
THE FIRST TEN YEARS

International Institute for
Environment and Development

1971-1981

IIED is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization incorporated in the District of Columbia in the United States and is registered as a charitable trust (No. 268695) in the United Kingdom. For more details about our programs and future plans, please contact the Institute's offices in London or Washington for copies of IIED's Annual Report or Prospectus and other publications.

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THE EARLY YEARS: Developing the Strategies

In its first ten years, IIED has become a respected centre for policy research, information and advocacy on the two critical and linked issues of our time: environmental management, and economic and social development.

The Institute was founded in 1971 under the sponsorship of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, Colorado. Through the years Robert O. Anderson has co-chaired the Board, first with Roy Jenkins, then with Sir John Foster and today with Abdlatif Y. Al-Hamad. Jack Raymond was the initial President (1971-73), followed by Barbara Ward (1973-80) and William Clark (from 1980).

Initially, IIED (then the International Institute for Environmental Affairs) was concerned with preparations for the 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm. A series of international workshops at Aspen drew up recommendations for the international management of environmental problems, many of which eventually formed part of the United Nations Environment Programme which Stockholm established.

IIED also undertook the staff work and publication arrangements for the Stockholm theme book *Only One Earth* by Barbara Ward and René Dubos, marshalling some 150 experts behind the book's preparation. The book, and a lecture series at the conference linked to it, were highlights at Stockholm.

RAISING THE ISSUES

As a direct result of Stockholm, Barbara Ward was asked by Robert Anderson and Maurice Strong (the conference secretary-general who subsequently became the Executive Director of UNEP) to head the Institute. They saw the need for an international non-governmental organisation to act as an intellectual spearhead. Barbara Ward accepted on one condition: that the name be changed to include the word development—"without which," she said "the concept of preserving the environment has no real meaning for the poorer two-thirds of mankind."

Barbara Ward, together with David Runnalls (a colleague from her days as Albert Schweitzer Professor at Columbia University, NY) and Robert Stein, began by moving IIED from New York to London and Washington. This early decision to have offices on both sides of the Atlantic has proved a real strength. North America and Europe provide rich hinterlands of academic and political experience, and the dual focus has proved invaluable in building up a diverse network of cooperating individuals and institutions.

1973 and 1974 were quiet years for the Institute. The original core staff of six was faced with an alarming range of options. The environmental issues of the North (pollution control, nuclear power, planning and environmental impact analysis, for example) were of little concern to the Third World, where the preoccupation was with human deprivation, poverty, disease and hunger. Environment was linked to development in name only.

Gradually, IIED's basic theme clarified. The earth's resources, if properly managed and fairly distributed, can sustain the planet's entire population with sufficient food, uncontaminated water, education, employment and shelter. Development without proper regard to environmental constraints is both unsustainable and wasteful.

By a process of trial and error IIED's twin strategies emerged. The first was to inject this line of argument into the major UN conferences of the 1970s. The second was to build around the initial core group of IIED a collegiate structure of expertise and commitment.

Barbara Ward and IIED developed three powerful instruments for influencing UN meetings: the symposium, the book and the press briefing.

The United Nations system followed the popular success and public participation of Stockholm with a series of other global meetings. At worst, these conferences raised awareness of some key issues, and placed them in a broader development context. At best, they created a new global consensus on action, and provided the institutions and the finance to implement common decisions.

There were conferences on population in Bucharest and food in Rome in 1974; on the law of the sea from 1974 onwards; on human settlements in Vancouver in 1976; on desertification in Nairobi and on water in Mar del Plata in 1977; on science and technology in Vienna in 1979; and on new and renewable energy in Nairobi in 1981. In all these IIED played a role—sometimes a central one.

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The first IIED symposium was held in Rome in November 1974. Its 26 distinguished members, representing the leadership of the non-governmental world as well as some governments and UN agencies, reported their conclusions to a press conference of over 400 journalists. Officials and many delegates to the conference welcomed its timely and concisely-written conclusions, more forcible than any UN agenda could be. They were beamed into the official conference directly by coordinated lobbying, and indirectly via the media.

