

Conversation starters in conservation: Navigating diverse perspectives using social science methods

Edinburgh Forests and Landscapes Network
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THE UNIVERSITY
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The Future of Conservation Survey team



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UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



Cambridge Conservation Initiative



Restoration partnership development toolkit



Annette Green

Educational study



Helena Slater



Aidan Keane

Great Big Nature Survey



Ellesse Janda



Daniel Barrios O'Neill

Longstanding debates over what, why and how to conserve

‘New conservationists’

Anthropocentric conservation

Multifunctional landscapes

Working with corporations and economic growth

‘Traditional’ conservationists

Near-pristine areas and ecocentric values

Capitalism ignores planetary limits

Nature’s resilience is over-exaggerated



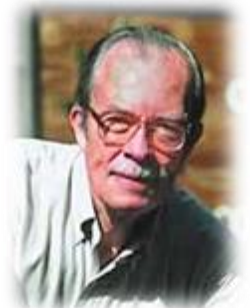
Peter
Kareiva



Michelle
Marvier



Michael
Soulé



Jon
Terborgh



BATTLE OVER BIODIVERSITY

An ideological clash could undermine a crucial assessment of the world's disappearing plant and animal life.

It's a hot and humid afternoon in the suburbs of Washington DC, and Bob Watson is looking worried. The renowned atmospheric chemist sits back on a bench in his yard, hemmed in by piles of paperwork. He speaks with his characteristic rapid-fire delivery as he explains the tensions surrounding the international committee he helms. The panel is supposed to provide scientific advice on one of the world's most intractable problems — the rapidly accelerating loss of plants and animals. But a rift in the research community risks diminishing the whole effort. In a few days' time, Watson will fly to England to mark his seventieth birthday, but right now he is not in a celebratory mood.

Watson is talking about a conflict infecting the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), a younger sibling to the Nobel-prizewinning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Both have immense tasks. The IPCC provides timely, expert information on climate change, and it helped to lay the groundwork for international treaties aimed at slowing global warming, such as the 2015 Paris climate accord. The biodiversity panel

BY ENSAN MASOOD

has been tasked to focus on the epic disappearance of plant and animal populations.

As with climate change, humans are the main culprit in biodiversity loss. People have converted somewhere in the region of 50% of Earth's surface for human activities, and researchers warn that the resulting loss of animal and plant species is leading towards a mass extinction.

But whereas the elder IPCC has largely unified the scientific community and has had considerable international policy success, the six-year-old biodiversity panel has not yet been able to exert anything like the same degree of influence. Moreover, the scientific community it represents is a house divided. The world of biodiversity research is like an extended family that has split into feuding factions. Scientists from less-prosperous southern countries have squared off against colleagues from the wealthier north, and researchers from more empirical disciplines are arguing with those from humanities and the social sciences.

The issues underlying the rift reflect broader debates in science about traditional power structures and increasing access for underrepresented groups, as well as opposition to dominant economic systems. Until now,

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID FINNINGS

The 'new conservation' debate

The debate had been quite polarising, characterised as you're either 'new' or 'traditional'

There was also a strong bias towards North America and senior white males in this debate

We wondered what conservation practitioners around the world thought about the issues

Your turn...



WHICH **DESIGNER BAG**
FITS YOUR PERSONALITY?

[START THE QUIZ!](#)

WHICH TYPE OF
CONSERVATIONIST IS
YOUR PERSONALITY?

[TAKE THE FUTURE OF
CONSERVATION SURVEY!](#)

Future of Conservation survey

Launched April 2017

38 Likert statements

~ 20,000 responses



Home Take the Survey About the Project About the Debate

The Future of Conservation survey

There have long been debates regarding the future direction of biodiversity conservation, but these have tended to be dominated by a few powerful individuals.

This survey allows you to contribute your views, so that a broader range of voices can be taken into account. It will take just 15 minutes to complete, and at the end you will be presented with a graphical representation of your views and how they compare to others who have taken the survey.

