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hardly any better for the praying mantis: his female partner climaxed their mating by biting his head off! Then, too, the boa constrictor lives up to its name, slinging and throttling the springbok into the Beyond before swallowing it whole—hoofs, horns and all. The sort of table manners we would hardly condone in our children, but that we nonetheless enjoy watching on television.

In the last analysis, even the animals themselves arouse suspicion. At popular request, they will don a little raffia skirt and imitate the noble savage to our sentimental sofa heart's content: Sitting Bull wearing a sad smile, wedged between Bang and Olufsen. If need be, even decked out in an Adidas jogger suit.

## **FREECOM: Free Communication Worldwide**

The send-off date for the FREECOM project was on June 27th, 2002, the Santa Lemusan national holiday. FREECOM – the first ever telecommunication firm to offer a zero rate worldwide – started out by setting up public phone stations. To avoid overburdening the network, only one new station a day gets put into operation. The first PUBLIC STATION is located in the Salita Castello overlooking the Riomaggiore harbor in the Cinque Terre.

**Technology:** The FREECOM communication technology is almost entirely disturbance-proof, and has proved its worth under extreme temperatures as well. Early tests showed that the system works flawlessly in a range from minus 18 to plus 37 degrees Celsius, and most probably it supports even far greater variations in temperature. Moreover, the system is so simple that repairs can be effected by just about any specialist worldwide.

**Operation:** Using the FREECOM devices is also so simple that it is user-friendly even among those sectors of the public who, because of their socio-economic context in this or that part of the world, have until now had little experience with telecommunications technology. Contrary to conventional telecommunications technology, FREECOM provides connections that can address various sense organs – not only the ears, but also the eyes, nose, mouth and skin. Whoever seeks a connection via FREECOM must pick up the FREECOM telephone book or consult their Web address (<http://www.lemusa.org/freecom>) to

So here we sit – and lie – on a standby basis in front of our TVs, watching animals live out their lives, the noble stress of their fight for survival. While munching on a candy bar, we experience a tingle of excitement as we take in the lion paws and zebra flanks. For millions of years we have managed to out-evolve the swamp. Now let's call it a day – time out for a bit of entertainment. Not in dribs and drabs, mind you, but the full gore and glory!

*Translated from the German by: Margie Mounier*

obtain the list of all the public phone stations, which is constantly updated. One then proceeds as follows:

1. Seek the nearest public station and sit down as comfortably as possible in front of it
2. Choose the public station with which you want to be connected from the list of public stations currently in operation
3. Next, concentrate fully on that site, which will then gradually come through with increasing colors, smells, sounds and climatic sensations (the phonebook photograph should be of help for dialing in)
4. Remain connected as long as you wish (it has not yet been established what effect the presence of a second person at the same public station can have)
5. To end the connection, transfer your attention back to the site from which you are calling

**Outlook:** In the foreseeable future, telecommunicating via FREECOM promises to become even easier. The first private phone stations are due to go into operation by June 2003. Those interested in obtaining a PRIVATE STATION at their home or office can send their inquiries to [freecom@lemusa.org](mailto:freecom@lemusa.org), under the reference "Infos PRIVATE STATION." In addition to this, the FREECOM research team is currently working on the development of a mobile phone system.