The Rome symposium was followed by similar events at Vancouver, at Mar del Plata and at Ocho Rios, Jamaica prior to the Vienna technology conference.

Barbara Ward's second book under IIED's auspices appeared in time for the Vancouver Habitat

conference in 1977. *The Home of Man* involved, as *Only One Earth* had before it, both Institute staff and outside consultants. Her third IIED book, *Progress for a Small Planet*, was ready in time for the UN Science and Technology conference in 1979.

At the time of her death in 1981, Barbara Ward was collaborating with Erik P. Eckholm on her book concerning global development and environmental problems: *Down to Earth: Environment and Human Needs* to be published by the IIED in June 1982 in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of the historic UN Stockholm conference. The influence of these books, especially on the large and uniquely influential group of national and global decision-makers who were Barbara Ward's friends or admirers, was profound.

IIED's third contribution to UN conferences has been through Earthscan, the independent news and information service which the Institute founded in 1975. At the Habitat conference in Vancouver, Earthscan organised press liaison for the IIED symposium, fixing over 200 interviews between seminar participants and journalists. This work has been expanded before and during thirteen subsequent UN and other international conferences, providing a series of press briefing documents, seminars and other media services, all designed to help journalists penetrate the political and bureaucratic fog around these meetings, and to focus on the key environment and development issues which underlie the rhetoric.

THE GROWTH OF COLLEGIALLY

IIED's reputation grew steadily, as it delivered timely, forceful and practicable recommendations, combining careful research, skilled private advocacy and a responsible ventilation of the issues through the NGO community and the media.

By the mid-1970s, as the UN conferences multiplied, the Institute found it had to supplement its small core staff with additional experts, initially on a short-term basis, to address some of the key issues on each conference agenda. Increasingly, these assignments were extended beyond the conference itself, for it seemed inadequate to try to influence conference decisions without an effort to monitor and audit the subsequent performance of international institutions and governments.

Gradually, therefore, IIED developed a small, semi-permanent group of senior "project" staff. They were not just lobbyists, for their recommendations were based on their own research and investigation. Nor were they simply policy studies experts, because a key part of every project was to convey its conclusions usefully and efficiently to decisionmakers.

By the late 1970s IIED had begun to see itself as functioning somewhat like a college or partnership. Under the overall policy guidelines of its Board of Directors and President, IIED's senior project staff developed the concept of collegiality. Each was largely responsible, within his or her own subject area, for research, advocacy, policy conclusions, staff, fund raising and administration. Collectively, they helped frame the Institute's overall policy, keeping core personnel and services down to the bare essentials.

By 1980, IIED had established an unique role in the international arena. It was linked closely with three centres of power and influence: with the UN agencies and other international institutions; with national governments and their agencies, especially those concerned with environment and development assistance; and, with national and international non-governmental organisations.

The first two IIED programmes to develop along these lines involved marine and polar resources and energy.

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UNIQUE APPROACHES TO POLICY RESEARCH

The intention is to associate the best of academic thought with the political process—while retaining the basic focus on better environmental management and a fairer world development pattern. IIED has in this way expanded its role as an independent and expert source of policy advice.

Marine and Polar Resources

IIED's marine programme began in 1975 with the publication of *Third World and Environmental Interests in the Law of the Sea* by Brian Johnson, followed by one of the first workshops on the environmental impact of deep sea mining.

Initially, the Institute's aim was simply to raise development and environmental issues within the agenda of the UN Conference on the Law of the Sea. But by the end of the third session of the conference in 1977, it was becoming apparent that IIED's limited resources could do little more to influence the conference process, which had by then taken on a closed and legalistic mantle.

So IIED turned to Antarctica, where the issues of ownership, environmental protection and marine resource exploitation converge in an unique way. This vast continent, unoccupied except for teams of scientists, lies outside accepted limits of national sovereignty, and has since 1959 been administered under an international treaty regime. If new institutions and mechanisms to protect and share natural resources were beyond mankind's reach in Antarctica, what hope for the peopled lands and busy seas further north?

