Society for Conservation Biology
χ Current Conservation

Partnering for more effective science communication and outreach

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PARTNERSHIP OVERVIEW

JANUARY 2021–DECEMBER 2023

Mission

Current Conservation works with scientists, researchers and artists to tell stories from the field of conservation. The Society for Conservation Biology is dedicated to advancing the science and practice of conserving biodiversity. Outreach lies at the heart of both these missions.

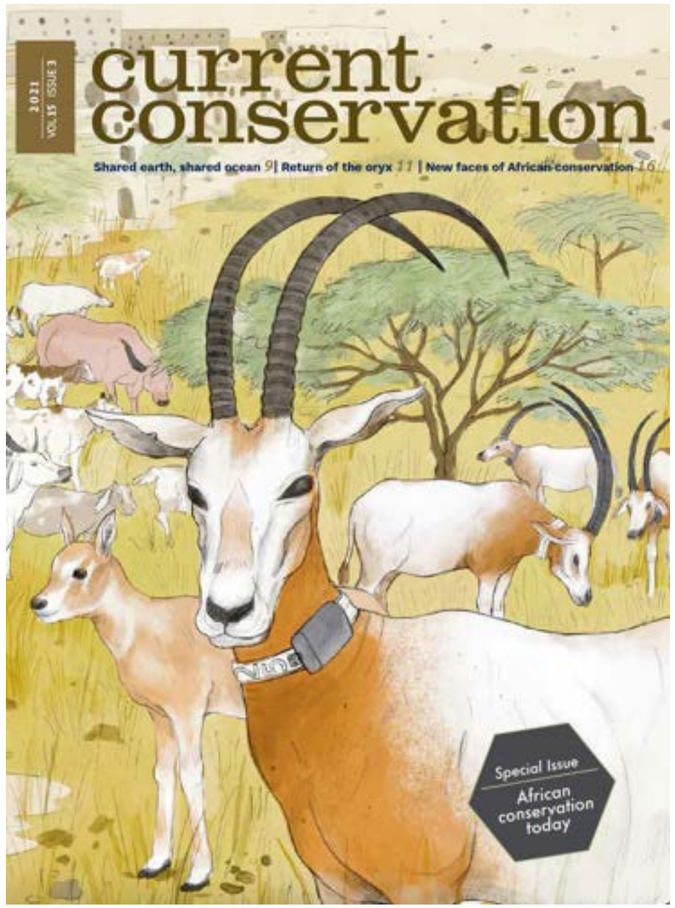
This partnership seeks to create an opportunity for both organisations to work together to promote public engagement by the conservation community worldwide, and take our messages out to a larger audience.

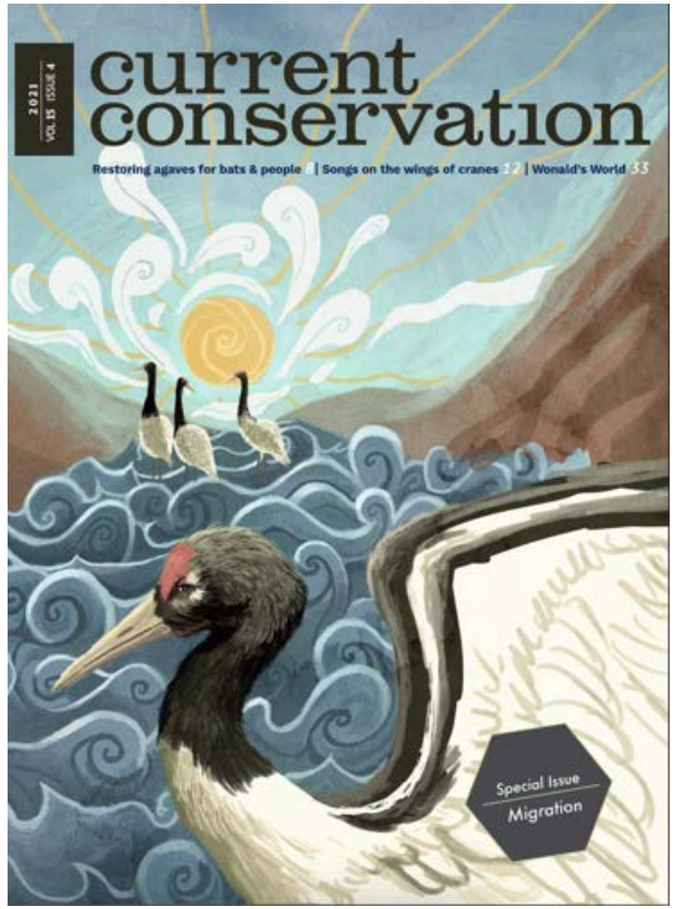
Society for Conservation Biology

current conservation

The partnership was launched with a panel discussion, later written up as an article by Caitlin Kight and Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao which was published online by Current Conservation

