

"Managers of reserves are faced with the challenge of preserving species diversity; counterintuitively, the best policy to prevent long-term change is to allow short-term change." This is the intriguing subtitle to Roger Lewin's Research News section in the Nov. 28, 1986 issue of *Science*; the title is "In Ecology, Change Brings Stability."

The problem is summarized in the following quote:

"The question for park managers and conservationists, therefore, is how to act in the face of change. If a reserve were immense in size, then no action would probably be the best action, because natural species declines in one area would probably be compensated for by species booms in another. But, as was noted by a constant refrain at the New York meeting ("Conservation 2100," a Fairfield Osborn Symposium at Rockefeller University, New York, Oct. 20-30, 1986), most reserves are going to be too small and fragmented to be maintained without the loss of species."

The article quotes Brian Walker of the Commonwealth Science and Industry Research Organization, in Canberra, Australia; "We will have to learn to compensate for the changes that will inevitably occur. We will have to learn how to manipulate the systems in the directions we want them to go, but we don't know enough about them yet to be able to do that."