

Publications

Social Science Theory for Environmental Sustainability: a Practical Guide by Marc J. Stern (2018), Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK. ISBN 978-0-198793199 (pbk), GBP 34.99.

This book contributes to growing efforts to examine human behaviour in order to better address environmental issues. It covers extensive theoretical and practical ground and, in doing so, challenges the common assumption that rational arguments and incentives offer an effective means to change behaviour. The guide is highly accessible to professionals, scientists, students and citizens alike and contains a diversity of ideas to facilitate more thoughtful action. That said, access to these insights requires deep engagement, an open mind and recognition of what this book is missing—broader social science theories related to power, politics and systemic change, and attention to contradictions among theories. The book's design facilitates piecemeal engagement for the busy reader, but the danger is that people simply cherry-pick theories to solve predefined problems (e.g. to spread my idea better I will use diffusion theory). This risks further legitimizing the problematic expert role of the few to devise solutions for the many, which would ironically contradict many theories in this book! This book's real value lies in its potential to help people question their own assumptions so as to explore more collaborative ways of framing problems and solutions.

Part I provides an overview of some cognitive biases and limitations that cause people to think they are much better at predicting and explaining behaviour than they actually are. This serves as a dose of humility in preparation for Part II—The Theories—which provides a concise summary of 30 explanatory theories and practical examples of their use, across five chapters/themes. An overview table in Chapter 3 matches these theories to potential real world uses, such as communication, negotiation and governance.

Chapter 4 presents nine theories to explain how values, beliefs and norms shape people's behaviour, to inform more persuasive messages and approaches. Yet, Chapter 5 shows how simply providing people with rational reasons to change, and incentives, is unlikely to work. The theories illuminate the intuitive processes that often affirm identities and inhibit learning. This reveals potential strategies for questioning assumptions, breaking down polarized conflict and fostering mutual empathy and trust. Chapter 6 then explores theories that help navigate among diverse people and ideas to develop and pursue shared goals. This chapter makes a compelling case that

collaborative efforts are more sustainable in the long-term and thus worth the hard work of negotiation and compromise.

Chapter 7 explores theories that can help organizations pursue their goals more effectively by enhancing intrinsic motivation and team performance, and managing project risk and competing accountabilities. It is argued that leaders are most effective at inspiring action and long-term commitment when they are seen as legitimate, trustworthy and competent, and encourage open questioning. This chapter also explores approaches to organizational learning; however, mostly in pursuit of predefined goals. This is a key shortcoming of this chapter, as it fails to offer tangible strategies for learning in ways that question initial goals. Broader social science work highlights the historical failure of dominant approaches to environmental governance (e.g. David Harvey, James Scott), and demonstrates the problematic ways organizations often manage to mobilize notions of success and expertise to reinforce their legitimacy and constrain meaningful learning (e.g. Thomas Kuhn, Bram Büscher).

Chapter 8 introduces systems theories to inform adaptive social-ecological governance but this promise is not fulfilled because system is defined in narrow terms. The theories focus mainly on the local scale and seek to further strategies/impacts, regardless of what they are. Again, this disregards broader social science work that shows how solutions paradoxically spread well when they allow those in power to accumulate power, often at the expense of sustainability and equitability outcomes. The recurring emphasis on meeting the basic needs of local people to make way for moral values (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs) also shifts blame for widespread injustices towards marginalized actors and away from elite actors.

Part III offers a series of vignettes that show how people can use these theories to address problems, such as resisting development pressures, shifting to more collaborative management and reducing corporate consumption and costs. It closes with a series of key principles. I commend this part for making the diverse theories presented highly accessible and tangible. However, the examples highlighted primarily emphasize how to solve a given problem rather than question the framing of the problem. This reflects the general tendency of this book to understand people's existing values, beliefs and motivations to enact power over them. This overlooks the more complex forms of power that constructed those identities in the first place and actively hides contradictions (e.g. see

discourse, governmentality and hegemony theories). Chapters 5–7 offer the most valuable insights that, alongside broader social science theories, may help identify opportunities for more powerful systemic change. In summary, this book is a commendable effort that deserves attention but I hope that this review can guide people to extend their learning beyond it.

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Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature in Protected Areas edited by Bas Verschuuren and Steve Brown (2018) 314 pp., Routledge, Abingdon, UK. ISBN 978-1-138091191 (pbk), GBP 35.19.

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

These lines from T.S. Eliot have always resonated with me. As with all art, what we read into them is inevitably informed by our own experience and cultural influences. For me, they bring forth a powerful sense of place for the area in which I grew up and to where, after decades elsewhere, I have finally returned. The land is of outstanding natural beauty and extraordinary biodiversity; it is also a dynamic cultural landscape, maintained over the centuries for hunting, grazing, firewood, fungi and timber. In recent years it has been formally gazetted as a National Park.

The Cultural and Spiritual Significance of Nature in Protected Areas explores the nature of our connections with just these kinds of landscapes. The authors argue that cultural and spiritual bonds with nature can provide strong motivations for conservation. This is timely. Despite some progress in both policy and practice towards more people-centred, rights-based approaches, so-called fortress conservation—excluding people from protected areas on the premise that human activities are incompatible with conservation—is not yet dead. The concepts and stories in this publication also contrast with neoliberal conservation, with its focus on the marketization, privatization and commodification of nature.

Chapter 1 opens with reference to Alexander van Humboldt's 'deeply seated bond', the connection between knowledge and the arts, between science and emotion.