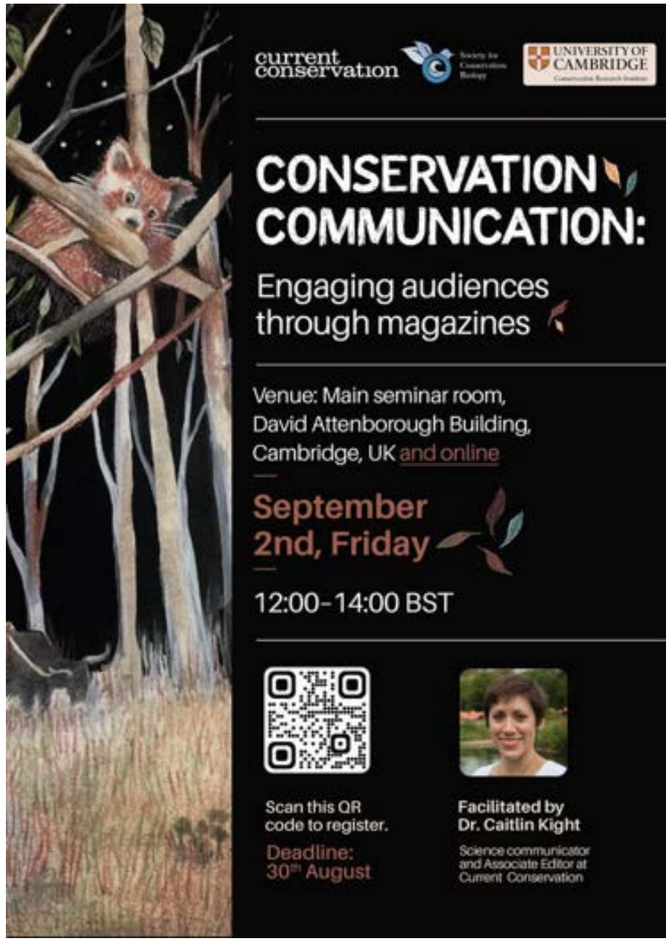
YEAR 1: JAN–DEC 2021





- Recruited five Handling Editors from the SCB network
- Tie-ups with *Conservation Biology*, *Conservation Science and Practice* and *Conservation Letters* – authors are encouraged to write a popular summary of their paper for Current Conservation in the acceptance email
- Issue 15.3: ‘African conservation today’, launched at ICCB 2021
- Issue 15.4: ‘Migration’, curated by Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao (SCB) & Kartik Shanker (CC)