Since 1978 IIED has publicised the Antarctica issue, drawing parallels and comparisons with such other "global commons" as the ocean, the atmosphere and outer space. Increasingly, IIED has fo-

cussed on the expanding new fishery for krill—a small shrimp-like creature which swarms in countless billions to form the food of whales and the centre of the Antarctic ecosystem.

In partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), IIED undertook an ambitious multidisciplinary study covering the biological, economic, legal and political issues involved in an expanded Southern Ocean fishery based on krill. IIED published *The Management of the Southern Ocean* by Barbara Mitchell and Richard Sandbrook in early 1980, in time for the final negotiations on the new Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Living Resources, a treaty whose principles now enshrine some of IIED's long-term concerns. A second study, dealing with possible legal frameworks for the more intractable issues of the management of Antarctica's putative mineral resources, including offshore oil, was produced in 1982.

The complex food web of the Antarctic seas is based on krill, but at the peak of the pyramid are the great whales, some now hunted to near-extinction. Would exploitation of krill prevent the recovery of whale populations? Could man most effectively exploit the ecosystem through whales at the peak of the foodchains, through krill at the base, through seals and white fish somewhere between, or via a combination of these methods?

Traditional fisheries management techniques, based on the concept of maximum sustainable yield from a single species stock, were unable to answer—and often unwilling to ask—these questions. Through the pioneering population dynamics work of Dr. John Beddington of the University of York, IIED's Southern Ocean study had for the first time tackled multispecies fishery management. In September 1980 John Beddington joined IIED to direct a two-year programme, again in partnership with IUCN, on the scientific and practical problems associated with multispecies fisheries.

Increasingly, as fish species at the head of the foodchain are overexploited and populations crash, exploitation shifts to smaller fish lower down the chain. In the northwest Atlantic, depletion of cod stocks led to fishing for the smaller capelin, which

collapsed in its turn. In the North Sea, the decline of the cod and the herring has led to commercial fishing for sand eels and sprats. And most tropical fisheries now take increasing proportions of smaller fish, and of species lower down the food chains.

At the same time, as the emerging new Law of the Sea has extended the fishery jurisdiction of coastal states to 200 miles, the responsibility for multi-species management is often placed on Third World governments without the political or scientific capabilities to withstand the powerful economic pressures of industrialised foreign fishing fleets. The IIED marine programme is now addressing these issues at both the scientific and political levels.

Energy

IIED's energy programme began in 1975, immediately before the Rome Food conference, with Gerald Leach's work on the energy costs of food production. This opened many eyes to the extravagant energy inputs to a modern, industrialised and unusually monocultural agriculture, heavily reliant on mechanisation, pesticides, water and fertilisers.

The linked problems of energy, food production and external debt remain among the three most pressing issues faced by the South. But IIED turned to the North for its next programme step. It has always been an Institute policy to study key issues in depth in the industrialised world in parallel with those faced in less developed countries. The Institute cannot ignore the fact that there is only one earth.

A significant part of the world's energy problem is due to overconsumption in the North. So IIED explored the conservation possibilities in the United Kingdom—now one of the few energy-independent nations in OECD. *A Low Energy Strategy for the United Kingdom*, published in early 1979, drew forceful attention to the immense potential in sophisticated Northern economies to conserve energy, and to base their energy plans on demand rather than on supply.

IIED's calculations showed that normal economic growth in Britain could continue for 30 to 40 years without any increase in primary energy consumption simply by a much more intelligent

use of resources.

By late 1979, IIED's energy work had developed three complementary components. The first continued to look at ways of reducing energy demand in Europe. The second began to be involved in energy policy planning in the South. And the third examined the international institutional response to energy issues.

In June 1979 IIED co-hosted a conference in London together with the Royal Institution (UK) and the Beijer Institute (Sweden) on *The Role of the Industrialised Countries in Third World Energy Problems*. It proved to be a solid step towards building up IIED's energy network in the South, adding to the substantial links already acquired in the North, through an IIED involvement in the World Alternative Energy Strategy and the World Coal Study.

By 1980 IIED's energy team carried out an energy policy study for President Julius Nyerere's office in Tanzania, under the auspices of the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation. It studied firewood problems in Senegal for IFAD and biogas options in China with UNEP. With El Colegio de México it organised a symposium in Mexico in 1981 on Third World rural energy options, and it undertook a study of the problems of solar technology transfer.

