

Special Topics: Human Dimensions of Wildlife Conservation
Anthro 300, Sec 001C/Env Stds 390, Sec 005C
Spring Semester 2009

Instructor: Dr. Stephanie Spehar
Office hours: Wed. 11:30-12:30, 3:00-4:00, or by appt.
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Class meetings: MWF 10:20-11:20

Classroom: S. Halsey 202

Course description

This course will focus on the most central issue in the conservation of wildlife and other forms of biological diversity: people. Human beings are dependent on their natural environments, but they are also the major drivers of almost all threats to biological diversity. This class will examine how this “human dimension” integrates with the conservation of wildlife. In particular, we will focus on the interaction between the human culture and the environment and how this influences the effectiveness and appropriateness of measures taken to preserve biodiversity. We will focus mainly on international conservation issues, but I will also introduce issues or case studies from the United States to provide local parallels. Throughout, this course will integrate perspectives from conservation biology, which is the scientific study of the factors that affect the maintenance and loss of biological diversity, and environmental anthropology, which examines the interaction between human beings and their natural environments.

This course will be divided into three sections: 1) What is biological diversity, and why should we care about it? 2) What are the main threats to biodiversity? and 3) What can (and should) we do to minimize or eliminate these threats?

In the first part of the course, we will carefully examine what biodiversity is, and then examine different perspectives on the value of wildlife and other forms of biodiversity and why it should be preserved. I will also provide an introduction to the study of interactions between human culture and the environment, and theoretical frameworks for how we can integrate the needs of people, society, and the natural world.

In the second part of the course, we will closely examine human-generated threats to biodiversity, in particular the two that currently have the largest impact: 1) habitat destruction, in the form of deforestation, fragmentation, and resource extraction; and 2) overexploitation, in the form of hunting and the wildlife trade. We will also touch on other issues related to biodiversity threats, such as global warming, population growth and the survival and well-being of indigenous peoples. For each threat, we will use both summaries and case studies to examine the conservation problem and how the culture and economy of people interact with these issues. Throughout we will examine how issues

like globalization and power inequities play into the destruction and conservation of biological diversity.

In the final part of the course, we will examine possible solutions to these threats. These are often dichotomized and placed into two major categories: 1) community-based approaches, such as management by local communities and ecotourism, and 2) exclusive protected areas like parks and reserves. We will closely examine hot-button issues such as the right to self-determination by local people, the effectiveness of ecotourism, and the “parks vs. people” debate. Finally, we will examine the role of global consumer culture, and our own consumer choices, in the loss of global biological diversity.

The concept of sustainability

A major, overarching theme of this course is the concept of sustainability. Sustainability can be defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” We will examine the concept of sustainability, and its applicability to biodiversity conservation, as we move through the issues presented in this class. It is my hope that by examining the sustainability of human actions and attitudes through case studies, you will gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of sustainability, and will be able to apply this concept to your own lives and your own interactions with the environment.

Required texts:

Townsend, Patricia K. 2000. *Environmental Anthropology: From Pigs to Policies*. Waveland Press.

This book is available in the bookstore.

Other readings have been selected from a variety of sources, and will be available on electronic reserve or on D2L.

Course goals

My goals regarding the subject matter of this class are threefold: 1) that students develop a deeper understanding of the complexities and challenges of biodiversity conservation, 2) that students understand how human culture and the natural environment interact, how this influences biodiversity conservation, and strategies for integrating the cultural practices and needs of people into conservation solutions; and 3) that through the examination of conservation issues on an international and local scale, students will be better able to evaluate the sustainability of their own interactions with the environment.

An equally important goal of this class is to further your liberal arts education. The essence of a liberal arts education is the production of an informed citizen who is interested in growing and learning throughout life and is adept at critical thinking. Therefore, I do not want students to take what they hear or read at face value; you will be encouraged to thoughtfully consider many perspectives and draw your own conclusions.

Course requirements

Attendance, participation, and readings

Attendance in this class is required. More than one unexcused absence will affect your participation grade!

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings for that day; all readings should be completed before class on the day they are assigned. Participation in class will be an important part of your grade. This will mainly be evaluated through your participation in regular class discussions. However, I understand that some people are more comfortable than others speaking in front of groups, and therefore your participation grade will also be evaluated through your participation in small group work and through a variety of other means (e.g., contribution of questions for class discussion or other materials or ideas that I ask you to bring to class, in-class work, and other assignments). I hope, however, that we can work together to create a class environment where everyone feels comfortable and safe participating in class discussions.

