

Insights from social sciences can help build an eco-surplus culture for conservation policymaking

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For several decades, scientific and technological innovations have been expected to be key solutions for many global problems, including environmental degradation [1]. However, we cannot ignore the fact that humans play a vital role in the Earth ecological systems, and many environmental problems are mainly caused by anthropogenic activities, such as biodiversity loss. Thus, proper policymaking to improve biodiversity conservation and curb biodiversity must include humanities and social sciences insights. This viewpoint shares the same sentiment with author Hetan Shah's saying [2]:

“In diverse cases, social factors — cultural norms, educational understanding, kin and social networks, power dynamics, or simply the layout of a building — must be accounted for before policy can succeed. Blind faith in data science without an understanding of what data are missing, or how algorithms can exacerbate existing biases, can lead to policy failure.”

Efforts to advocate the importance of insights from human dimensions in conservation policymaking and actions are growing. The emergence of the new research field in conservation sciences – conservation social sciences – is a typical example [3].

In line with conservation social scientists, I contend that understanding how people adapt and change their attitudes and behaviors towards biodiversity concepts is crucial for tackling biodiversity loss through building an eco-surplus culture in urban areas [4,5]. Eco-surplus culture is a set of pro-environmental norms, practices, and values to reduce negative anthropogenic impacts on environments and conserve and restore nature [6]. My argument can be defended by various studies that have confirmed the positive

relationships between interactions with nature and attitudes towards biodiversity [7-9] and the *biophilia* hypothesis [10,11].

References

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