine in details. After that, the person who is responsible for the information department of WBCSD, Mrs. Nadja Crettol, Jérôme's aunt, showed us the 'machine room' with its 5 servers. It was quite noisy and there was a distinct smell of machinery. She then gave us special work to do on the computers, which was to wipe out all the information on the hard disc. We also followed, during other activities of the day, the installation of a programme on one computer.

After lunch in town, we went to see Mrs. Anouk Pasquier, the publication coordinator. She showed us the programmes she uses to create the attractive and colourful brochures, with pictures and information on the WBCSD. Then we visited Mr. Thorsten Arndt, who is responsible for the WBCSD website ([www.wbcsd.org](http://www.wbcsd.org)). After this, we observed the visiting-card filing system for Mrs. Jacqueline Coté, Laurent's mother.



**Laurent and Jérôme at the offices of the WBCSD, Geneva, Switzerland.**

Actually, an efficient filing system for cards is essential when you receive, as does Mrs. Coté, hundreds of business cards. It was very interesting.

Then, we met Mr. Eric Dérobert, the administrative and financial director. He explained to us what he did. In all, it was a very good day full of new things that we learnt about the world of work.

**Laurent Obertholzer, 14, Switzerland, Canada, U.K., France and Brazil and Jérôme Crettol, 14, Switzerland, Collège de la Terre Sainte, Coppet, Switzerland**

World Business Council on Sustainable Development, Geneva, Switzerland website:  
[www.wbcsd.org](http://www.wbcsd.org),

**Have you had an experience like this?  
Do you have a part-time job or maybe more, can you tell us? Send in an article.**

# Grade 9 Expanding their Global Awareness!

**G**rade 9 Social Studies Students at Bandung International School have been learning about the skills, attitudes and action involved in responsible Global Citizenship.

Education is the key to reaching out to a rapidly globalizing world. Education must encourage, provide and prepare a suitable

learning environment to mold students into responsible global citizens.

The students put together the following declaration.

**Arlyn Ogawa Yohan,  
Courtney Reeve, Grade 9 Bandung  
International School, Indonesia**



## Declaration of Educational Aspirations for a Global World

The students of grade 9 believe that Education for Responsible Global Citizenship must include the following.

### Education Must Encourage

- Understanding and tolerance towards all cultures, beliefs, and traditions
- Responsible global citizenship, rights and responsibilities
- Willingness to try new ideas and opportunities
- Adaptability to challenge injustice
- Critical Thinking
- Equality

### Education Must Prepare Students

- to overcome obstacles that they might encounter
- for the future in a globalized world
- to embrace the world!

### Education Must Provide

- A healthy, safe environment
- Ways to positively influence others
- Opportunities to bring out student's strengths
- A high standard, challenging curriculum with a global perspective
- A Mission Statement that supports "Thinking globally, Acting locally"
- Opportunities to express different view points
- Opportunities to learn different languages
- Up-to-date facilities for learning
- Knowledge of other cultures
- Leadership skills



# Disaster Strikes! Oil Spills



## How is oil formed?

Oil is a thick liquid that is sometimes found in rocks. It is made from organisms that lived on the Earth many millions years ago. These creatures died and fell to the bottom of the sea, where they formed a kind of sludge. The layers of sludge were then slowly heated in the Earth's mantle deep below the Earth's surface. Then, many years later, mud and sand built up on top of the sludge. When the layers of sludge are heated the pressure turns it into oil.

## What are its uses?

Oil is a very important thing for our daily life. It is used for fuel in transportation and it is used to heat our houses. The oil can be used to make plastics such as toys, CD players or portable radios.

## How is it transported around the world?

It is transported around the world by huge ships called oil tankers and by pipe lines.

Unfortunately accidents can happen and this affects the environment.

## What impact do oil spills have on the environment?

Oil spills have a damaging impact on the environment. They cause death to marine life, damage to coral reefs and coastlines.

## Effect on sea birds

- when the birds accidentally drink the oil, the oil causes anaemia by damaging birds' red blood cells
- birds' feathers actually interlock to make waterproof resistance for the birds. If the feathers are oiled, they lose their shape, and will no longer make the bird warm.
- when sea birds try to restructure the shape of their feathers they take the oil in their bodies and this causes danger to them.

## Effect on marine mammals

- animals can suffer from nosebleeds and also blindness if they swim through the oil.
- the oil can cause lung disease which, in turn, causes difficulty for the animals' diving ability. The results of this can be death.
- the liver and kidneys of animals can be damaged from the oil.
- if animals' fur is covered with oil, it loses its properties. This causes hypothermia.
- sea otters are the only sea mammals that do not have "blubber" (the thick layer of fat just under the skin), and because of oil spills, they can be badly hurt.

