

Conflicts in Conservation

Navigating Towards Solutions

Conflicts over the conservation of biodiversity are increasing worldwide and threaten conservation objectives and people's lives and livelihoods. Changing patterns in land use, over-exploitation, pollution, climate change and the threat posed by invasive species all challenge the way we currently manage biodiversity – from the local management of single species to the international management of resources. The solutions are as much about people as they are about biodiversity.

Presenting approaches from different academic disciplines and practitioners, this volume offers new insights and approaches to deal with conflicts. Ground-breaking strategies for conservation are analysed, and a large section of the book is devoted to exploring case studies of conflict from around the world.

Aimed primarily at academics, researchers and students from disciplines relating to conservation, ecology, natural resources management and environmental governance, this book will be equally valuable to conservation NGOs and practitioners, and to the policy community at national and international levels.

STEPHEN M. REDPATH is a conservation scientist at the University of Aberdeen. He started his career as an ecologist, working on birds of prey and red grouse. Much of his work now focuses on understanding and searching for sustainable solutions to a wide range of conservation conflicts.

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Conflicts in Conservation

Navigating Towards Solutions

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Stephen M. Redpath, R. J. Gutiérrez, Kevin A. Wood, Juliette C. Young

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For Simon Thirgood
(1962–2009)

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Foreword

As pressures on the environment from ever-increasing numbers of people with more needs and demands for natural resources grow, so must the number of conservation problems. Examining conservation problems solely from the perspective of the species or habitat that is put under pressure simply leads to a rapidly escalating list of ever-more-difficult problems. Solutions are hard to find, especially solutions that will be effective over longer time periods. In fact, conservation is almost never this straightforward anyway. It is much more complex and usually there are many different winners and losers in different sectors of society, and often over time and in different places as well. No wonder, then, that progress to meet conservation targets has been so challenging. As the authors in this book show over and over again, the apparent conflicts between people and the environment are better tackled by appreciating that the conflicts are actually between different groups of people. While sometimes the conflicts are very clear, especially to conservationists working on the front line who encounter stakeholders with different perspectives, this is rarely the case, and it is even rarer that the issues can be simply or neatly circumscribed.

A key advance, then, is the recognition that conservation is an interdisciplinary endeavour and that biologists acting alone can never hope to make lasting progress. Instead, recognising the many linkages between nature and society, and building on the different kinds of values that people have and hold for nature will allow much more fundamental and ultimately sustainable progress to be made. Conservation will never work when it is either apparently or actually at odds with the needs and wishes of those who are nature's stewards.

So, this is a very important book, focussing as it does very clearly at the interface between conservation and livelihoods, and scrutinising many different strategies for enhancing both conservation success and social outcomes in mutually supporting relationships. Of course there are few easy solutions, but the many different perspectives and case studies presented here provide a remarkable resource for lasting solutions. I commend Steve Redpath and the other editors for the extraordinary effort to include such a wide range of different disciplinary experts and conflict situations in such broad geographical and

political contexts. Among a plethora of conservation manuals and text books, this stands out for its breadth and depth, and the potential it offers for so many hard conservation problems.

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Acknowledgements

The initial idea for this book grew out of a conference on human–wildlife conflicts in London in 2002, partly organised by our friend and colleague, Simon Thirgood. This conference ultimately led to the excellent book *People and wildlife: conflict or coexistence*, by Woodroffe *et al.* (2005). The focus of that conference was on human–animal interactions. Yet, as recognised by contributors at that conference, conservation is fundamentally about personal and cultural values and the choices people make, and we therefore need to understand the people as much as we do the human–animal interactions. To start exploring these complex problems, we held a conference, ‘Conflicts in conservation: strategies for coping with a changing world’, in August 2011 that was organised by the Aberdeen Centre for Environmental Sustainability (ACES). The discussions from this conference led to a review paper on conservation conflicts (Redpath *et al.*, 2013), and ultimately this book.

This book is the result of collaboration with over 60 colleagues studying conflicts from diverse disciplines around the world. We thank them all for their wisdom, their insight and their wonderful contributions, as well as their patience in seeing this book to completion. Thanks to Catherine Young, Adam Vanbergen and Viktor Bahktin for their beautiful illustrations. We also want to thank Georgina Mace for her foreword to the book.

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