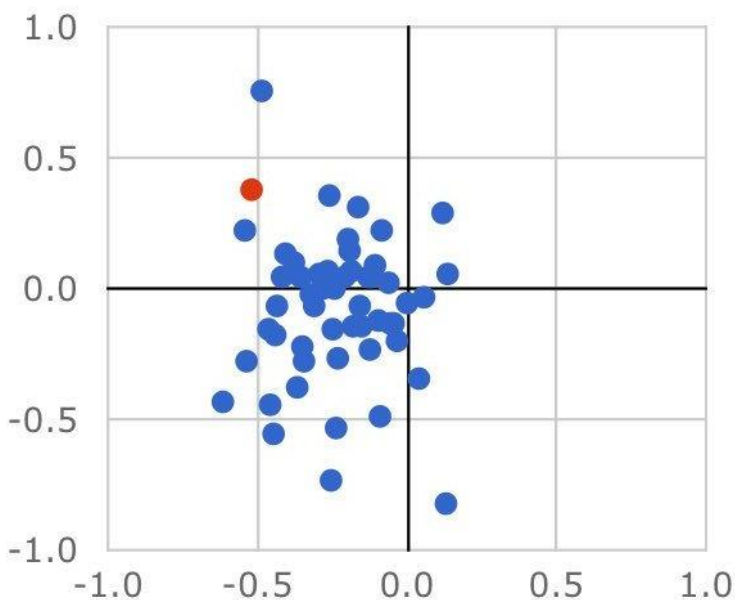
We hope that you enjoy the survey and encourage you to share your experience by asking others to take part!

TAKE THE SURVEY

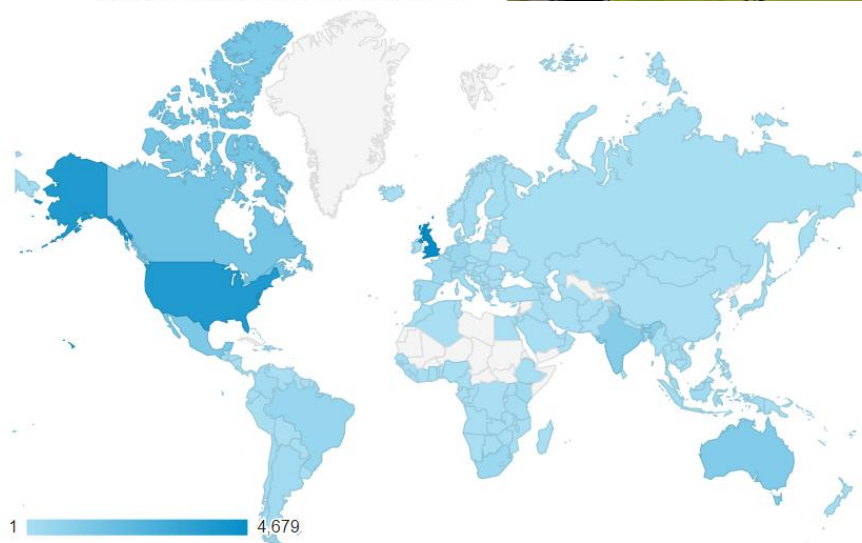
Your responses will be kept anonymous, stored securely and will only be used for this project. Full details of ethics and data security for this project can be [found here](#).

What next?

We plan to use the data to establish whether there are any



● Other pe... ● Your resu...



