

HOW CAN CONSERVATION SUCCEED IN AFRICA?
THE QUESTION OF CAPACITY.

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The failure of conservation in central Africa is due primarily to human crises -- poverty, illness, war, commercial greed, political corruption, lawlessness. There is a revolution going on in equatorial Africa, and it is being perpetrated by international exploiters who are radically manipulating the social order and cultural values of the African people so as to serve their personal and corporate pursuit of power and money. Because of this global assault on African life ways and values, social change and turmoil are the rule. In this milieu the practice of conservation must become proficient at understanding the context for change and working with its problems, causes, and solutions.

THE CONTEXT FOR CHANGE IN CENTRAL AFRICA Controversy, Complexity, & Hard Realities Underlie the Rapid Spread Of Unsustainable Commercial Exploitation of Nature.

Problems	Causes	Solutions
Over Exploitation	Greed / Corruption	Transparency / Monitoring
Cultural Destruction	Lost Social Control	Community Development
Fatalism/Lawlessness	Poverty & Disease	Health & Welfare Support
Game Market Growth	Misdirected Finance	Non-game Protein Provision
Rampant Poaching	Inadequate Capacity	Build Protection Forces
Great Ape Extinction	Conservator Timidity	Empower New Leaders
Consumption of Nature	Lost Care/Reverence	Global Wildlife Mission

Our first challenge is to help people to restore and sustain their cultures, their economies, and their reverence for nature as the foundation for ensuring the viability, diversity, and synergy of life in the region, and ultimately across the planet.

There is one cause of failure that is the conservationist's responsibility -- inadequate capacity. The leaders of the conservation movement come from fields and disciplines that don't address the human causes of the wildlife crisis. This leaves us vulnerable to dangerous misunderstanding of the multifactor etiology of the crisis, and of the complex and powerful biases and motives that shape the systems and goals of the varied players in relevant social and political arenas.

Educational discipline and personal experience effect our decisions in relation to science and conservation. In the context of social systems that opportune individual achievement, a person's psychological strengths will influence her/his professional path, values, theories and behavior. Differential capacity to think, feel, act, and intuit characterize an individual's persona and delimit one's attitudes and behaviors (see writings of Carl Jung). In short, we chose our solutions in wildlife conservation to fit our own capacities and experience, and ignore problems that we have not been trained to solve.

The first step towards creation of an effective conservation movement must be to assess the baseline biases that influence perceptions and decisions of the people who are analyzing problems and constructing solutions. Gaps in outlook and capacity must then be filled in with new players from new fields and disciplines. This *Matrix of Approaches to Wildlife* constructed along Jung's psychological dimensions seems to align with the biases of professional fields of endeavor, as well as disciplines within the natural and social sciences. It demonstrates areas of strength and weakness in the conservation arena.

MATRIX OF APPROACHES TO WILDLIFE

	CONTROL				
	Extract		Steward		
EXPLOIT	<<<<<<<<<<<<<<	KNOW	>>>>>>>>>>>>		REVERE
	Domesticate		Preserve		
	COMMUNE				
Endeavors:	Business	Politics & Law	Life & Social Sciences	Arts & Humanities	Theology
Life Science:	Medicine	Agriculture	Biology & Zoology	Conservation	Ecology
Soc. Science:	Economics	Political Science	Psychology	Sociology	Anthropology

People want to know about wildlife for diverse reasons. Those who work in business, medicine, and economics are typically biased towards the exploitation of biodiversity. They see wildlife as a resource for personal and human gain. Professionals in politics and law, along with political scientists and experts in agriculture, also tend to approach wildlife from the standpoint of extraction and domestication of products for human use. Of course there are utilitarians everywhere, since sensory focus on empirical (material/visible) phenomena is crucial to human survival and to making a living. Nonetheless, it does appear that resource exploitation is the prime driving force in some arenas and not in others.

Practitioners in theology, ecology, and physical anthropology are perhaps the least likely to ask questions like “what can biodiversity do for people?” Persons in these areas are typically biased towards asserting reverence or respect for wildlife. They want to know about wildlife in order to appreciate it as an intrinsically valuable element of nature. Professionals in the arts and humanities, along with sociologists and experts in conservation, also tend to approach wildlife from the standpoint of stewardship and preservation. Still, there are naturalists everywhere, as intuitive experience of metaphysical (abstract, spiritual) phenomena is crucial to psychological well-being and to the quality of life.

As suggested in the matrix, professionals in the life and social sciences seem to take a middle ground between exploitative businessmen and reverential theologians. Biology, zoology and psychology seem similarly centrist in their respective realms. This is not to say that these disciplines are more “objective” than the others. Rather it suggests that their members are more often ambivalent or afraid to relate the subject matter of their choice to the controversial meta-issue of humankind’s involvement with wildlife, and with non-human animals in general.