Discussion and group work are tremendously useful tools for student learning, as they allow you to explore topics in-depth, and clarify and expand upon issues raised in class. Numerous studies show that students learn much better in classes where discussion and group work are a part of the curriculum. However, in order for discussion to be productive and effective, we must create an environment that is respectful and comfortable for all participants. While disagreements and differences of opinion are expected during discussion, please try to state your opinions or objections in a way that is respectful and considerate of the feelings and sensitivities of others.

Reading responses

Reading responses are short responses (~1 page total) to questions posed about the readings for that week. These assignments are designed to ensure that students are doing the readings and thinking carefully about what they read. I require that students submit 5 out of 9 possible reading responses throughout the semester. The guiding questions for these reading responses will be posted on D2L by the Friday before the reading response is due. ***Make sure you bring your completed readings response to class on the day it is listed on the syllabus.***

Papers

In lieu of exams, I will require you to complete 2 “summary papers” examining issues covered in class throughout the semester. For these papers, which should be 4-5 pages in length, you will be required to address a set of questions or issues; you are expected to demonstrate your knowledge of information presented in class readings, lectures, and discussions and your ability to integrate diverse concepts and information related to the human dimensions of wildlife conservation. Information about these papers will be distributed and discussed when appropriate.

Research project

Each student will be required to write an 8-10 page research paper on an issue related to biodiversity conservation. I will not be assigning topics; you should choose a topic that

interests you. Each student will also be required to complete a poster based on their research project, which will be displayed as part of UW Oshkosh's Earth Week from April 20-24. Additionally, students will also give a 10 minute presentation based on their research paper at the end of the semester. Details will be discussed during the semester.

Your research project must be based on sources other than the primary readings used in class. You must have at least 10 outside sources in your bibliography for your research project; your bibliography will be assessed as part of your grade for your term project. Of these sources, only one may be a website (which must be verified by me before it can be used); the other nine must be *scholarly sources*. A *scholarly source* is a published work that has been subject to peer review, e.g., a book, a chapter in an edited volume, or a journal article (this can include journal articles found online). We will spend some time discussing the nature of scholarly sources and how to find good sources in class.

Grading

Attendance and participation:	15%
Reading responses (5):	15%
Summary papers (2):	40%
Term project:	30%
(includes term paper, poster, presentation, and bibliography)	

Semester grades will be based on the UWO grade scale:

A = 93% through 100% of highest score	C = 73% through 77% of the highest score
AB = 88% through 92% of highest score	CD = 68% through 72% of the highest score
B = 83% through 87% of highest score	D = 60% through 67% of the highest score
BC = 78% through 82% of highest score	F = 0% through 59% of the highest score

Changes to the syllabus and course schedule

I will do my very best to adhere to the syllabus and course schedule; however, I reserve the right to change topic, dates, readings, etc. due to unforeseen circumstances! You will always be notified of these changes in class, and changes will also be posted on D2L.

You are responsible for any changes to the syllabus or course schedule that are announced in class and are posted on D2L.

Course schedule

NOTE: PT= Patricia Townsend, *Environmental Anthropology: From Pigs to Policies*;
RR=Reading response

CHANGES SOMETIMES OCCUR IN SCHEDULED LECTURE TOPICS, READINGS, ETC. I RECOMMEND THAT YOU REGULARLY CHECK THIS COURSE SCHEDULE ON D2L, RATHER THAN RELYING ON A PRINTED SYLLABUS.

Part 1: What is biodiversity, and why should we care about it? What is the human dimension?

Week 1: What is biodiversity?

Monday 2/2: Introduction to the course

Wednesday 2/4: What is biodiversity? What is the biodiversity crisis?

Readings:

- Wilson, E.O. (2002) To the ends of the Earth. In: *The Future of Life*. Vintage: New York. (carefully)
- Wilson, E.O. (1988). The current state of biological diversity. In: *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (skim)
- Myers, N. et al. (2000). Biodiversity hotspots for conservation priorities. *Nature* 403:853-858. (carefully)

Optional:

- Orians, G.H. (1997). Global Biodiversity: Patterns and Processes. In: *Principles of Conservation Biology, 2nd Ed.* Sinauer: New York.

Friday 2/6: Biodiversity case study: Tropical forests

Film: *Planet Earth: Jungles*

Readings:

- Myers, N. (1988) Tropical forests and their species: Going, going.... In: *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (carefully)
- Guiding questions for *Planet Earth: Jungles* ***bring to class***

Week 2: What is the value of biodiversity? Why should we care?

