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Opinion:

Owners of the Bugs

Roam a meadow and enjoy nature. Observe the thousands of buzzing, creeping and swarming insects and think: Who is their owner?

This crazy thought has a real background. In our materialistic world everything (and everybody? see discussion on genetic "resources" of ethnic minorities) *has* to be owned. Since the agreement in the "Convention of Biodiversity" wild animals (including protozoes, worms, and insects), plants, and even microbes are owned by the states, who own the rights to self-controlled exploitation. The "common heritage principle" (in my opinion even this term is worth discussion) was replaced by the "common concern principle". Respect for nature is obviously not even considered.

It is not only a Christian attitude, than men subject Mother Earth. In most "civilizations" nature is owned by somebody; those creatures which are not owned by a person or a company are owned by the state. Ecological movements did not reduce this trend, but even enforced it involuntarily. Ecologists said, "be responsible for our nature", but politicians heard only "our nature": they made laws stating that wildlife (more modern: its genetic "resources") belongs to the country, which must be a little responsible for it ("... not too much, please, respect economic needs!"), but can use it as it likes. Biodiversity projects were (and still are) justified by (often not existing) follow-up research on usage of yet undiscovered species (in medical plants, etc.). Politicians heard "usage" and made laws to regulate this possible use in advance.

One of the disastrous consequences of the "Convention of Biodiversity" will be a quickly growing administration and regulation of biodiversity research (especially concerning export regulations), which may result even in a de facto end to international cooperation. Consequently, nature destruction may overtake biodiversity research, especially in those tropical countries where scientific cooperation is essential for well-founded nature protection.

Be sure: *It's good for the economy!*

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P.S.: Yesterday, at a newspaper kiosk, I read a headline in a popular journal: "Biodiversity: There are at least 13 million living creatures. - Who really needs them all?"

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