Is the Pursuit of Gold Open Access Good for All Scientists?

Author: Lidicker, William Z.

Source: BioScience, 63(4) : 241

Published By: American Institute of Biological Sciences

URL: https://doi.org/10.1525/bio.2013.63.4.17

Is the Pursuit of *Gold* Open Access Good for All Scientists?

Macilwain's astute article (*BioScience* 63: 7–11) on the status of open-access publishing is a welcome summary of recent developments and associated major issues being vigorously debated. One gets the strong impression that the big questions are centered on profits for the big corporate publishers and support for this from governmental and private granting institutions. The essay, however, does not explicitly mention the large number of research scientists, from all parts of the world, who are working with little or no grant support. For them, support for open-access publication can mainly come only from their own institutions or their own pockets. Traditionally, of course, this component of the scientific community depends heavily on publication through their professional societies and associated journals. If this route is phased out without the finding of some realistic alternative, this major segment of the scientific enterprise will be hard pressed to survive. We need to come up with a more comprehensive open-access scheme that accommodates all aspects of good science, not just the well-funded parts.

WILLIAM Z. LIDICKER JR.
William Z. Lidicker Jr. (wlidicker@berkeley.edu) is an emeritus professor of integrative biology at the University of California, Berkeley.

doi:10.1525/bio.2013.63.4.17

Nothing New in Kareiva and Marvier

Kareiva and Marvier (2012) criticize Soulé (1985) and, more broadly, the field of conservation biology for an "inattention to human well-being"; for relying on "anecdotes or conventional wisdom" instead of evidence; for being "primarily focused on biology," which has led to misdiagnosis of problems and "ill-conceived solutions"; and for focusing "efforts solely on pristine places." These criticisms are based on misrepresentations both of Soulé's seminal paper defining conservation biology and of the field itself and are therefore misplaced.

As evidence that conservation biology does not pay sufficient attention to human well-being, Kareiva and Marvier point to "well-documented instances of human communities having been unjustly displaced and disrupted for the creation of protected areas." Although there are instances in which indigenous peoples have been displaced to create protected areas and although this is not a trivial matter, it is plainly not accurate to state that conservation has ignored issues related to human well-being. Soulé (1985) specifically noted that "any recommendations about the location and size of national parks should consider the impact of the park on indigenous peoples and their cultures, on the local economy, and on opportunity costs such as forfeited logging profits." Even a cursory search of the journal *Conservation Biology* produces dozens of articles focused on the costs and benefits to society from conservation. There are many examples in which conservation has benefited and been supported by indigenous people because it provided protection from resource extraction or development (e.g., CBC 2012), which are the primary causes of human displacement, not conservation (e.g., Robinson 2003).

Kareiva and Marvier's suggestion that conservation biology is not evidence based and relies on "anecdotes" fails to recognize the many bright and serious practitioners of conservation biology, who are publishing numerous papers and otherwise engaging in conservation based on solid evidence from experimentation and observation. Likewise, the charge that conservation biology is primarily focused on biology to the exclusion of other fields fails to recognize the prominent role of social scientists, philosophers, economists, and many other diverse practitioners in conservation biology, as is reflected by the diverse membership of the Society for Conservation Biology, for instance. Finally, the assertion that conservation is primarily focused on pristine places is simply false. The great majority of conservation work today is focused on both private and public lands subject to resource extraction, because conservation biology recognized decades ago that context matters and that conservation rises or falls depending on what happens in the matrix within which protected areas are embedded. Whether you call it *conservation biology* or *conservation science*, the tools of the trade have been growing for decades, and the field is far from being in stasis.

NOAH GREENWALD
DOMINICK A. DELLASALA
JOHN W. TERBORGH
Noah Greenwald (ngreenwald@biologicaldiversity.org) is the Endangered Species Program director for the Center for Biological Diversity, in Tucson, Arizona. Dominick A. DellaSala is the president and chief scientist at the Geos Institute, in Ashland, Oregon. John W. Terborgh is the James B. Duke Professor of Environmental Science, in the Nicholas School of the Environment, at Duke University, in Durham, North Carolina.

References cited

[CBC] Canadian Broadcasting Company. 2012. Nunavut closer to fifth National Park. CBC News. (22 January 2013; *www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/story/2012/11/16/north-nunavut-national-park.html*)

Kareiva P, Marvier M. 2012. What is conservation science? BioScience 62: 962–969.

Robinson WC. 2003. Risks and Rights: The Causes, Consequences, and Challenges of Development-Induced Displacement. The Brookings Institution. (22 January 2013; *www.brookings.edu/fp/projects/idp/articles/didreport.pdf*)

Soulé ME. 1985. What is conservation biology? BioScience 35: 727–734.

doi:10.1525/bio.2013.63.4.18

Humanity's Domination of Nature is Part of the Problem: A Response to Kareiva and Marvier

In "What is conservation science?", Peter Kareiva and Michelle Marvier (2012) argue that "human domination is now so widespread and profound that it can no longer be ignored in any conservation decision" (p. 965). They note that in recent decades, human populations and the per capita consumption of energy and materials have increased immensely, whereas