

9.3 Conservation NGOs

WSPA

WSPA, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, is a non-profit animal welfare organization. It has a presence in over 140 countries worldwide and has 800 member groups. It was founded in the early 1980s after two animal welfare organizations decided to merge. Its main policies include protecting and promoting the welfare of animals and encouraging respect for the environment.

It has campaigned on numerous animal welfare issues, including bullfighting, bear-baiting, whaling and intensive farming of animals. It has had some successes, most notably in reducing bear baiting in south-east Asia.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is an American environmental organization which currently has over one million members in 30 countries. It was founded in 1951 and since that time has sought to preserve flora and fauna that represent the diversity of life on Earth by buying and protecting land to provide secure habitats.

To date, it has acquired 473,000 square kilometres of vulnerable habitats around the world. In its 'Campaign for Conservation', launched in 2000, it raised over \$1 billion to preserve 200 great places around the world, including 600 square kilometres of temperate rainforest in the Valdivian coastal range in southern Chile.

WWF

WWF is an international non-governmental organization which works within the field of conservation, research and the restoration of the environment. It is currently the largest conservation organization worldwide, with over five million members and branches in 90 countries. It also manages over 100 conservation projects.

The organization was founded in 1961 with the aim of conserving world fauna, flora and landscapes by managing land, raising public awareness and supporting research projects. Its best-known project is the Giant Panda breeding programme, a joint programme between WWF and the Chinese government. Although the breeding programme has been very successful, the subsequent reintroduction of the bears to their natural environments has largely failed due to habitat degradation and human population pressures. Therefore, in recent years, the organization's aims have moved away from breeding programmes to a focus on protecting and recreating natural habitats.

World Land Trust

The World Land Trust (WLT) is a UK-based non-profit environmental organization which was founded in 1989. It is similar to The Nature Conservancy in that it buys land in order to protect it from degradation and conserve its plants and animals. The land is normally managed by local partner organizations. The WLT also provides training and equipment to organizations in the developing world which are engaged in conservation projects.

Since it began, the WLT has saved nearly 3,000 square kilometres of ecologically important land. One of its projects, 'The Programme for Belize', has been very successful, with threatened rainforest now under the stewardship of several environmental NGOs.