### How do oil spills occur?

Oil spills occur from oil tankers, barges, pipelines, refineries, and storage facilities. Oil spills can also occur from people making mistakes or being careless. Examples of large oil spills were the Exxon Valdez (1989); the Prestige (2001), off the coast of Spain (Galicia). The Exxon Valdez released 11 million gallons of oil into Prince William Sound in Alaska. Its impact was still felt 15 years later and salmon numbers have not yet recovered.

### How can these accidents be avoided?

- avoid using too much oil. If we use less oil, less needs to be transported, so there would probably be a lower risk of oil spills. We should avoid using a car unnecessarily in order to use less oil.
- the captain (and his crew) of the tanker must learn to handle the vessel properly so that there is a lower risk of oil spills.
- to help prevent oil spills, the tanker should be double-layered rather than one-layered because the tanker would be more stable to keep the oil from spilling.

### Oil spills in Indonesia

Many oil spills have occurred in Indonesia, for example in the Malacca Strait and in the Thousands Islands, off the coast of Jakarta. Some of the oil reached many island shores and destroyed the coral reefs which only survive in clear water.



An oiled bird.



Our class studying how to clean up an oil spill.

### Conclusion

Students at Bandung International School tried cleaning up a fake oil spill. We realized that oil spreads really quickly on water and forms into slicks. We understand how damaging oil can be to the environment.

**Jihe, 12 and Nadia, 12**  
**International School of Bandung, Indonesia**

## Music in Tanzania



Music has now become a great deal for many Tanzanian young people. Many youths have now started to engage themselves in music. The kind of music they like is reggae, blues and hip-hop. Until now there are many musicians who have come to be known internationally and attend international musical concerts, such as KORA AFRICA. Examples of these people are Lady Jay Dee with her Songo Distance in which she uses seven different languages and Khaleed Mohammed (TID) plus the so-called Rehema Chalamila (Ray C) and many others.

This shows that music in Tanzania will one day be loved like that in America and other developed nations. We need to be courageous and work hard for success.

**Bertha Joseph and Happy Gervas**  
**St. Joseph Girls Seminary, Mwanza, Tanzania**



# Guantanamo Bay

I found an article from the Amnesty International official site about Guantanamo Bay, an offshore prison camp in Cuba. The detainees there are held blindfold in tiny cells with no access to lawyers or to their relatives. They are constantly degraded and interrogated using techniques like sleep deprivation, dogs, isolation etc. to weaken them.

There have been numerous suicide attempts. The detainees are completely denied any human rights, according to international law they must have a full trial or else be released immediately.

I also found out that other governments and Human Rights Organizations (United Nations and

Amnesty International) have been working to stop this and some detainees have been released but over 500 remain from over 30 nationalities. The United States authorities usually do not admit the evidence they have against them, they just keep them there, some for several years.

You have to ask, 'Would the U.S approve if their citizens were treated like that by a foreign government?'

I chose this article because it is a problem I hear about a lot and it seems unfair that so many (often) innocent people have to suffer.

After all even guilty people have the right to a trial.

**Class 9, La Grande-Boissière,  
Geneva, Switzerland**

## TCK – Third Culture Kids

The Grade 9 Bandung International School Social Studies students have been studying a unit about Third Culture Kids (TCK). A TCK is an individual "who has spent a significant part of their developmental years in a culture other than their parents' culture."

It's a great advantage since we have primary resources within the class itself, as most of the students are TCKs. The students, many with bi-cultural identities, are multi-lingual with experience of what it's like to be a TCK, and are therefore able to open their minds and thoughts during class. Who am I? What is a TCK? Is it a good thing or a bad thing?

So what exactly is a TCK?



Being a Third Culture Kid has both disadvantages and advantages and we are certainly unique!