The third element of the energy programme, the international institutional arrangements for energy policy, started in 1977, with a critique of the international response to the nuclear option: *Whose Power to Choose?* In early 1981, *The World Energy Triangle* by Brian Johnson and Thomas Hoffmann urged that development agencies in the West and in the OPEC countries should work together to encourage research and development into new energy sources in the South.

Thus the character of the Institute was established. Items on the international agenda were subjected to expert interdisciplinary study. The intention is to associate the best of academic thought with the political process—while retaining the basic focus on better environmental management and a fairer world development pattern. IIED has in this way expanded its role as an independent and expert source of policy advice.

MONITORING INTERNATIONAL DECISIONS AND POLICIES

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Human Settlements

By the end of the Habitat conference in 1976, it had become clear that governments and international agencies alike tended quickly to forget the rhetoric, the pledges and the "programmes of action" agreed at the major UN conferences. A measure of independent audit was required.

It also became clear that the whole process of official development assistance, from the smallest bilateral aid agency to the largest multilateral bank, needed to incorporate the wider environmental concerns and the commitment to basic needs of the Third World which had been so clearly put at Stockholm, Rome, Bucharest and Vancouver.

In 1976 IIED decided to build two new components into its programme agenda. A human settlements programme was designed to follow up on Habitat, and the sustainable development (assessment) programme started to tackle the formal aid sector. The decentralised character of each programme, with its close links to associated institutes in other countries, illustrates another key aspect of IIED's development.

In 1976, after the Habitat conference in Vancouver, the Canadian government asked Barbara Ward if IIED could survey what practical results had flowed from that elaborate global assembly of town planners, architects, administrators and politicians. This

programme is directed by Dr. Jorge Hardoy, who for three years worked from London but now continues from the Centre for Urban and Regional Studies (CEUR) in Buenos Aires.

IIED needed partners for such an undertaking, and "associate" relationships were established with the Institute of Development Studies in Mysore, India, with the University of Khartoum, with the University of Lagos, and with CEUR in Buenos Aires. The directors of each unit became IIED Fellows, and together with Hardoy the four planned three major components in an overall programme.

First, 17 national human settlements policies were critically reviewed. A team from one of the associated institutions visited each country to examine housing, land and settlements policies in depth. Regional reports were published in 1979, and in 1981 a synthesis appeared: *Shelter: Need and Response* by Jorge Hardoy and David Satterthwaite. It revealed that while a few countries such as Tanzania, Singapore and Tunisia had implemented many of the Habitat recommendations, others such as Jordan, Nigeria and Bolivia had so far hardly responded at all.

The second audit function was to ask how much financial assistance flows directly into housing and other settlements-related projects from the multilateral agencies. It is often argued that virtually all multilateral aid and technical assistance indirectly affect cities, towns and villages. IIED has developed a somewhat more precise classification of projects with direct and indirect impacts on settlements and on the lives of people living there.

IIED then produced an annual review of the multilaterals' performance, at first across the whole Third World and now on a regional basis for Latin America, Asia and Africa. Sadly, the statistics reveal an alarming disregard of direct assistance for urban housing, urban transport and building materials, water supply and sanitation: only 7.5% of total assistance up to 1978.

The third IIED audit of human settlements policies has looked at planning. There is an increasing consensus among both governments and international agencies that the benefits of development must be spread more widely. But there is far less agreement on the type of planning that is required to do this.

As three-quarters of the Third World's population live in settlements with less than 100,000 inhabitants, the smaller towns and villages are critical to the development pattern. IIED, again with the four collaborating Third World institutions, has begun to examine the role that these "small and intermediate" settlements play in social and economic development.

The IIED settlements programme seeks to persuade national and international authorities that one of the most basic needs of all is shelter—not only from the elements but shelter from disease. Settlements are the only means by which the basic needs of clean water, health care and education can be brought to the poorest people. It is in settlements, from the mushrooming mega-cities to the remote rural villages, that the most acute problems of the environment—the human environment—must be faced.