Monday 2/9: Putting a value on biodiversity: Goods, services, and economic arguments

Readings:

- Meffe et al. (1997). Conservation values and ethics, pp. 29-32. In: *Principles of Conservation Biology, 2nd Ed.* Sinauer: Mass.
- Wilson, E.O. (2002). How much is the biosphere worth? In: *The Future of Life*. Vintage: New York. (carefully)
- Balmford, A. et al. (2002). Economic reasons for saving wild nature. *Science* 297: 950-953. (carefully)

Optional:

- PT, Chp. 10 (carefully)
- Costanza et al. (1997). The value of the world's ecosystem services and natural capital. *Nature* 387: 253-260.

Wednesday 2/11: Putting a value on biodiversity: Intrinsic and ecological value

Readings:

- Ehrenfeld, D. (1988). Why put a value on biodiversity? In *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (carefully)
- Meffe et al. (1997). Conservation values and ethics: Biocentrism and Ecocentrism, pp. 44-52. In: *Principles of Conservation Biology*, 2nd Ed. Sinaur: Mass. (you do not need to read boxed essays) (carefully)
- McCauley, D. (2006). Selling out on nature. *Nature*. (skim; a more recent argument similar to Ehrenfeld's, above) Ehrenfeld, D. (1988). Why put a value on biodiversity? In *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (carefully)

Optional:

- Responses to McCauley. (2006). *Nature*.

Friday 2/13: Putting a value on biodiversity: Biophilia, aesthetics, and religion

Readings:

- * Wilson, E.O. (2002). For the love of life. In: *The Future of Life*. Vintage: New York. (carefully)
- Bratton, S.P. (1997). Monks, temples, and trees. In: *Principles of Conservation Biology*, 2nd Ed. Sinaur: Mass. (carefully)
- McClure, M. (1988). A mammal gallery: five word pictures and three poems. In: *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (carefully)

Optional:

- Meffe et al. (1997). Conservation values and ethics: Judeo-Christian & Non-Western views pp. 40-44. In: *Principles of Conservation Biology*, 2nd Ed. Sinaur: Mass.
- Cobb, J. (1988). A Christian view of biodiversity. In *Biodiversity*. National Academy Press: New York. (carefully)

Due: RR1

Week 3: The human dimension: human interactions with the natural world

Monday 2/16: Prehistoric and historical perspectives on human interactions with the environment

- PT, Chp 1 and Chp 2 pp 10-11 (carefully)
- Weisman, A. (2007). The Lost Menagerie. In: *The World Without Us*. St. Martin's Press: New York. (carefully)
- McNeill, J.R. (2000). Prologue: Peculiarities of a Prodigal Century. In: *Something New Under the Sun: An Environmental History of the Twentieth-Century World*. W.W. Norton: New York. (skim)

Wednesday 2/18: Living people and the environment: Environmental anthropology

Readings:

- PT, Chp 2-Chp 4 (carefully)
- Kottak, C.P. (1999). The new ecological anthropology. *American Anthropologist* 101: 23-55 (skim)

Friday 2/20: Sustainability: A possibility for reconciling humanity, nature, and culture?

Readings:

- Fricker, A. (1998). Measuring up to sustainability. *Futures* 30. (carefully)
- Examine the original statement on the concept of sustainable development in the Bruntland Report: <http://www.un-documents.net/ocf-02.htm#I>

Due: RR2

Part 2: Humans and the major threats to biodiversity

Week 4: Introduction to Threats

Monday 2/23: Film: *The 11th Hour*

Readings:

- Guiding questions ***bring to class***

Wednesday 2/25: HIPPO: An introduction to the major threats to biodiversity

Readings:

- Wilson, E.O. (2002). Nature's last stand. In: *The Future of Life*. Vintage: New York. (carefully)
- Jenkins, M. (2003). Prospects for biodiversity. *Science* 302: 1175-1177. (carefully)

Due: RR3

Friday 2/27: Introduction to habitat destruction and fragmentation

Readings:

- Moulton, M.P. & Sanderson, J. (1999). Evil quartet 2: Habitat fragmentation and destruction. In *Wildlife Issues in a Changing World*. Lewis Publishers: New York. (carefully)
- Laurance, W.F. (1999). Reflections on the tropical deforestation crisis. *Biological Conservation* 91:109-117. (carefully)
- Sponsel, L. et al. (1996). Anthropological perspectives on the causes, consequences, and solutions of deforestation. In *Tropical Deforestation: The Human Dimension*. Columbia University Press: New York. (skim)