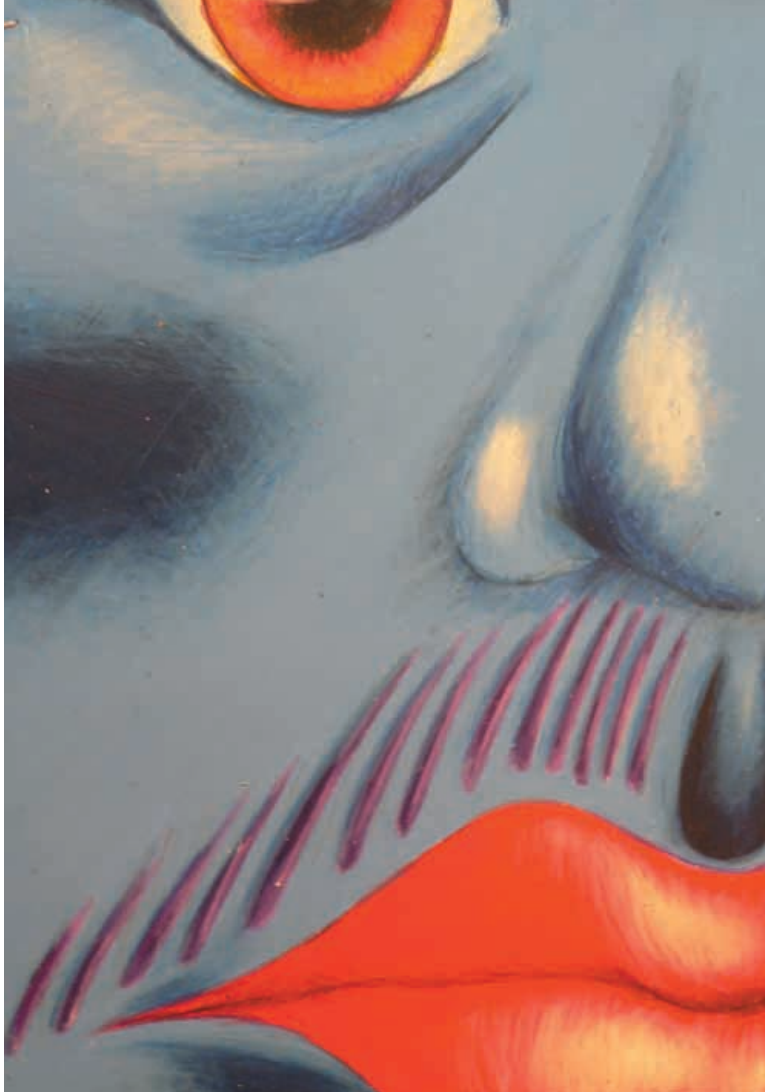
**Arlyn Ogawa Yohan  
Grade 9, Bandung International School**

### Disadvantages

Stuck in between two or more cultures.  
WHO AM I? Hard to find identity.  
Unable to easily connect with others.  
Don't have full ownership of any one culture.  
Forget your own culture.  
Always seeking change.  
Offending others by cultural differences.  
BEING UNIQUE!

### Advantages

Open minded, flexible, can easily adjust to new things.  
Introduced to new cultures and languages.  
Able to experience new things and challenges.  
Respecting other view points.  
Able to travel world wide!  
Develop attitudes of respect for other cultures  
Ready to face the challenge of a rapidly changing world  
Chances to learn different languages  
BEING UNIQUE!



# Multinational Corporations Abusing Labour Rights

us buy items from every day, also employ children who work in terrible conditions as well.

One clothing store has been accused of using cheap labour and violating the human rights of the workers. This department store, well known for its relatively cheap clothing items and accessories for males and females of all ages, pays its workers well below the minimum wage. In Indonesia, workers are paid as little as 1 dollar or less per day even though they work 60 hours per week. Both the adults and children are underpaid and if they protest for more wages the local management threatens to take away their jobs and the labourers would rather have some money than none at all. It takes about four hours to make a sweater and a labourer will only get paid 12 U.S cents for making one sweater. This corporation is also guilty of a lack of health and safety precautions. For example, in one factory in China, the air was full of chlorine gas and the workers had no protective gear, they also had to wash jeans in chemicals with their bare hands.

I do understand why multinational corporations want cheap labour but that does not make it right. They are all in competition with each other and they need to make a good profit. The money not spent on labourers is spent on advertising to attract more people to their products. The sad thing is that it works! The majority of us will have bought from at least one of the corporations that abuse the rights of its labourers.

At the end of the day we have to ask ourselves: is it worth it for a pair of trainers?

**Chengyue Niu, 15, China, La Grande Boissière,  
Geneva, Switzerland and Alyssa Reinoso, 15,  
Singapore American School**

**S**ome multinational brands have more than 90% of their factories in Southeast Asia: Philippines, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Vietnam. These multinational companies give miserable salaries to their employers, on average 2 euros per day and there have even been complaints of these companies frequently "forgetting" to pay the labourers or finding excuses not to pay them. The employers protest that the employees are working too slowly or not producing enough as a reason to make them work extra hours. However, in reality, labourers sometimes work for 17 hours a day, every day of the week.