Aid Agencies and the Environment

The second major aspect of the IIED's audit function is concerned directly with the process of development assistance. There has often been a certain hostility between developers and environmentalists, but the Institute firmly believes that an environment in which no creative acts of development have occurred may in human terms be especially threatened and vulnerable, and that if development is environmentally unsound it is unsustainable, and thus ultimately valueless.

In 1977, an IIED team began a study of how far the major development agencies take environmental considerations into account when they plan and execute development projects. The World Bank and others had promised to do this at the Stockholm conference. How were they performing in practice?

The first phase of the IIED programme was designed to evaluate the environmental performance of eight multilateral finance agencies: the African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the Caribbean Development Bank, the European Development Fund, the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, the Organisation of American

States and the United Nations Development Programme. A report published in early 1979, *Banking on the Biosphere?*, concluded that only one of these eight agencies, the World Bank, had made any systematic attempt to include environmental considerations in its lending programme. Even here there are many loopholes and gaps, and the Bank itself remains concerned that major environmental damage can still be occasioned by World Bank-financed projects.

A second phase of the assessment programme looked at six bilateral agencies, those of the US, Canada, Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden and West Germany. As in the settlements audit, the bulk of the research was carried out by six locally-recruited teams based in these countries; IIED coordinated the work and in 1980 produced a comparative report: *The Environment and Bilateral Development Aid*.

In both sets of studies the Institute took great care to avoid an aggressive stance with the agencies concerned. The style was one of comparative study and cooperation, and IIED's draft conclusions were discussed with the agencies before publication. This approach often allowed the final report to describe a positive response made by the agency to the IIED analysis.

The studies did nevertheless reveal a dangerous inattention by many of the agencies, multilateral and bilateral, to short and long term environmental considerations. The response of the multilaterals was to sign a public declaration pledging better performance; for a while little else followed. But it is clear now that the studies themselves were therapeutic, and in recent months several of the agencies have asked the IIED to advise and help on ways and means towards sound environmental practice. Today plans are under development whereby IIED (together with IUCN) will provide an environmental advisory service for development assistance—directed both at aid agencies and at recipient countries.

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EDUCATING THE PUBLIC

From its foundation, a key part of the Institute's work has been to alert a wide citizen audience to the issues of environment and sustainable development.

Barbara Ward's books, and an IIED offshoot called the World Environment Newsletter, were early manifestations of this concern. In 1974, an initiative from Maurice Strong, then executive director of the newly-founded UN Environment Programme, laid the foundations of another key aspect of IIED's development.

Strong had rapidly reached two apparently contradictory conclusions about UNEP's information programme. First, he decided that public information ought to play an integral part in UNEP's catalytic role, rather than hold the essentially marginal function it has in other, more strictly executive, UN agencies. Second, experience persuaded him that the political and bureaucratic constraints imposed on a UN agency prevented UNEP from undertaking, in-house, the more innovative forms of information activity.

Strong asked IIED to suggest ways out of this dilemma, and the Institute proposed that some of UNEP's budget be spent on establishing and supporting an independent information unit within an international NGO. This somewhat radical conclusion for a UN agency was accepted by UNEP, which invited IIED to set up such a unit. In November 1975, with Jon Tinker as its director, IIED established Earthscan under an initial one-year contract from UNEP.

Earthscan is an editorially-independent news and information service on global environment and development issues. Although UNEP funding at a reduced level continues to underpin about one-quarter of its activities, Earthscan has in recent years been financially supported by UNICEF, UNDP, WHO, Habitat, the World Bank and many other units within the UN family, as well as by development or other agencies of Canada, Sweden, the Netherlands, the

United States, and other countries, together with collaborative support from the Sudan, Costa Rica and the USSR.

Earthscan activities include a newspaper feature syndication service in three languages, going to over 100 newspapers in 50 countries; a regular series of briefing seminars and field trips for specialist journalists; background press briefing documents; a bulletin servicing over 800 NGOs in 100 countries; a briefing service for radio and TV producers; on-the-job fellowships for Third World journalists; special press photosheets; and the Earthscan Publications series of books and pamphlets.