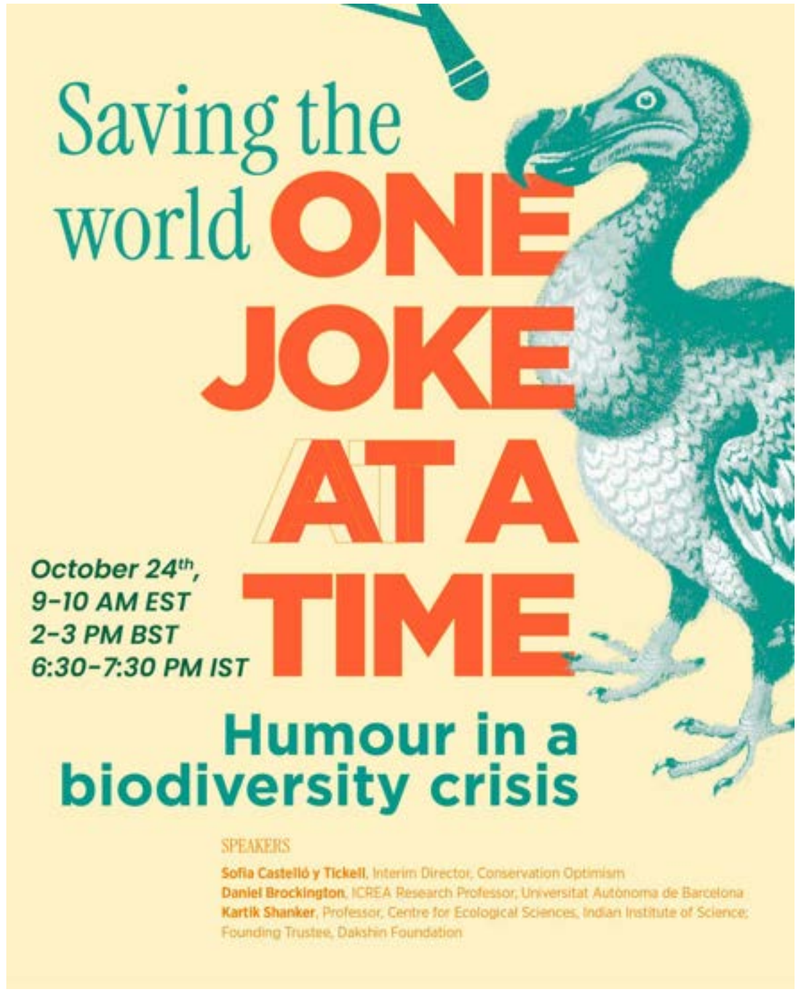
YEAR 2: JAN–DEC 2022



- Tie-up with SCB Oceania partner *Pacific Conservation Biology*, with a similar note in the acceptance email directing authors to Current Conservation
- CC Associate Editor Payal Bal became a Liaison Editor on PCB's board
- CC Associate Editor Caitlin Kight facilitated a hybrid workshop on 'Engaging audiences through magazines' in September at the David Attenborough Building in Cambridge, UK

In October 2022, Devathi Parashuram (CC) and Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao (SCB) co-hosted a webinar with retired NPR Science correspondent Christopher Joyce

YEAR 3: JAN–DEC 2023



- Free copies of *Current Conservation* were available at ICCB 2023 in Kigali, Rwanda, and the magazines were also distributed to local middle schools
- New tie-up with the journal *Biological Conservation*, facilitated by Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao
- The annual partnership event in October was a well-attended webinar on conservation humour

Current Conservation x Conservation Biology

What can we do about illegal trade within the cactus and succulent collector community?

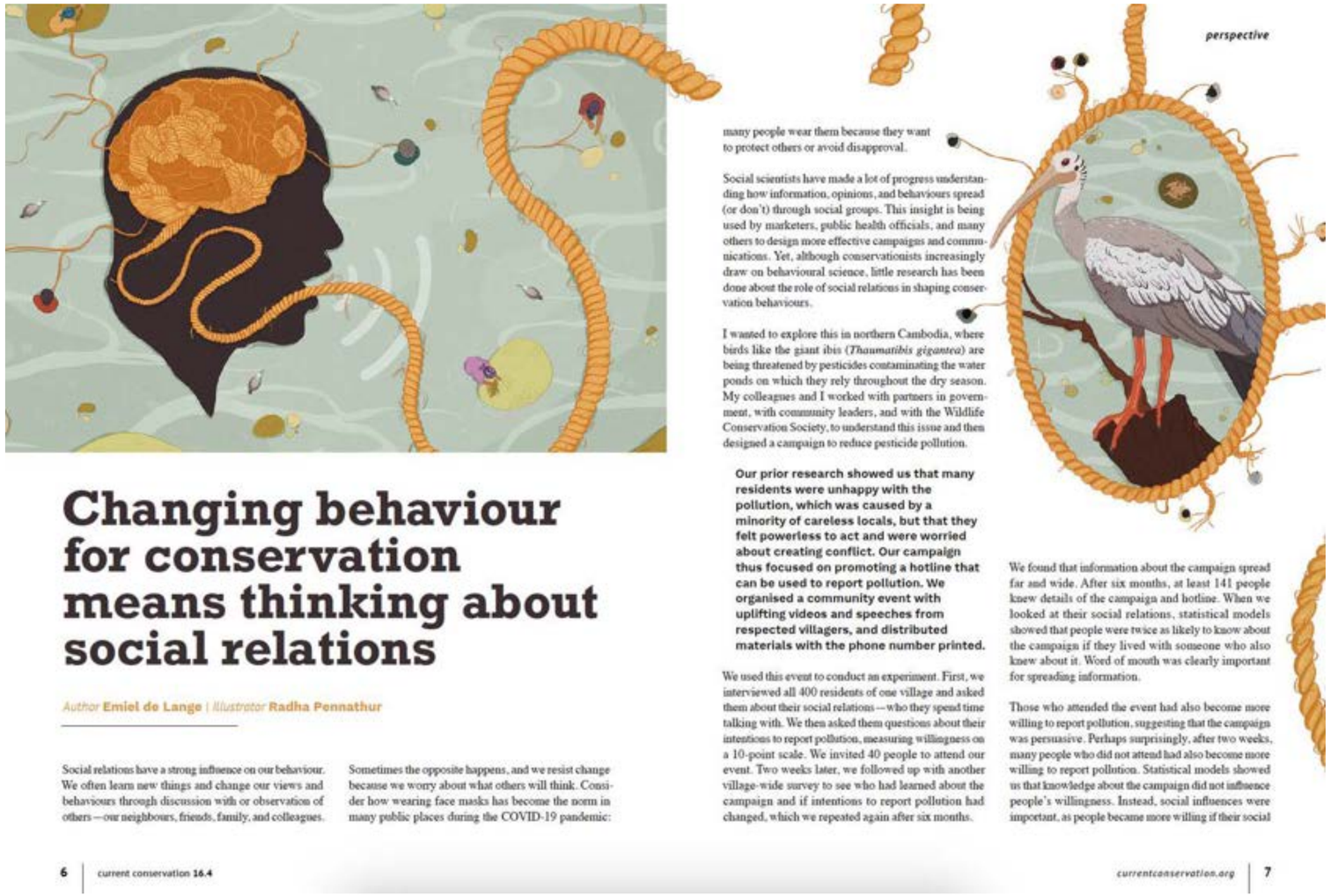
Authors **Jared Margulies & Frankie Moorman** | *Photographs* **Jared Margulies**

