

## Planet in Peril : Long Term

As Anderson Cooper describes it, Bangkok's infamous Jatuchak market resembles many markets scattered throughout Thailand, but behind the bustle are dark secrets. The camera pans from a slightly high angle, emphasizing the crowds, vendors booths, and general grayness of the scene. Sellers and shoppers alike are poor, surviving day to day, seemingly unmoved by the fact that a CNN news team has landed in their midst. Cooper means to uncover those dark secrets, of course. In this case, the focus is the illegal traffic in rare and endangered wildlife and the context is Planet in Peril, a four-hour investigation of the changing global environment.

The term global works in multiple ways here, marking the broad extent of deleterious effects, as well as the vital interconnectedness of a range of problems. Submitting that most modifications result from human activity, including population growth and unsustainable consumption of resources, crews led by Cooper, Sanjay Gupta, and Animal Planet celebrity Jeff Corwin travel to far corners from Southeast Asia to North America to China in order to show the connections among pollution, poverty, and wildlife extinction.

Cooper and Corwin accompany local police as they mount what looks to be a massive raid on illegal activities. Armed with weapons and information gathered by an undercover agent, who has spotted cages full of scarce tortoises from Madagascar and South American marmosets (these sell for some \$2,000 a piece, a lot of money in this area of the world). The outcome is somewhat anti-climactic. It begins as a typical Cooper-style adventure: he and Corwin ride in trucks with the uniformed officers, their faces forward to the wind, their gazes steadfast and bold. They are journalists on a mission, meaning to uncover hard truths and indict wrongdoers. (Corwin takes a few moments in voice-over to re-explain the mission that Cooper has already laid out.) But at the market, which is like a labyrinth, they learn the vendors have been tipped off ("Savvy dealers, narrates Cooper, are closing their doors"). While this doesn't make for conventionally thrilling TV no one's arrested or hauled away in handcuffs the broader points are clear enough. First, this underground business is well organized and well connected (with officials who are also in need of income). And second, when CNN rolls into town, it's not exactly a secret.

Still, the intrepid reporters spend the documentary riding along with cops and researchers. Corwin explicates the crisis: You can judge the health of a society, he intones, by looking at the environment around it, and as we, as a global community, allow ourselves to unsustainably pillage the natural world, it's the next generation that'll pay the price. The cost is illustrated vividly in Planet in Peril, CNN's first report shot in high definition; the photography of wildlife and terrains, from jungles to mountainsides to impoverished neighborhoods, is breathtaking.

Russ Mittermeier on a brief, if arduous, quest on Madagascar ("a place where 90% of the wildlife can be found nowhere else on earth"). As usual, Corwin gives himself over to the excitement of the moment: he and Mittermeier are trailblazing through the Andasibe Rainforest, while also chastened by the fact they are in one of the poorest countries in the world, where more than 70% population lives below the poverty line. The program's focus being the threat to wildlife, it doesn't dig into economic frameworks (the exploitation of developing nations by rich ones, for instance), but makes a simple-seeming plea for defending the environment. The team comes across what Corwin describes as the payoff, a look at the very unusual, mysterious and rare species of lemur, the black sifaka, never before captured on video.

Animals aren't the only creatures in peril in Planet in Peril. In the second episode, which premieres Wednesday, 24 October, Dr. Gupta points out that the consumption of endangered wildlife can be unhealthy as well as expensive. While he makes something of a spectacle of visiting a restaurant in China that features exotic dishes like tiger paw and tiger penis, Gupta's medical point concerns TCM (traditional Chinese medicine). The segment focuses on the production of bear bile is brutal (it's extracted from the animals through a painful process using steel catheters), but implies that the effects of TCM are not always beneficial (details are left unexamined here).

Pollution makes an easier, more obvious target. After he interviews a Chinese woman who lost her husband to colon cancer (she blames the brown and red water and asserts, prompted by an especially silly question, that she does indeed miss her husband), then pursues the cause. Again, the CNN crew makes its way into a situation that is plainly transformed by its intrusion. Gupta and camera head into a mine director's office, determined to make him confess to polluting China's Hengshui River, making it red and brown and full of carcinogens. The director looks taken aback as Gupta enters, glancing at the camera uncomfortably. Gupta describes the scene in terms that seem borrowed from the Michael Moore playbook: At first he refused to answer our questions, but we persisted. The answers he gives are mostly vague, until he's asked whether he would eat food irrigated by the river or drink its water. His Of course not! serves as the interview's ostensible gotcha moment, but it's hardly revelatory.

Despite such simplifications and shortcuts, Planet in Peril is a remarkably wide-reaching program. It points the way toward more in-depth investigations and above all, insists on the interconnections among ecosystems and human activities. As populations and individuals strive to survive and/or exploit their environments, a larger framework is always influencing and influenced by our daily choices.

VCD gift to commemorate the opening ceremony of a set of CD-ROM (with my camera);

3, participants presented on behalf of the leaders and participants in the Great Hall of photos of a collective;

4, in the General Assembly Journal published free of charge to the participants on behalf of less than 1,000 words to the units and individuals on cooperation in information and the text information (required to submit electronic files word format), presented to the participants on behalf of the Journal ;

5, the provision of conference participants roster;

6, participants will be representatives of the Chinese medicine Cultural Research Association membership (one-year).

7. Enrollment procedures:

Each unit after receipt of this notice, please carefully fill enrollment acknowledgment and returned by fax. Registration deadline: July 31, 2007.

Semi-official group received enrollment acknowledgment participants will be issued notices. Each session costs 3,000 yuan (These costs include: servicing costs, the information charges, the report charges, Changjubi, the city reunification activities traffic, etc.), please August 10, 2007 into the General Assembly designated account. Accommodation arrangements for their own expenses.

Participants may submit a representative to participate in the exchange of relevant papers, the organizing committee will organize experts to a collection of papers after publication of judges, and presented papers Award. Requirements: 1000-3000 characters wordage, sent to the semi-official group dedicated mail. Papers submitted closing date: August 10, 2007.

The General Assembly intends to conduct a new technology, and new achievements, new products promotion, publicity, display units please signed please specified, the organizing committee will send a special negotiating related issues.

Participants will be organized in Beijing inspected exchange (voluntary).

## About the Author

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Chinese traditional herbal medicine from Encyclopedia of Medicine in Array provided free by LookSmart.

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Traditional Chinese medicine, including acupuncture, massage, herbs and nutrition.

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Traditional Chinese Medicine and Qigong instruction. Learn how to cultivate your natural ability to heal and attain a life of vitality.

Our site provides information about the Foundation for Traditional Chinese Medicine, a dynamic organisation promoting wider access to acupuncture.

Acupuncture and traditional Chinese medicine books. Distributed by Redwing Book Company, Brookline, Massachusetts.

In this program, students have the unique opportunity to study traditional Chinese medicine and public health issues by working with professionals.

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