Earthscan's output, which appears in English, French and Spanish, is designed to stimulate interest and awareness among the media on neglected global development issues. Earthscan is not a propagandist agency on behalf of the UN or of IIED, and it has over the past six years acquired an unique reputation with the press for its objective and often sharply-expressed analyses of international issues.

Earthscan information programmes on a wide range of issues—desertification, primary health care, renewable energy, water and sanitation, Antarctica, for example—have played a seminal role in creating and sustaining media and thereby public interest. Strong's original concept—that public awareness could in some aspects be more effectively achieved through an independent outside unit—has been vindicated. Many other international and national development agencies have concluded that through Earthscan, IIED can illustrate issues in a better and more cost effective way than they could do themselves.

THE FUTURE

As the IIED enters its second decade, a decade which is opening with more signs of stress and tension than of hope on the international stage, the Institute will increasingly address new themes, new issues, new problems. But its approach to these challenges is by now firmly established: research and advocacy, an internal collegiality, a determination to bridge the gaps between the rich and poor and academics and decisionmakers, a critical and where necessary outspoken audit of national and international action, close links with collaborating institutions in the South, private approaches to those who move the levers of power combined with a direct impact on public awareness through the media.

This brief history of IIED's first ten years has touched on some of the major themes which have moulded the Institute's character and contribution: the links with UN conferences, the marine and polar resources and energy programmes and the concept of collegiality, the audit function through settlements and development aid, and the growth of Earthscan.

Some important aspects have necessarily been omitted. There has been, for example, IIED's sustained concern—and especially that of Barbara Ward—to focus attention on the need for clean drinking water. There has been the non-governmental dimension to IIED's activities: an often-successful attempt to help build coalitions with other NGOs, on law of the sea, Antarctica, marine pollution, and the European environment, common concerns among population, natural resource management and environment issues. And there are the details of IIED's European environmental policy programme, and Business Programme. Specific details about the Institute's current programme can be found in the Annual Report, and future plans in our Prospectus.

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International Trade in Wildlife by Tim Inskipp and Sue Wells, 1979.

Antarctica and Its Resources by Barbara Mitchell and Jon Tinker, 1980.

Mud, Mud—The Potential of Earth-Based Materials for Third World Housing by Anil Agarwal, 1981.

New and Renewable Energies 1 (solar, biomass) edited by Jon Tinker, 1981.

New and Renewable Energies 2 (hydro, tidal wave, OTEC, wind, tarsands, oil shale). edited by Jon Tinker, 1981.

Water, Sanitation, Health—for All? by Anil Agarwal, James Kimondo, Gloria Moreno and Jon Tinker, 1981.

Carbon Dioxide, Climate and Man by John Gribbin, 1981.

Fuel Alcohol: Energy and Environment in a Hungry World by Bill Kovarik, 1981.

EARTHSCAN AUDIO VISUAL

A Village in a Million Photosheet. A poster with 50 captioned photographs showing all aspects of energy use in Akbarpur Barota, a village in India.

Life at the Margin: Voltan Village Photosheets. 24 illustrations of life in Lougsi Village, Upper Volta.

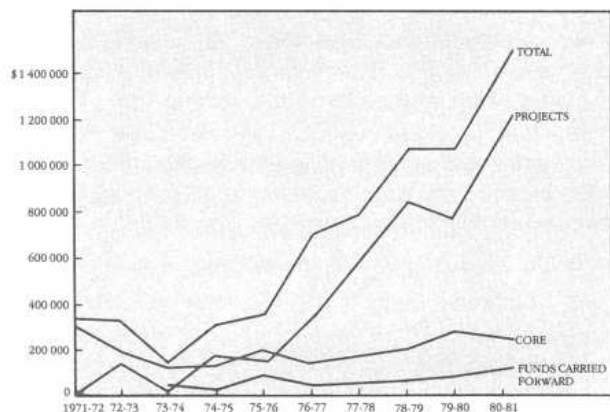
Water and Sanitation Photosheets. 121 photographs captioned, English, French and Spanish illustrating drinking water and sanitation in developing countries.

International Directory of Environmental Film Sources, 1977. A list of environmental films, with names and addresses of producers and distributors.

Note: This is a partial listing of publications.

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