It seems today that cactus and succulent plants are everywhere. Yet, despite their global popularity, many succulents face pressing conservation concerns. A 2015 study published in *Nature Plants* assessed that 31 percent of all cactus species are threatened with extinction based on IUCN Red List categories, and 47 percent of all cacti are harvested for horticultural and ornamental collection, much of which is for the international illegal trade. Many conservationists reckon that obsessive collectors are driving this trade. But why would people who are seemingly most passionate about these plants, engage in activities that harm them? And, how prevalent is such illegal behaviour among cactus and succulent collectors?

Margulies, J. D. and F. R. Moorman. 2023. What can we do about illegal trade within the cactus and succulent collector community? *Current Conservation* 17(3): 26-29.

Based on:

Margulies, J. D., F. R. Moorman, B. Goettsch, J. C. Axmacher and A. Hinsley. 2023. Prevalence and perspectives of illegal trade in cacti and succulent plants in the collector community. Conservation Biology: e14030. doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13834



Changing behaviour for conservation means thinking about social relations

Author **Emiel de Lange** | *Illustrator* **Radha Pennathur**

Social relations have a strong influence on our behaviour. We often learn new things and change our views and behaviours through discussion with or observation of others—our neighbours, friends, family, and colleagues.

Sometimes the opposite happens, and we resist change because we worry about what others will think. Consider how wearing face masks has become the norm in many public places during the COVID-19 pandemic: many people wear them because they want to protect others or avoid disapproval.

Social scientists have made a lot of progress understanding how information, opinions, and behaviours spread (or don't) through social groups. This insight is being used by marketers, public health officials, and many others to design more effective campaigns and communications. Yet, although conservationists increasingly draw on behavioural science, little research has been done about the role of social relations in shaping conservation behaviours.

I wanted to explore this in northern Cambodia, where birds like the giant ibis (*Thaumatibis gigantea*) are being threatened by pesticides contaminating the water ponds on which they rely throughout the dry season. My colleagues and I worked with partners in government, with community leaders, and with the Wildlife Conservation Society, to understand this issue and then designed a campaign to reduce pesticide pollution.

Our prior research showed us that many residents were unhappy with the pollution, which was caused by a minority of careless locals, but that they felt powerless to act and were worried about creating conflict. Our campaign thus focused on promoting a hotline that can be used to report pollution. We organised a community event with uplifting videos and speeches from respected villagers, and distributed materials with the phone number printed.

We used this event to conduct an experiment. First, we interviewed all 400 residents of one village and asked them about their social relations—who they spend time talking with. We then asked them questions about their intentions to report pollution, measuring willingness on a 10-point scale. We invited 40 people to attend our event. Two weeks later, we followed up with another village-wide survey to see who had learned about the campaign and if intentions to report pollution had changed, which we repeated again after six months.