These multinational corporations often do not treat workers respectfully. The working conditions are bad and not many safety precautions are taken. Nevertheless, when inspectors come to evaluate the workplace, the workers are given appropriate equipment, which they should be using every day such as gloves and masks. Labourers are often humiliated, insulted, receive reduced wages and are even sometimes physically abused for not working hard enough, talking while working or arriving a few minutes late. These huge corporations, that many of



# Voice of the Ocean

Since 1989 the Swiss non-profit organisation OceanCare has been working for the worldwide protection of marine mammals and the ocean. Since Switzerland is a landlocked country, we might think it would be easier not to deal with foreign problems. However, Sigrid Lüber, president of OceanCare, is convinced of the importance of protecting whales, dolphins, seals and their environment. "Over 90% of Swiss citizens spend their vacations at the sea side. All our rivers flow to the oceans and a great part of our goods are being transported by sea", says Lüber. Moreover, it is important that Swiss people take action because the Swiss government is part of many conventions dealing with Ocean issues and thus has a voice for or against conservation measures.

## No end ahead

For 15 years OceanCare has been working at national and international levels, focusing on raising public awareness and offering credible resources for Governmental issues. Whaling, industrial fishing, ocean noise pollution, environmental changes, seal hunting and dolphin captivity are only a few of the main issues.

Even though OceanCare can look back successfully on its accomplishments, its members won't stop their work! OceanCare has joined the international protest against dolphin drive fisheries in Japan. They distributed 100,000 protest cards and 7500 textile ribbons with the emblem of the campaign and good luck oracles. OceanCare held a public protest in Zurich with Japanese music which attracted hundreds of people, who obviously were very touched by what is going on in Japan. The Silent Oceans Project which they started in 2002 is also of great importance. "Intense man-made underwater noise is increasing exponentially, caused by

sources including shipping, oil and gas exploration, scientific research, and military activities.", explains Sigrid Lüber. The effects on marine life are not yet fully understood, but it is certain that they include beaching of marine mammals, injuries, mortality and behavioural changes. OceanCare works towards international and co-operative solutions for this problem.

## What we can do!

It is important that we have greater respect for nature. We have the capability and the choice to do something. On the one hand we can use our responsibility as citizens to influence our politicians; on the other hand we are consumers, who can influence the market forces (i.e. consume only dolphin-friendly tuna products – see *Earth Focus* issue 27, page 19).

Also, of course, people who feel the need to do more can actively join one of the many organisations which need help to work efficiently on animal and nature conservation and welfare issues. OceanCare would be grateful to be supported by motivated young people since there is still a long way to go! It is so important that we take care, because we, the youth, can make a difference!

"It is my greatest desire to create enough public awareness in order to change the attitude of the world citizens towards respect and care, so that marine life has a sound basis for survival and that future generations can enjoy the riches of the oceans", says Lüber.

**Melanie Schär, 20, Switzerland  
University of Berne, Switzerland**

Visit the website for further information: [www.oceancare.org](http://www.oceancare.org)

# School for Street Children in Jakarta

**O**n the first Sunday of Advent, my mother and I went to a Christmas Carol concert at the home of Father Peter Holden from the Jakarta Community church for English-speaking people. We met a Chinese man who was setting up a school and my mother decided she would help him.

My mum was working for the UN, for a man who didn't seem to show much interest in local social services and thus she never got the chance to meet any local people.

During the weekends we would visit the poor communities around Jakarta. People were living in shacks under a bridge and it was humid and dirty. Rats and stray cats and dogs fought on the bridge for food. The children were not getting any education.

A little school was built and people from the International Community donated food, money, clothes and blankets.

I felt very privileged to go to an International School with such good sports facilities and lots of space. I live in a nice clean and safe apartment. I spoke to some of my friends at school and we



decided to make a collection of schoolbooks, crayons, clothes, shoes and toys (because children need to play, too!). This was a really positive start to a worthwhile project.

When we left Jakarta, our Chinese friend promised to continue with the school and people still send us emails about the school's progress. This little school still exists.

**G. Fiore, 15, Italy**  
**La Grande Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**

## Gather Around - a poem

People People gather around, and take a look at the other round,  
Walk in the shoes of the starving girls and boys that don't even have a choice.  
What they have is what they eat, but look at you, you proceed,  
Everyday you wake up smiling but others wake up hoping to die.  
Listen to me and hear me speak, what are we doing to help those in need?  
They need shelter, they need protection, they need to be cared for,  
I questioned, do we care? I do, and so will you.  
Look to the left and look to the right, take your neighbour's hand and hold it tight,  
Together we'll help the poor, we'll be fair, cause we know together we can share.  
This world is our world, and together we can make it even better.  
I love you and you love me, That's why I care for you like you care for me,  
And that's the only way it should be. We won't hate but we'll appreciate,  
So listen to me as I speak,  
People people gather around and take a look at the other round.