Such interconnectedness, including the relationships between people and their environment, is at the core of this compilation. The word culture is derived from the Latin term to tend the earth, to cultivate, to nurture. However, definitions of culture, cultural values and cultural significance vary markedly between disciplines. The editors therefore take the time to explore these terms and explain their own choices of terminology. Of particular note is the use of the word nature-culture to articulate the concept that nature and culture are mutually constituted, rather than separate or linked realms.

The book is structured in three sections. Part I focuses on philosophical foundations. Part II explores how the concepts are addressed in international conventions and associated practice. Part III comprises case studies of how the cultural and spiritual significance of nature is incorporated into protected area governance and management. The primary intended audience is conservation professionals working in protected area management and policy, with academics as a key secondary target group. Hence there is a strong emphasis on conceptual frameworks and international policy processes. This can make some material feel heavy going, particularly for those more directly engaged in conservation practice.

Readers are taken on a global journey across mountains, steppes, islands and wetlands, from Yellowstone through Batwa customary lands in Uganda and the cultural landscapes of Italy and Spain, *Fengshui* forests and spiritually governed sacred sites in China, the Pacific islands, to the homestead gardens of Australia. So what's missing? Seascapes and their cultural and spiritual significance seem to be limited to a photo of a whale in the final chapter. Geographically, I found little reference to Latin America which, given its diversity of Indigenous Peoples and more recent migrants with their often contrasting relationships with nature, seems a pity. Reading with an equity lens, I was also somewhat surprised to be left with the feeling that most analysis was largely gender blind.

To be fair, no single publication is likely to be able to cover all the bases. There is definitely something here for everyone interested in these complex, dynamic and diverse issues, including explorations of what makes a place sacred, stories of meaning, even the meaning of meaning. Spiritual governance and Indigenous nature spirituality, as well as the role of mainstream religious institutions, are also discussed.

At the heart of this book is the contributors' desire to make conservation more sustainable, equitable and effective by engaging with deeply held cultural and spiritual values to inspire action to conserve cultural, geological and biological diversity. In many places their passion for this mission shines through.

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Conservation and Development in Uganda

edited by Chris Sandbrook, Connor Joseph Cavanagh and David Mwesigye Tumusiime (2018) xix + 276 pp., Routledge, Abingdon, UK. ISBN 978-1-138710924 (hbk), GBP 80.50.

This edited volume is a fascinating, useful book as it combines a case study of conservation and development in Uganda with more theoretical and methodological perspectives. Uganda is biologically diverse and its protected areas support species such as the gorilla, chimpanzee and elephant. But at the same time its agricultural sector accounts for 25% of GDP and 70% of employment, with 75% of this production coming from small-scale or household farms. Thus, when animals such as elephants leave a park to eat a farmer's crops, there is conflict—a group of elephants can cause a great deal of damage in a short period of time. One reason this edited volume is of such interest is that Uganda has been a country where many of the different approaches to conservation and development have been tried, evaluated and contrasted, and there are many scholars who have written on conservation and development in the country. As a result, Uganda has an interesting story to tell and readers can glean many insights by reading this edited volume.

The book contains 13 chapters in five sections. The first section provides a historical perspective about the conflict between conservation and development and allows the reader to understand the context that rural people dealt with and thus why they take some of the perspectives they do. These reflections go back to 1896, during the colonial time, when the first laws relating to wildlife were passed, through the Idi Amin time with its civil war, to the present. For each time period the outcomes of the different management schemes on biodiversity and local livelihoods are presented.

The second section presents three 'celebrity sites' as case studies: Bwindi, Budongo, and Mount Elgon. These are very interesting descriptions as they provide insights into the nature of conflicts and how resolutions were attempted or achieved. It would have been nice to have chapters on some of the other important national parks, such as Kibale, Queen Elizabeth, and Murchison National Parks, as they have experienced different management approaches and resettlement programmes.

The third section takes more of a methodological perspective and examines various conservation and development tools that have been used over the years in Uganda. The first chapter of this section deals with carbon offset programmes in Uganda, which have taken on global significance. Since they were started in 1992 the efforts of the Uganda Wildlife Authority and Forests Absorbing Carbon Emissions Foundation to plant native trees have grown to the extent that Uganda's production accounts for the fourth largest market share of carbon credits globally. The next chapter deals with the tourism sector, which has also grown to be significant in Uganda, accounting for 9% (USD 2.2 billion) of the country's GDP, and that has focused on a successful gorilla ecotourism programme. The final chapter deals with the need to harmonize local cultural values with conservation and development—an issue that is often neglected and can lead to project failure.

The last section of the book deals with the interplay between the productive sectors of Uganda's economy and conservation and development, and begins with the agricultural sector, which experiences significant conflict with wildlife. The forestry sector is considered next. There has been a historically troublesome institutional arrangement leading to inefficiency in conservation and development programmes and poor management of nature reserves. There have been a number of international players over the years, including the USA, UK, Germany, and Norway, and the lack of coordination has caused disharmony. The last chapter deals with the relatively new oil industry, primarily in Murchison Falls National Park, and outlines conflicts among conservation groups, the state and the oil industry. It is estimated that Uganda has 6.5 billion barrels of oil in place and between 1.4 and 1.7 billion more barrels that could be recovered. With these sorts of reserves there are bound to be conflicts between the oil industry and conservation.

The book ends with a discussion of future research that should be a priority and future policy that would be useful to adopt. The topics in this section range from neglected communities, landscapes, and protected areas, interdisciplinarity and epistemological reflections, to hybrid knowledges and forms of science. These topics would be good for researchers, managers, and policy makers alike to evaluate in detail.

So who should read this book? Anyone who is engaged in conservation and development or interested in the varied tools this field uses will find the book to be of value. African scholars will find the book useful for understanding contemporary issues. The book would also be useful for classroom debate, as