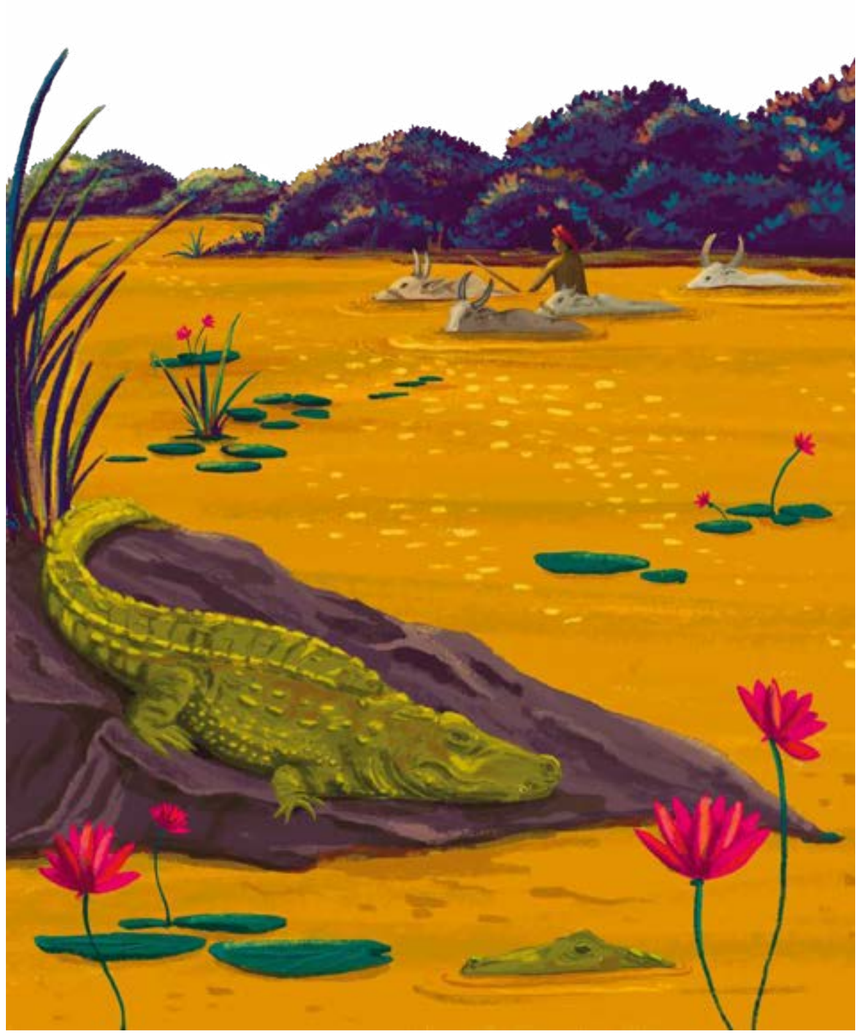
We found that information about the campaign spread far and wide. After six months, at least 141 people knew details of the campaign and hotline. When we looked at their social relations, statistical models showed that people were twice as likely to know about the campaign if they lived with someone who also knew about it. Word of mouth was clearly important for spreading information.

Those who attended the event had also become more willing to report pollution, suggesting that the campaign was persuasive. Perhaps surprisingly, after two weeks, many people who did not attend had also become more willing to report pollution. Statistical models showed us that knowledge about the campaign did not influence people's willingness. Instead, social influences were important, as people became more willing if their social

de Lange, E. 2022. Changing behaviour for conservation means thinking about social relations. *Current Conservation* 16(4): 6-9.

Based on:

de Lange, E., E. J. Milner-Gulland and A. Keane. 2021. Effects of social networks on interventions to change conservation behaviour. Conservation Biology 36(3): e13833. doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13833



Other *Conservation Biology* articles that appeared in the print magazine:

Brias-Guinart, A., K. 2022. Misy miala! A road map to malagasy public transport. *Current Conservation* 16(4): 10-15. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13893)

Munstermann, M. J. 2022. The ecological extinction of land animals. *Current Conservation* 16(4): 31-33. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13852)

Hemming, V. and A. E. Camaclang. 2022. Making better decisions to save species and ecosystems. *Current Conservation* 16(4): 34-36. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13868)

Pooley, S. 2021. Rethinking coexistence with wildlife in the wetlands of Gujarat. *Current Conservation* 15(1): 23-28. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13653)

Online-only articles on the CC website:

Fiennes, S. and D. Veríssimo. 2023. Understanding how experts classify species as extinct. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.14001)

Manlik, O. and S. J. Allen. 2022. A better way to determine sustainable limits to wildlife mortality. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13897)

Marshall, I. R. 2022. Captive breeding informed by genetics leads to long-term success in the reintroduction of a threatened Australian fish. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13889)

Schoen, J. 2022. Consensus for connectivity: Tigers in Central India. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13909)

Biber, M. 2022. How well do protected areas cover current biophysical conditions? Current Conservation. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13822)

Online-only articles on the CC website:

Rojas, I. M. 2022. Seeking refuge from the storm: A new framework to bolster conservation efforts. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13834)

Moranta, J., C. Torres, I. Murray, M. Hidalgo, H. Hilmar and A. Gouraguine. 2022. Insights for conservation through sustainable degrowth. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13821)

Kophamel, S. 2021. Protecting wildlife populations by looking at individual health. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13724)

