



Statement by Dr. Lee Talbot presenting the Harold Jefferson Coolidge Medal to Dr. Robert Goodland, at the IUCN World Conservation Congress, Barcelona, Spain, 11 October 2008

It is a particular pleasure and honor for me to present this first Harold Jefferson Coolidge Medal. Dr. Coolidge introduced me to IUCN 55 years ago, and he also introduced many others, including Wolfgang Burhenne and our honoree, Robert Goodland, to the Union.

Dr. Coolidge was widely known as "the Father of International Conservation," and more than any other individual, he was responsible for the creation and development of the IUCN of today.

He was a distinguished scientist who specialized in taxonomy, ecology and what we now call conservation biology. He did, for example, the initial taxonomic work on endangered animals such as the mountain gorilla and on the kouprey, and led subsequent conservation efforts for both of them. In the 1920s he carried out field research on wildlife in Africa and South East Asia. In 1930 he started the first NGO in North America devoted to international wildlife conservation. In the later 1930s and 1940s he worked with European colleagues to try to create a truly international conservation organization. These efforts came to fruition in 1948 with the establishment of the IUCN.

A founder of IUCN, Dr. Coolidge also was the architect of the Union's commission structure. He initiated what are now the Species Survival Commission and the World Commission on Protected Areas, and also was instrumental in creating the Law, Education and Ecology Commissions. He remained very active in IUCN affairs for well over 30 years, served as its President from 1966 to 1972, and through his fund raising he arranged most of the financial support which kept the Union alive from its creation in 1948 through the 1970s.

It is almost a law of nature that when an organization is successful and active, it concentrates on present and future achievements and all too often tends to forget that it owes much of its success to the accomplishments of the past. The Harold Jefferson Coolidge Medal is intended to assure that the key role of Dr. Coolidge is not forgotten, while facilitating the recognition of individuals of truly extraordinary accomplishment. The medal is being awarded for the first time this year. It is to an individual who has made internationally significant contributions to conservation of nature and natural resources, and whose conservation efforts embody Dr. Coolidge's approach and achievements.

The jury set up by the IUCN Council was unanimous in its decision to award the Harold Jefferson Coolidge medal to Dr. Robert Goodland of Canada.

The citation reads, "in recognition of his outstanding conservation initiatives at the international level and for providing inspiration, encouragement and support to numerous individuals, especially young people, to enable them to pursue their careers in conservation."

From 1971 through 1977 Dr. Goodland was an environmental advisor or consultant to the World Bank. From 1978 through 2001 he held the position of Chief environmental Advisor to the World Bank, and from 2001 to 2004 he was Chief Environmental Advisor to the independent Extractive Industries Review of the World Bank Group.

From 1971 through 1984 he was virtually the sole voice for environment in an organization of over 10,000 staff. Thereafter, in part because of his endeavors, the Bank gradually but substantially increased the environmental staff. Like Dr. Coolidge, Dr. Goodland worked largely in the background. He developed environmental and social policies and procedures, and more important, convinced the Bank to adopt them formally. By the mid 1980s the World Bank's environmental and social policies and procedures were recognized as by far the best and most effective of any of the multilateral development assistance agencies (MDAs). Because of this, in the following years similar policies and procedures were adopted by all the other MDAs, so that Dr. Goodland's efforts led to very significant environmental



and social improvements in development assistance throughout the world. With the worldwide impact of development, it is hard to overemphasize Dr. Goodland's contributions.

For decades Dr. Goodland has provided inspiration, encouragement and support to environmentalists of all ages, from his home and offices in North America and in his work throughout the rest of the world. Through his prolific writing and continued support of others, he continues to have a major impact on conservation worldwide.

Dr. Goodland, it is with the greatest of pleasure that I present this medal to you.