Dimensions of conservation thought

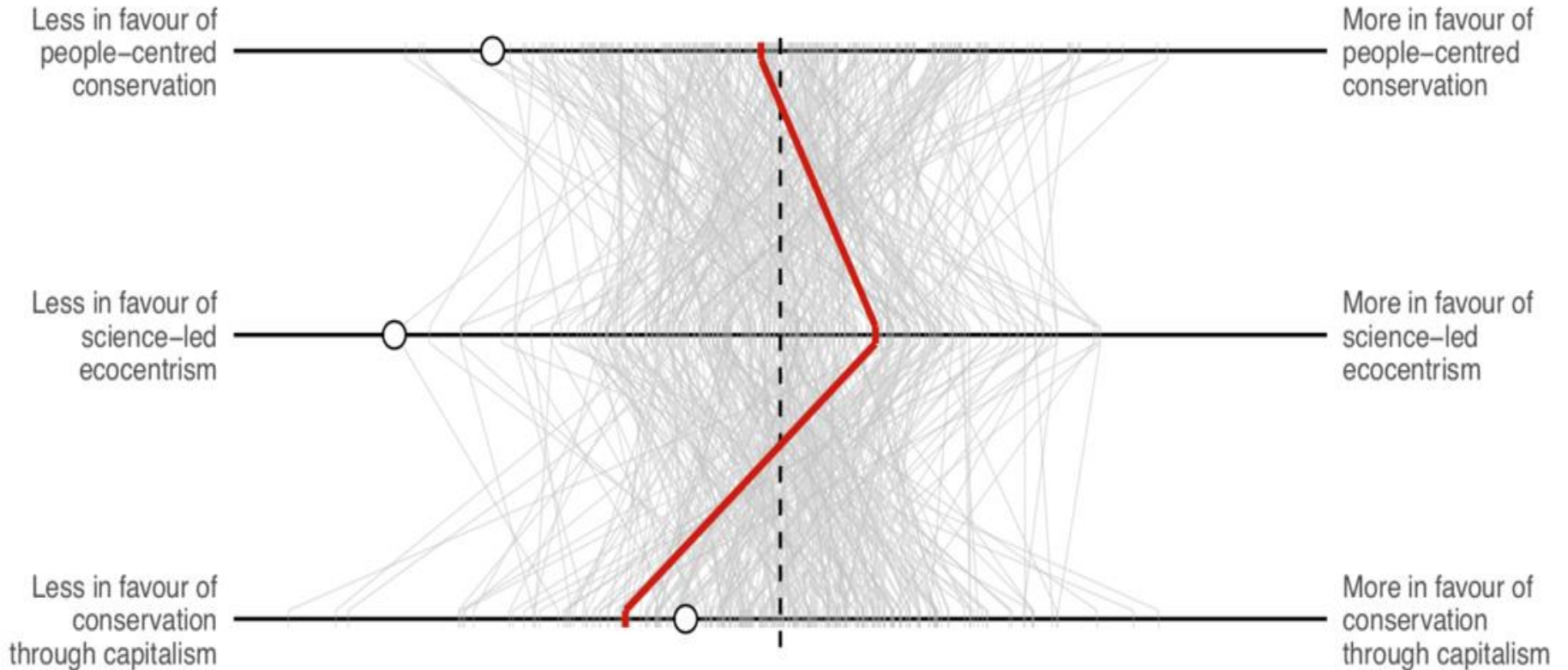
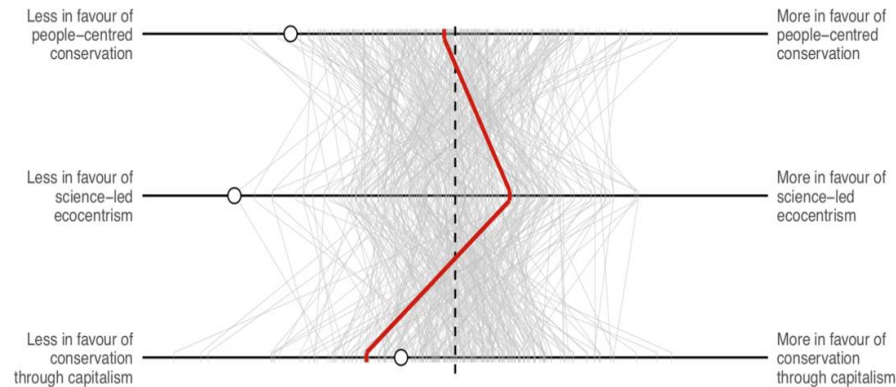
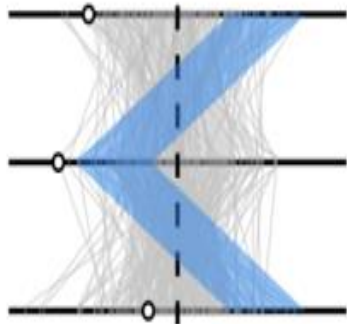


Figure 3 | Parallel coordinates plots. The upper panel shows your score on each dimension of conservation thinking and how these compare to a random subsample from the overall sample of respondents. The lower panels illustrate typical patterns associated with recognised positions in conservation debates. White circles represent the neutral score obtained if the answer 'neither agree nor disagree' were selected for every question

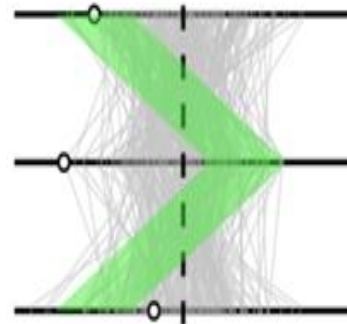
Dimensions of conservation thought



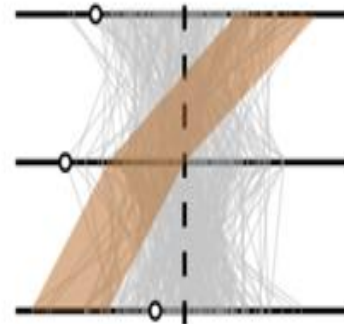
New Conservation



Traditional Conservation



Critical Social Scientist



Market-based Ecocentrism

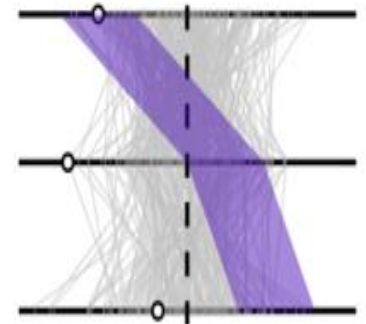


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The global conservation movement is diverse but not divided