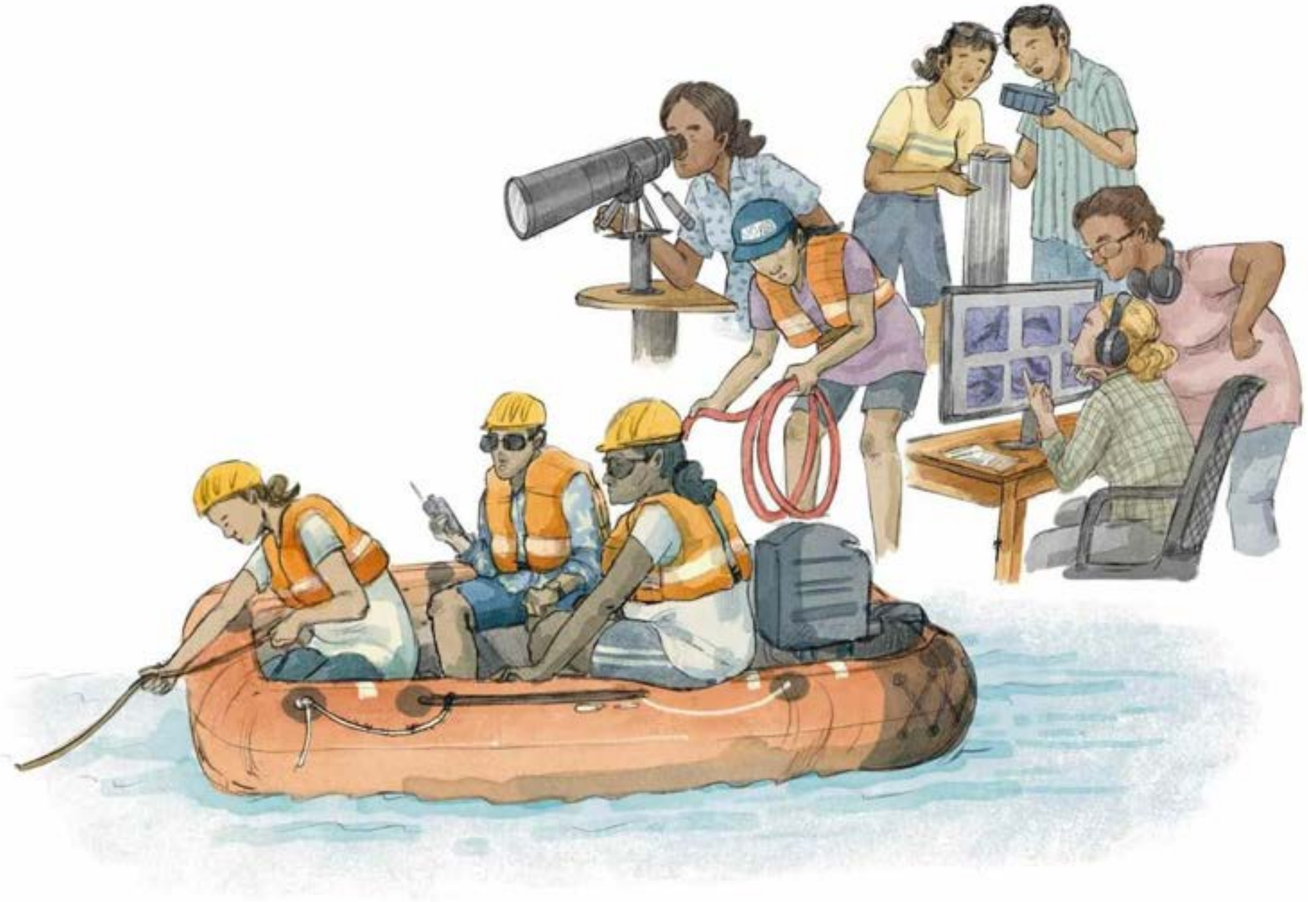
Gladstone, N. S. and N. V. Whelan. 2021. Protecting the living jewels hidden underground: conservation needs of groundwater-restricted snails. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13722)

Bartish, I.V. and Wamelink, W .G .W. 2021. Habitats with plant groups from ancient geological epochs may cease to exist due to human pressure. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13556)

Online-only articles:

Stahl, A. and J. Stahl. 2021. Mapping legal authority to build wildlife corridors along streams. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13484)

Stevenson, S. 2021. How well does global marine protection cover drivers of biodiversity loss? *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/cobi.13429)



CC x Conservation Science and Practice

interview

Wolves deserve our best science, not vilification

Authors **Peter Kareiva** & **Elishebah Tate-Pulliam** | *Illustrator* **Bhavya K. Magdziarz**

our society and for nature?

Elishebah: As a keystone species, grey wolves are critical for maintaining healthy, resilient ecosystems and preserving biodiversity. We depend on these amazing animals to serve as ecosystem guardians. For example, wolves help keep herbivore populations, like deer and elk in check. Without predators, elk and deer can become so abundant that they overgraze, which in turn exacerbates soil erosion and produces heavy loads of sediment in streams.