Week 5: Deforestation

Monday 3/2: Agriculture and grazing

Case study: Latin America

- Stonich, S.C. and DeWalt, B.R. (1996). The Political Ecology of Deforestation in Honduras. In *Tropical Deforestation: The Human Dimension*. Columbia University Press. (carefully)

Wednesday 3/4: Logging

Case study: Indonesia

Readings:

- Curran, L.M. et al. (2004). Lowland forest loss in protected areas of Indonesian Borneo. *Science* 303:1000-1003 (carefully)
- Stokstad, E. (2008) A Second Chance for Rainforest Biodiversity. *Science*. (carefully)
- Bennett, E.L. (2000). Timber certification: where is the voice of the biologist? *Conservation Biology* 14:921-933 (carefully)

Optional:

- Putz et al. (2001). Tropical forest management and conservation of biodiversity: an overview. *Conservation Biology* 15:7-20. (skim)

Due: RR4

Friday 3/6: Research project day

- Expectations for research project
- How to find sources, cite sources, and write a research paper

DUE: Research project topic

Week 6: Overexploitation

Monday 3/9: Hunting

Readings:

- Bennett, E.L. & Robinson, J.G. (2000). Hunting for the Snark. In: *Hunting for Sustainability in Tropical Forests*. Columbia University Press: New York. (carefully)
- Milner-Gulland, E.J. & Bennett, E.L. (2003). Wild meat: the bigger picture. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 18: 351-357 (carefully)

Wednesday 3/11: Subsistence hunting

Case study: The Amazon

Readings:

- Stearman, A. (2000). A pound of flesh: social change and modernization as factors in hunting sustainability among neotropical indigenous societies. In: *Hunting for Sustainability in Tropical Forests*. Columbia University Press: New York. (carefully)
- Townsend, W. (2000). The sustainability of subsistence hunting by the Siriono Indians of Bolivia. In: *Hunting for Sustainability in Tropical Forests*. Columbia University Press: New York. (skim)

Friday 3/13: Commercial hunting and the bushmeat crisis

Readings:

- McRae, M. (1997). Road Kill in Cameroon. *Natural History*. (carefully)
- Eves, H. & Ruggiero, R. 2000. Socioeconomics and sustainability of hunting in the forests of Northern Congo (Brazzaville). In: *Hunting for Sustainability in Tropical Forests*. Columbia University Press: New York. (carefully)

Due: RR5

Week 7: Overexploitation & Global Warming

Monday 3/16: Can hunting be sustainable?

Readings:

- Bodmer, R. & Puertas, P. (2000). Community-based comanagement of wildlife in the Peruvian Amazon. In *Hunting for Sustainability in Tropical Forests*. Columbia University Press: New York (carefully)
- Bennett, E. et al. (2006). Hunting for Consensus: Reconciling Bushmeat Harvest, Conservation, and Development Policy in West and Central Africa. *Conservation Biology*. (carefully)

Wednesday 3/18: The wildlife trade

Readings:

- Webster, D. (1997). The looting and smuggling and fencing and hoarding of impossibly precious, feathered and scaly wild things. *The New York Times Magazine*, February 16, 1997. (carefully)
- Nowell & Ling (2007). *Taming the tiger trade*. TRAFFIC East Asia. (skim)
- Read about the mission of TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network: <http://www.traffic.org/trade/>, and find information on the wildlife trade in at least one other Asian species (besides tigers) on this website

Friday 3/20: Global warming

Readings:

- TBA

Due: Paper #1

Week 8 (3/23-3/27): Spring break

Week 9: Indigenous groups, population pressure, and a history of conservation solutions

Monday 3/30: Impacts on Indigenous Communities

Case study: Resource extraction in the developing world

Readings:

- PT, Chp 7 (carefully)
- Excerpts from Kane, J. (1996). *Savages*. Vintage: New York.

- Excerpts from Sawyer, S. (2004). *Crude Chronicles: Indigenous Politics, Multinational Oil, and Neoliberalism in Ecuador*. Duke University Press.

Wednesday 4/1: Population: The root of the problem?

Readings:

- PT, Chp 9 (carefully)
- Wilson, E.O. (2002). The bottleneck. In *The Future of Life*. Vintage: New York. (carefully)
- Cincotta et al. (2000). Human population in the biodiversity hotspots. *Nature* 404:990-992. (carefully)

Due: RR6

Friday 4/3: A history of conservation strategies: biological diversity vs. human rights?