Chris Sandbrook ^{1,2*}, Janet A. Fisher³, George Holmes ⁴, Rogelio Luque-Lora¹ and Aidan Keane ³

Biodiversity is being lost at an unprecedented rate, making the conservation movement of critical importance for life on Earth. However, recent debates over the future of conservation have been polarized, acrimonious and dominated by an unrepresentative demographic group. The views of the wider global conservation community on fundamental questions regarding what, why and how to conserve are unknown. Here we characterize the views of 9,264 conservationists from 149 countries, identifying specific areas of consensus and disagreement, and three independent dimensions of conservation thinking. The first

PEOPLE
AND
NATURE

BRITISH
ECOLOGICAL
SOCIETY

RESEARCH ARTICLE |  Open Access |  

A global analysis of factors predicting conservationists' values

Rogelio Luque-Lora , Aidan Keane, Janet A. Fisher, George Holmes, Chris Sandbrook

First published: 02 August 2022 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10391> | Citations: 3



Group and Organisation Future of Conservation Survey (GO-FOX)

In response to demand, we have now launched a tool which allows you to create your own unique version of the Future of Conservation Survey and distribute it to a closed group of respondents you are working with.



able to you, to use for the benefit of the group. This tool can be used within organisations, or to support teaching on the subject. [Click here](#) for more details, or [register now](#) and start your survey today!

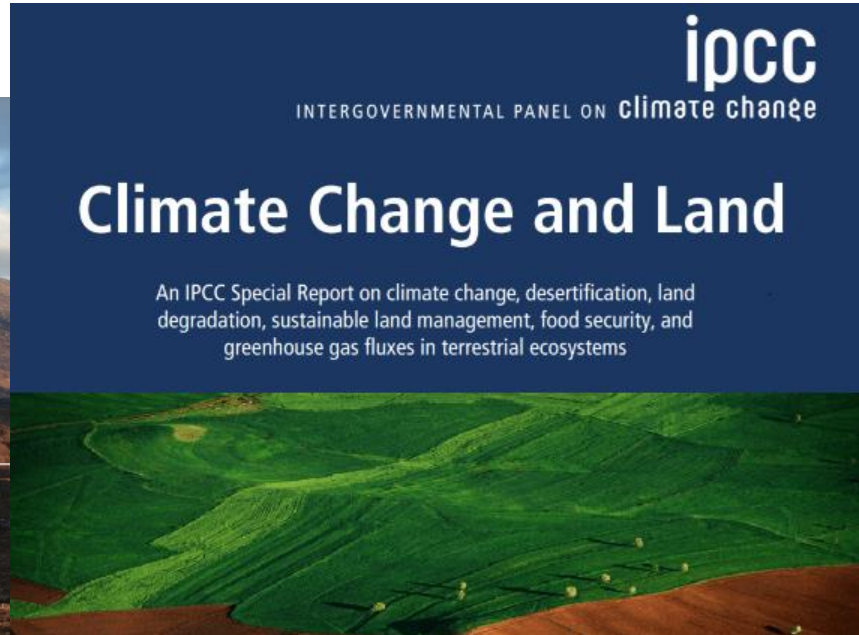
Been used by ~30 organisations around the world

Used in 80-100 classrooms around the world

Debates about the 'future of conservation' were abstract and unlinked to any place...

Could a method like this which characterises perspectives, then enables their deliberation, help with facilitating more productive conversations about change in real landscapes?

Societal needs from land are changing...



...can environmental social science contribute to a more productive conversation about change?

'Cumbria Connect'
case study

'Wilder Marches'
(Welsh borders)
case study

Affric/Kintail
Highlands case
study

Highlands deer
management debates
(with Callum Leavey-
Wilson)

*Empirical
data and
lessons from
case studies
inform...*

Toolkit for
mapping and
deliberating
restoration
project
stakeholder
perspectives



Restoration
partnership
development toolkit



The Great Big Nature Survey



20,000 respondents (WTs members)

Nationally representative sample of UK public also

Take the survey today!

The Great Big Nature Survey is all about people and nature.

The Wildlife Trusts want to hear your opinions on some of the biggest questions surrounding nature and our role in caring for it.

- How often do you spend time in nature, if at all?
- Is nature important to you? If so, how important?
- What, if any, roles should people, business, and government have in managing nature?

Hoffech chi gymryd rhan yn yr arolwg yn y Gymraeg? [Cliciwch yma](#)

Make your voice heard and complete The Great Big Nature Survey.

Great Big Nature Survey



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