Peter: Elishebah is exactly right. The best documented case study comes from Yellowstone National Park, where wolves were reintroduced in 1995. The return of wolves changed elk behaviour, keeping them on the move, which in turn allowed young willow and aspen plants to survive when previously they would have been browsed by elk. The return of these plants then helped beaver populations recover, and helped reduce sediments in streams. A less commonly appreciated benefit of wolves is their prudent predation of sick and diseased animals.

For example, chronic wasting disease has been spreading among elk and deer populations in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, and wildlife biologists hypothesize that wolves could play a valuable role in removing sick and infectious animals, thereby slowing the spread of this deadly brain disease.

Q: What is wrong with current wolf management policies?

Peter: Extreme wolf hunts in states like Idaho, Montana, and Wisconsin have shocked many wildlife

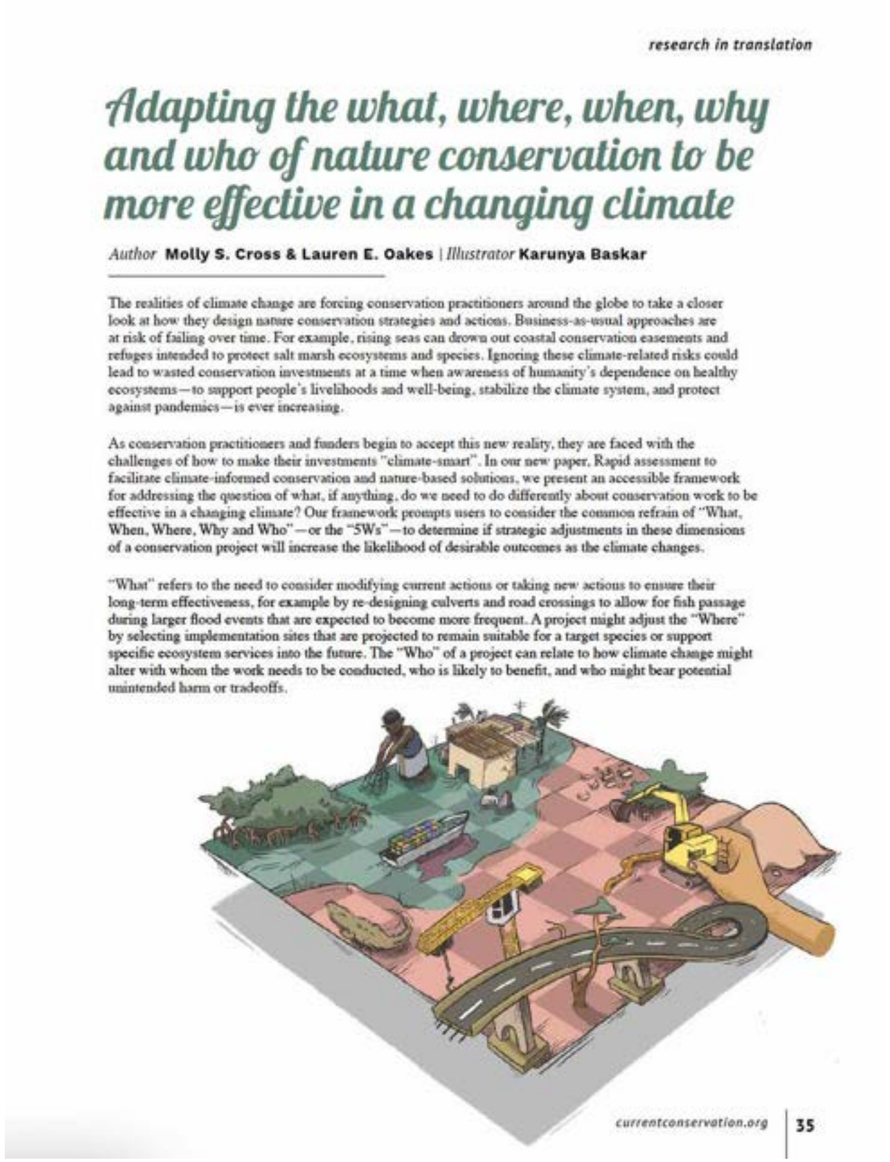
Keystone species

The concept of "keystone species" can be traced to R.T. Paine, who introduced the idea after conducting field experiments in which the removal of starfish from rocky intertidal communities in Washington State, USA, led to a transformed intertidal zone—blanketed with mussels, whereas in the presence of starfish intertidal rocks were covered with barnacles, sea palms, mussels, anemones, and other "space-holders". "Keystone" is a metaphor for a species that holds the ecosystem together, much like the keystone at the top of a stone arch. Some species are more equal than others, and keystone species are those organisms which, if deleted from an ecosystem, the ecosystem shifts to a totally different state with a cascade of impacts that dramatically alter the abundances of other species. Without its "keystone", a stone arch collapses into rubble. The elimination of these species in nature can prompt surprising and far-reaching changes or collapses in the local environment. Examples of keystone species include sea otters, elephants, sharks, certain diseases, and of course humans! Unfortunately, human activities have tended to deplete and in some cases locally extinguish keystone species throughout the world, largely because keystone species are most often predators at the top of food chains and are thus viewed by humans as dangerous or as competitors.