To synthesize, the division of professional fields and endeavors seems to separate the active seeker of a way to *make a living* from the intuitive seeker of a *quality life*. It has been accepted in organizational psychology for decades that effective leadership must integrate these dichotomous character types and contrasting pursuits, if corporate, community, and individual goals are to be achieved. Conservation leaders, workers and programs, whether *in situ* or *ex situ*, are not exempt from this need for psychological and organizational integrity.

Conservation Psychology Drives Personal and Social Interventions

If one’s proclivity towards *Acting* or *Intuiting* defines the spread of perceptions and relationships to wildlife among diverse fields and disciplines, then the duality of *Thinking* and *Feeling* appears to effect intervention choices taken within these professional bailiwicks. Heavily rationalized persons are likely to opt to control wildlife, while more emotion directed individuals will elect to commune with it. For the conservationist driven by intellectual control needs, hands-off preservation of biodiversity seems to be preferred. On the other hand, emotionally oriented persons in conservation seeking to commune with wildlife, may select stewardship and care-taking to relate to wild flora and fauna more directly.

These distinctions are not fixed, however. Affective personalities can become reactive and take rigid irrational postures against direct involvement with wildlife, sometimes to protect themselves and the animals with which they identify from emotional or physical adversity. Conversely, intellect is ubiquitous and can produce decisions which require others to connect and commune with wildlife in ways that the policy maker would never attempt.

The policy planner in agriculture may find it easier to construct schemes for extraction of wildlife resources. Intellectual reasoning provides a sense of righteousness for those who design methods to “harvest forest protein resources to meet human population demands in a sustainable manner.” Clearly these designs would be less popular, if they were presented as plans to “shoot and kill thousands of apes, elephants, and other endangered and defenseless animals in order to feed expensive game meat to rich men and their families.” Emotionally driven agriculturists may prefer to domesticate “non-charismatic” wildlife such as grasscutters and porcupine which do not evoke so much human empathy. From the standpoint of the affective persons in agribusiness, hands-on game ranching is likely to be more satisfying than management of wildlife culling programs.

These psychological biases influence our perceptions and decisions to act on an ongoing basis. When we call together a team of professionals to analyze research findings and set science and conservation priorities, it is absolutely necessary to include a broad and balanced mix of individuals with the full panoply of values and biases. Otherwise our data base and our decision making will be skewed, incomplete, and misinterpreted. This is not an easy imperative to implement. Beyond incorporating experts from new disciplines and endeavors, it will mean assuring that all professionals are aware and forthcoming about their personal biases, so that their input can be balanced and amalgamated into a fully representative consensus. And it will require professional team process facilitation. To invent an effective conservation movement we must begin with the art and science of creative human social development.

How Can We Succeed? -- Expand & Build Professional Capacity

Professional input must be expanded according to values/biases and disciplines. First we must construct a more complete and valid *Matrix of Approaches to Wildlife*. Second we must assess the values/biases of the professionals already involved in conservation and array ourselves on the Matrix. Third, we must identify missing enterprises and disciplines, and find professionals within them who can be assessed to determine how their values/biases and competencies fit in the Matrix. Fourth, conservation leaders must recruit and contract a wide range of professionals to join their development programs in order to fill gaps in the matrix. Fifth, the full complement of professionals committed to work on the initiative must be organized and molded into collaborative interdependent teams.

The list of professional types that could be added to this effort is enormous. To fill in each cell of the *Matrix of Approaches to Wildlife* with African specialists and international counterparts will require careful analysis and recruiting. Some of the new fields that must be represented at this startup stage are:

community development, cross-cultural relations, ethics and applied theology,
entrepreneurial agribusiness, small business finance, food marketing,
environmental conflict management, military peacekeeping, law enforcement,
environmental justice systems, rural and urban ecology, media advertising
organization development, applied social psychology and social anthropology

This expansion must be completed as soon as possible. Only with comprehensive and cohesive professional involvement can we expect to create conservation programs which will be grounded in enough domains to be effective in countering the revolutionary exploitative programs that are altering the social, cultural, and ecological terrain of central Africa.

Solutions to the Wildlife Crisis

As new players join the conservation community from new fields of endeavour, an expanding matrix of solutions will be innovated to address the many elements of the crisis. All these solutions must be addressed, if the destruction and dangers of the exploitation revolution are to be reversed. There are at least ten vital elements to the wildlife crisis agenda -- all important. They are listed below in three groups. The first group includes items that are fundamental to initiating solutions. The second deals with areas that need urgent action. The third lists solutions leading to long-term sustainability.

Group 1 (Fundamental): Global Alliance for Wildlife Crisis Education and Control

A. Wildlife Alliance -- Organise social change and peacekeeping groups, select government agencies, disease control organisations, agribusiness, and financial institutions to collaborate to stop the commercial wildlife trade and its concomitant adverse effects on endangered species, local cultures, natural ecosystems, and human health. Only by making the effective treatment of this crisis a requirement for international finance and development in Africa, will the needed changes occur.

