

new act also contains provisions to enable enforcement officers to act efficiently in cases where the offence is relatively minor. It creates a class of ticketable offences to which an accused may plead guilty and pay the prescribed fine without having to appear in court.

When a suspect is found guilty of a ticketable offence, any specimens that have been seized in relation to the alleged offence will be forfeited. The collection of unpaid fines will be facilitated by allowing the government to proceed through the courts for their collection.

Penalties have a dual purpose. They may deter those who contemplate violating the law and they are imposed on those who do. The stiff penalties provided by the new act will doubtless deter some people who are considering illegal trade in endangered species, or the import of prohibited or harmful species. For those who are not deterred and those who contravene the act severe punishments can be handed out to serious violators, while still allowing the courts to deal with minor violations in an appropriate manner.

The way in which this act will be administered is also important. The Minister of the Environment will be responsible for administering WAPPA through Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service. In terms of enforcement, since the new act will control the import, export and interprovincial transport of wild animal and plant specimens, Canada Customs and the RCMP that are also responsible for the enforcement of the Customs Act must continue to be involved as they have been in the past.

To make protection more effective, however, Canadian Wildlife Service enforcement co-ordinators and national park wardens of Environment Canada will also be officers under the new legislation. In addition, wildlife in Canada is also managed by the provinces and territories and by the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Thus provincial and territorial conservation officers and fisheries officers will be designated for enforcement purposes once agreement with their agencies are completed. In addition, the implementation program will be co-ordinated with Agriculture Canada to improve protection for live wild animals and plants.

Government Orders

The co-operative effort of this expanded roster of enforcement agency will make possible enhanced inspections and information exchanges, stepped up investigations, and lead to the more vigorous enforcement of environmental regulations.

Officers designated under the act will have all the powers of a peace officer. These are described in the Criminal Code and include for example the power to obtain a warrant, to conduct a search, to make an arrest, and to lay a charge against an alleged violator. In the past conservation officers have often been severely limited in the performance of their duties because they lacked these powers. Now they will have full powers to protect Canada's wildlife.

Wild animal and plant conservation is the responsibility of all nations. In Canada the federal, provincial and territorial governments share these obligations. Wildlife issues are so broad, Canada is such a vast country and Canadians have such a deep and widespread interest in wildlife, that implementation of WAPPA calls for true partnership.

Genuine partnership is what this act will result in. Its implementation will be a multi-agency endeavour, involving five federal agencies and the provinces and territories. This co-operative, partnership approach is essential if we are to deter poaching and illegal trading in wild animals and plants effectively.

Finally I would like to stress that WAPPA is consistent with the requirements of the Constitution, particularly with section 35 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms which recognizes and affirms the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of aboriginal people. The proposed legislation will not interfere with the traditional exchange by aboriginal peoples of artefacts and other items made from wild animals and plants.

The act does not pertain to the taking of wildlife nor prevent trade in legally hunted or trapped wildlife. Rather, its provisions apply to illegal international and interprovincial transport. The act is designed to contribute to the conservation of Canadian and foreign wildlife by preventing trade in poached wildlife.

Canadians cherish the wild animals and plants that are both their heritage and part of the legacy they wish to pass on to future generations. WAPPA responds to