Readings:

- Wilshusen et al. (2002). Contested nature: Conservation and development at the turn of the 21st century. In: *Contested Nature: Promoting International Biodiversity with Social Justice in the 21st Century*. SUNY: New York. (carefully)

Due: preliminary bibliography for research project

Week 10: Community-based conservation

Monday 4/6: Community conservation: Social capital and social justice

Readings:

- Pretty, J. (2002). People, livelihood, and collective action in biodiversity management. In: *Biodiversity, Sustainability and Human Communities*. Cambridge University Press: New York. (carefully)
- Fortwangler, C. (2002). The Winding Road: Incorporation of social justice and human rights into protected area policies. In *Contested Nature: Promoting International Biodiversity with Social Justice in the 21st Century*. SUNY: New York. (skim)

Wednesday 4/8: Case study: CAMPFIRE in Zimbabwe

- Murphee, M.W. (2005). Congruent objectives, competing interests, and strategic compromise: Concept and process in the evolution of Zimbabwe's CAMPFIRE, 1984-1996. In: *Communities and Conservation*. Atlamira: New York. (carefully)
- Neumann, R.P. (2005). Model, panacea, or exception? Contextualizing campfire and related programs in Africa. In: *Communities and Conservation*. Atlamira: New York. (carefully)

Friday 4/10: Challenges of community-based conservation

Readings:

- McCabe, J.T. (2002). Giving conservation a human face? In: *Conservation and Mobile Indigenous Peoples: Displacement, forced settlement, and sustainable development*. (carefully)

Due: RR7

Week 11: Ecotourism: a possible solution?

Monday 4/13: Ecotourism

Readings:

- Honey, M. (1999). Ecotourism Today. In *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?* Island Press. (carefully)
- Weaver, D. (2001). Environmental, Economic, and Socio-cultural Impacts. In *Ecotourism*. Wiley. (carefully)

Wednesday 4/15: Social and environmental impacts of ecotourism

Case study: Tanzania

Readings:

- Honey, M. 1999. Tanzania: Whose Eden Is It? In *Ecotourism and Sustainable Development: Who Owns Paradise?* Island Press. (carefully)

Due: RR8

Friday 4/17: Free day to work on posters for Earth Week

Week 12: The other side of the coin: Protectionist arguments

Monday 4/20: Criticisms of community-based conservation and sustainable development

- Oates, J.F. (1999). Conservation falls in love with economic development & People first: The Cross River National Park. In: *Myth and Reality in the Rain Forest: How Conservation Strategies are Failing in West Africa*. University of California Press. (carefully)

Wednesday 4/22: The protectionist argument: the case for parks

- van Schaik et al. (1997). The silent crisis: The state of rain forest nature preserves. In: *Last Stand: Protected Areas and the Defense of Tropical Biodiversity*. Oxford: New York. (skim)
- Terborgh, J. (1999). Parks: The last bastions of nature, Paradise Fading, and The Danger Within. In: *Requiem for Nature*. Shearwater: Washington, D.C. (carefully)

Due: RR9

Friday 4/24: Case study: Nicaragua

Guest speaker: Dr. Sarah Otterstrom of Paso Pacífico, an NGO dedicated to conserving wildlife by working with local communities in Nicaragua

Week 13: Moving forward: Conservation solutions and the role of the global consumer

Monday 4/27: Culmination: Can we reach consensus?

Readings:

- Wilshusen et al. (2002). Reinventing a Square Wheel: Critique of a Resurgent “Protection Paradigm” in International Biodiversity Conservation. *Society and Natural Resources*, 15:17-40. (carefully)
- Redford, K. et al. (1998). Holding Ground. In *Parks in Peril: People, Politics, and Protected Areas*. (carefully)

Wednesday 2/29: Our role as individuals: Consumer societies and globalization

Case study: Indonesia

Readings:

- PT, Chp. 12 (carefully)
- Wilk, R.R. (2006). The ecology of global consumer culture. In *The Environment in Anthropology*. New York University Press. (carefully)

Friday 5/1: Reflections on our role in biodiversity conservation

Week 14: Student presentations

Monday 5/4: Student presentations

Wednesday 5/6: Student presentations

Friday 5/8: Student presentations

Week 15: Student presentations

Monday 5/11: Student presentations

Wednesday 5/13: Student presentations

Friday 5/15: Final reflections

Due: Final projects and Paper #2