Several questions about the ecological loss concept in the socio-economic context

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In Nguyen Minh Hoang’s doctoral dissertation, entitled “Exploring the Involvement of Urban Residents in Biodiversity Conservation within Protected Areas: Empirical Findings from Vietnam,” the primary focus of the mentioned inquiry is thoroughly examined [1].

Regarding the inference results and the analytics applied to the data, they all underwent peer review, gained approval from editorial boards, and were officially published [2-3].

The dissertation’s author also concurs with the analysis and findings of the thesis [1], which have effectively integrated the constituent results, as evidenced by documentary sources [2] and [3].

In this context, two questions arise from reflections upon reading R. L. Nuwer’s book “Poached: Inside the Dark World of Wildlife Trafficking” [4]. This book is also cited in the dissertation [1].

Question 1: Is there a possibility that policies and information related to animals and plants in protected areas, which reflects a declining “supply” of natural products, stimulate curiosity and the tendency to “experience”?

Question 2: If the answer to the preceding question is yes (either partially or entirely), could there be a shift from “consumption driven by personal needs” to “consumption driven by fear
of future unavailability, where people may believe they won’t have another chance to experience? If it happens this way, there can be severe consequences since it represents a consumption trend that damages the environment, regardless of awareness of ecological consequences.

Nuwer’s book [4] depicts instances of the consumption of rare and wild animals locally. Nevertheless, it also highlights a practice often referred to as “Bait and Switch” (treo đầu đê, bán thịt chó), where claims are made regarding dishes containing rare wild animals, although in reality, such dishes do not exist. This tactic is merely employed to allure customers to “try and experience.”

However, similar to the analysis of [1], the above issues come under the value system of consumption culture and the propensity of value-shifting, with many similarities to the Duesenberry effect [5]. If the two previously indicated questions are answered, the value of [1-3] will be enhanced and translated into insights suggesting environmental policies with more practical meaning.

I look forward to reading articles that address the new answers mentioned above someday.

References

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