**Aseneta Alemi, 14, Sudan**  
**La Grande-Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**



# Promoter and Violator

*Throughout our ninth grade program in Global Awareness, we were assigned to choose one person who in our opinion, promoted human rights, and another who violated them. I choose Oskar Schindler and Klaus Barbie. Both of these men lived during the Second World War, when Jews were being persecuted in Europe. It is an event in history which I think too few people know about and this assignment was my chance to bring some knowledge to my peers about it.*



## **Klaus Barbie – Violator.**

Klaus Barbie was born in Bad Godesberg, near Bonn on October 25th 1913. He was raised to be a Nazi as he grew up being a member of Hitler's youth brigade. In 1932, when he was just twenty one, he joined the Nazi party. Three years later, he became a member of the SS service, eventually being promoted to second lieutenant.

In November of 1942, he was transferred to Lyon, where he was in charge of the Gestapo, the German Secret Police. His job was to penetrate and destroy the Resistance, and to "exterminate" Jews. He accomplished these tasks with an unmatched cruelty and brutality, which gave him the nickname of "The Butcher of Lyon".

Klaus Barbie's ways of torture were inhuman. There are survivors of his insanity who have retold their experiences. One survivor, Ennat Leger, said that Barbie "had the eyes of a monster. He was savage. My God, he was savage! It was unimaginable. He broke my teeth, he pulled my hair back. He put a bottle in my mouth and pushed it until the lips split from the pressure." This, unfortunately, is just one of many testimonies which have been given on Barbie.

Klaus Barbie violated many human rights. Most

importantly, he violated the right to be treated equally and he, personally, forced inhuman tortures on thousands of people just because they were Jewish. In addition, he completely disregarded the right for all humans not to be subjected to harsh or unfair punishment. This list could go on for ever, but in short, Klaus Barbie's whole life was spent violating human rights.

When he returned to France, in 1987, for his trial, having been charged with crimes against humanity, he told an interviewer, "What is there to regret? I am a convinced Nazi... and if I had to be born a thousand times, I would be a thousand times what I have been." He was sentenced to prison for life, and died in 1991 of leukemia at the age of 78.

## **Oskar Schindler – A Promoter**

Oskar Schindler was born April 28, 1908, in Zwittau, Austria-Hungary, modern Moravia in the Czech Republic. Schindler at first was just a business man, with a thirst for money and profit.



He decided to hire Jews to run his factory. This way he would make a considerable profit, as the Jews would work hard for very little money. As the war progressed, though, the fate of the Jews became more and more obvious and Schindler began to change. His motivations switched from wanting to make profit to human sympathy.

Schindler tried his best to save as many Jews from death as he could. During the War, for a certain amount of money, one could buy Jews from the camps. Schindler sold everything he had to be able to get enough money to buy as many Jews as he possibly could. Schindler spent an estimated 4 million German Marks to save Jews from death, which in those days was an enormous sum of money.

By taking Jews under the protection of his factory, he promoted their right to have a life. In the camps, Jews were treated like beasts, one can not even say like animals, because it was worse. When Schindler "bought" the Jews from concentration camps, he gave them a proper life, work, food, and did not exploit them.

He set up a secret sanitarium in his factory where his wife, Emily Schindler, would look after the sick and treat them with medicine she and her husband purchased on the black market. Those who could not survive were given a proper Jewish burial in a hidden graveyard which Schindler made and paid for.

He did not abuse them physically like the guards did in the camps; he respected them and risked his life to protect them.

He gave them the right to be treated like anyone else, and not to be submitted to hell just because they were Jews. There is no excuse for what the Jews went through during the Second World War and Schindler was one of the people who understood this and tried to restore some sense into the absurd form humanity had taken.

Today, there are more than 7, 000 descendents of the Jews Schindler saved, living in the USA and Europe, and many more as well in Israel.

### Conclusion

Klaus Barbie and Oskar Schindler simply cannot be compared, they can only be contrasted. Barbie violated human rights in a way no one could ever imagine. Schindler, on the other hand, promoted human rights in a time where Jews wondered if they would ever have any rights again. He came and showed the light of hope when almost all had gone dark. There are thousands of people today who are thankful for what Schindler did in the Second World War, not just Jews, but people with

common sense and respect for humans. But there is not one single person with human decency who can say that he is thankful for what Barbie did...

The Holocaust is something which people everywhere, young or old should know about. Knowledge worldwide of the atrocities Jews went through during that time is the only way of preventing such a nightmare from happening again.

**Alexia Bédar, 15, Switzerland/U.S.A., La Grande-Boissière, Geneva, Switzerland**

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Contributions by November 2006.