B. Wildlife Protection Endowments -- Endow and institutionalise permanent wildlife protection teams for established parks and reserves, as well as mobile units to work in resource extraction areas. These groups will use community-based preventive techniques, inform people about ecological and health risks, renew conservation values and a sense of kinship with other animals, encourage alternatives to wildlife commerce, & enforce wildlife laws through interdiction and prosecution.

C. Wildlife Education Campaign -- Conduct international campaigns to evoke public concern about the destructive effects of the wildlife crisis. Produce books and magazines as well as TV and cinema programs; organise locally developed radio and newsprint campaigns to motivate respect for and protection of endangered wildlife and to stimulate conservation development in equatorial Africa.

Group 2 (Urgent): Multidisciplinary Crisis Intervention Field Projects

A. Bushmeat Control Mobilisation -- Set up projects to recruit, train and re-employ poachers and hunters as park guards, field assistants, census takers, teachers and wildlife commerce monitors. Swift reduction of endangered ape and wildlife killing will come from *in-situ* projects that use hunters' skills and knowledge to support conservation.

B. Health Monitoring Programs -- Design and install methods to study, assess, monitor, prevent and treat interspecies viral and bacterial transmissions in territories where wildlife hunting and commerce, animal pet and orphan caretaking, and other human contact with African fauna occurs.

C. Vital Ecosystem Preservation -- Require and enable ecosystem exploiters to become conservation developers to establish bushmeat-free operations, develop effective wildlife and forest protection programmes, provide ecologically renewable products for workers and commercial consumers, and integrate disease and eco-social synergy management into their field operations.

D. Bushmeat Orphan Recovery -- Develop and implement projects to seek and safeguard "charismatic" wildlife orphans in hunting camps, homes, businesses, zoos, and sanctuaries and to employ them in health and education efforts to engender positive conservation values in local people and communities in regions where wildlife commerce is growing at highest rates.

Group 3 (Sustaining): Long-term Conservation Development Programs

A. Biosynergy Management -- Develop and install mechanisms to restore and maintain synergistic relationships between the natural ecology and human social systems in the widest possible range of primate habitat. Begin with bushmeat hotspots where human exploitation threatens life and health of key endangered species, humans, and natural ecosystems the most.

B. Bushmeat Alternatives -- Underwrite and develop alternative protein sources, non-destructive forest product businesses, ecologically sound community gardens and farms, and bushmeat-free markets and restaurants in forest, village, farm, and urban areas where domestic food and economic alternatives are needed most to counter commerce in endangered wildlife.

C. Nature / Wildlife Missions -- Establish mobile training and development projects linking government agencies, faith-based missions, and public school systems to help teachers and pastors implement “wildlife missions” that will increase awareness of the economic, ecological, spiritual, and health risks of the endangered wildlife trade, foster moral and humanistic concerns for living wildlife, and initiate community-based conservation projects.

As you read the above solutions you may recognize that some of them have been discussed and proposed by innovative conservationists in recent years. But if you reread them carefully, you will recognize that very few conservationists have experience or training to implement these vital ideas. These new approaches require a strategic paradigm shift at the highest levels of global leadership. That shift will alter the social and moral strategies and tactics of key players in conservation and development.

Strategies for Success in Conservation

To succeed in the face of today's exploitation revolution requires escalation of the conservation mission to a top global priority. Global conservation must be guided by five strategic imperatives:

- 1) social and moral leaders must promote humanity's profound obligation to conserve wildlife and wilderness and to restore nature;
- 2) political and economic authority must place conservation on par with human rights and welfare;
- 3) conservationists must go beyond protecting biodiversity to assuring the biosynergy of human social systems and natural ecology;
- 4) public demand for intrinsic and spiritual values of nature must supersede utilitarian exploitation and underwrite massive long-term programs in conservation development;
- 5) all wildlife habitats must be considered sacrosanct, and human intrusion must be managed in a moral, businesslike, and competent way for the global good.

Wildlife Conservation Can Succeed if We Expand and Unify

If we make the changes needed then conservation can succeed. But we need much that is new -- new premises and players, new organizing principles, new strategies and tactics, new values and disciplines, new goals and objectives, new levels of effectiveness. The new conservation movement's mission will be the promotion of biosynergy -- the harmony of humanity and nature. To pursue that mission, methods for achieving synergy among diverse conservationists, social change professionals, business and religious leaders, and countless other experts and stakeholders must be invented and installed. The barriers and prejudices that keep us apart and in conflict must be overcome first. Interdisciplinary battles must be stopped. Common language and ground must be created. Conservation organizations, small and large must stop competing and join forces.

We have no choice. The crisis that has engulfed equatorial Africa and all the tropical areas of the world demands that the most powerful agencies in the world innovate social and ecological change programs that will restore the synergy of humanity and nature. To respond to this call, we who wish to save endangered wildlife in these regions will need the courage and the will to collaborate with strange bedfellows in places where exploitation, migration, and conflagration are destroying people, wildlife and environment. Nothing about it will be easy. After all, we are fighting for life.

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