Kareiva, P. and E. Tate-Pulliam. 2023. Wolves deserve our best science, not vilification *Current Conservation* 17(3): 35-40.

Based on:

Kareiva, P., S. K. Attwood, K. Bean, D. Felix, M. Marvier, M. L. Miketa and E. Tate-Pulliam. 2022. A new era of wolf management demands better data and a more inclusive process. *Conservation Science and Practice*: e12821. doi.org/10.1111/csp2.12821.



research in translation

Adapting the what, where, when, why and who of nature conservation to be more effective in a changing climate

Author **Molly S. Cross & Lauren E. Oakes** | *Illustrator* **Karunya Baskar**

The realities of climate change are forcing conservation practitioners around the globe to take a closer look at how they design nature conservation strategies and actions. Business-as-usual approaches are at risk of failing over time. For example, rising seas can drown out coastal conservation easements and refuges intended to protect salt marsh ecosystems and species. Ignoring these climate-related risks could lead to wasted conservation investments at a time when awareness of humanity's dependence on healthy ecosystems—to support people's livelihoods and well-being, stabilize the climate system, and protect against pandemics—is ever increasing.

As conservation practitioners and funders begin to accept this new reality, they are faced with the challenges of how to make their investments "climate-smart". In our new paper, Rapid assessment to facilitate climate-informed conservation and nature-based solutions, we present an accessible framework for addressing the question of what, if anything, do we need to do differently about conservation work to be effective in a changing climate? Our framework prompts users to consider the common refrain of "What, When, Where, Why and Who"—or the "5Ws"—to determine if strategic adjustments in these dimensions of a conservation project will increase the likelihood of desirable outcomes as the climate changes.

"What" refers to the need to consider modifying current actions or taking new actions to ensure their long-term effectiveness, for example by re-designing culverts and road crossings to allow for fish passage during larger flood events that are expected to become more frequent. A project might adjust the "Where" by selecting implementation sites that are projected to remain suitable for a target species or support specific ecosystem services into the future. The "Who" of a project can relate to how climate change might alter with whom the work needs to be conducted, who is likely to benefit, and who might bear potential unintended harm or tradeoffs.

Cross, M. S. and L.E. Oakes. 2021. Adapting the what, where, when, why and who of nature conservation to be more effective in a changing climate. *Current Conservation* 15(3): 35-36.

Based on:

Oakes, L. E., M. S. Cross and E. Zavaleta. 2021. Rapid assessment to facilitate climate-informed conservation and nature-based solutions. *Conservation Science and Practice* 3(8): e472. doi.org/10.1111/csp2.472.

Online-only articles on the CC website:

Wheedleton, S., S. Canty and J. Deichmann. 2022. Using conservation to achieve sustainable development goals. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/csp2.12731)

Ferns, B., B. Campbell and D. Veríssimo. 2022. Enforcement: can less be more? *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/csp2.12655)

Poo, S., A. Bogisich, M. Mack, B. K. Lynn and A. Devan-Song. 2022. Can freezing frog sperm help with conservation efforts? *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/csp2.572)

Cartledge, E. 2022. Habitat suitability mapping helps to identify future dormouse reintroduction sites. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/csp2.544)

Ruppert, K., M. Dun, J. Fennessy, S. Fennessy, J. A. Glikman, D. O'Connor and D. Veríssimo. 2021. Not a cookie-cutter approach: How *the uses and trade of giraffe parts vary across Africa*. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/csp2.390)

Current Conservation
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Conservation Letters and Pacific Conservation Biology

Eurich, J. 2023. Giant clams, climate change, and the traditions of a Pacific Island nation. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1071/PC22050)

Van der Wal, J. 2022. How we can safeguard rare cases of cooperation between people and wild animals. *Current Conservation*. (Based on doi.org/10.1111/conl.12886)

Current Conservation's readership

Google Analytics		2021	2022	2023
	Readers	36.9K	46.1K	52.1K
	Page views	112K	110K	120.2K
	Top six countries	India, US, UK, Canada, Australia, South Africa	India, US, UK, Germany, Australia, South Africa	India, US, Pakistan, UK, Australia, Canada

CC was read in 183, 187 and 195 countries in 2021, 2022 and 2023, respectively, but the top six countries accounted for 75% of the readership