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Nature Unbound

A good place to begin a study of wildlife and landscape conservation is to look at trends in the growth of protected areas in the last few years. Protected areas are all the national parks, game reserves, national monuments, forest reserves and the myriad other places and spaces for which states provide special protection from human interference. There is a curious pattern in their recent history, which we have shown in Figure 1.1. The period of most dramatic growth was between 1985 and 1995. While these data have to be treated with caution, the pattern is striking and its timing odd.[1] For that time was also the period when neoliberal economic policies were dominant globally (Peet and Watts, 1996). Neoliberalism is based on the ideas of reducing the power, reach and interference of government (expressed in the catchphrase 'small government') and giving industry greater freedom and less red tape. Neoliberal policies were favoured by the powerful financial institutions, particularly the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, with tremendous influence over the details of many governments' policies through the implementation of economic liberalization in the form of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) (Clapham, 1996; Harrison, 2004, 2005). Yet it was precisely when pressures to reduce government were greatest that the extent of state control and restriction on land and natural resource use increased more dramatically than any other period.

Could there be a mechanism behind the pattern, or is it mere coincidence? Could there be anything about the nature of modern capitalism that seems to favour the establishment of protected areas? One explanation is that conservationists have collectively responded to the threats and damage of contemporary capitalism by securing lands from development. In the face of increased development pressures they have risen to the challenge, identifying the places that need protection, fighting and winning the political battles required for governments to support their plans. They have created international conventions to further their cause, strengthened conservation and wildlife departments in numerous countries to fight for nature, as well as nurturing and training state actors throughout the world to champion conservation causes in their respective countries (Frank et al, 2000).

There is some truth to this idea, many protected areas were set up explicitly to limit development and had significant success in doing so. Fights to save places such as Jervis Bay near Sydney in Australia, and the West Coast Forests in South Island, New Zealand, resulted in new, or stronger, protected areas. Moreover these fights have been defining moments in the history of environmentalism. The

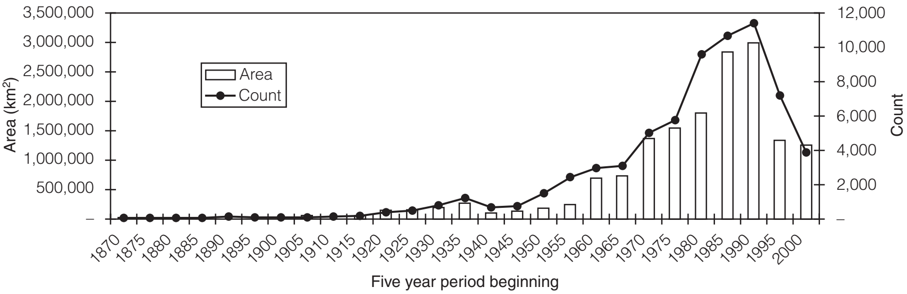

Figure 1.1 *The global growth of protected areas*

Source: The World Database of Protected Areas (2005)

successful campaigns to prevent the construction of the Franklin Dam in Tasmania, and the dams proposed in the Dinosaur National Monument in the US, strengthened and invigorated the movement internationally. Conversely, in India for example, extractive and timber corporations find that protected areas limit their operations and have actively campaigned for their denotification (Saberwal et al, 2001).

Many contemporary battles are also fought on these lines, while expanding to include the question of indigenous land rights. For example current disputes about oil exploration in Alaska and its impact on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR) represent a complex mix of national security, indigenous rights, notions of wilderness and global energy supply (Lovecraft, 2007). The ANWR was established in 1960 to conserve wildlife populations in their natural habitats.[2] Supporters of opening ANWR for oil exploration have claimed that it could reduce dependence on oil supplies from the Middle East and that current oil installations in ANWR have been designed and sited to take account of wildlife populations. Critics are adamant that the area should remain as a 'pristine wilderness', while other interest groups have lobbied for the rights of indigenous groups to maintain their access to fishing grounds.[3] The creation of the Kuna Yala Reserve in Panama united conservationists and indigenous peoples in the protection of indigenous homelands from the environmentally destructive spread of homesteaders and cattle ranchers (Chapin, 2000). Alliances between the Kayapo Indians and international conservationists, beginning in the 1980s and championed by the rock star Sting, have thus far protected Brazil's Xingu National Park from flooding by proposed hydroelectric dams along the Xingu River (Turner, 1993; Nugent, 1994).

But the problem with trying to interpret the spread of conservation in terms of successfully fighting and resisting capitalist development is that it suggests a confrontational stance to capitalism in the conservation movement. Dramatic confrontation against construction projects remains the leitmotif of groups like

Greenpeace. But, in the main, conservation is more conciliatory and accommodating of the needs of capitalism than it once was (Daily and Walker, 2000). Fights to save places have given way to complicated geographic information system (GIS) software models, which distribute protected areas optimally across the landscape according to such priorities as rarity and vulnerability while minimizing cost. The more sophisticated GIS models specifically include human economic and social needs to reduce the potential for dispute (Sarkar et al, 2006; Wilson et al, 2006, 2007). Many conservationists now work to a simple pragmatic mandate: cooperating with the powers that be in order to protect nature. From this perspective, the growth of protected areas under neoliberal regimes is a testimony to their success in working with the system, speaking comfortable truths to power.

But this again is only part of the story. For it suggests a distance between the values and practices of biodiversity conservation and those of neoliberal capitalism. According to this explanation, conservationists compromise with the demands of capitalism, with humanity's hunger for resources and industries' demand for profit, because they have to. But their own values and priorities remain distinct from these dominant forces and values. We do not believe that this is accurate. It is more appropriate to recognize that capitalist policies and values, and often neoliberal policies and values, pervade conservation practice; indeed in some parts of the world they infest it.

If that seems far-fetched, consider the current situation in Laos where the World Bank is currently supporting a US$50 billion dollar project to build a series of dams on the Mekong River. The dams will eventually supply energy to Laos and its neighbours, most notably Thailand, stimulating and sustaining economic growth for years to come. But they come at a huge ecological cost. Thousands of square kilometres of lowland tropical rainforest will be lost, and are indeed now being logged by the Laos military to ensure that as much valuable timber as possible is extracted before the waters rise. But this project has the support of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF, which was one of the organizations that was instrumental in protests against the Xingu Dams in the 1980s). These organizations are able to support the dams in Laos because the project also involves setting up new protected areas in the highlands, safeguarding both the watersheds and the valuable biodiversity therein. Ironically, amidst all the destruction, this is a project that will vastly increase Laos' protected area network, for it had hardly any prior to this project (Goldman, 2001b).

Situations like the one in Laos are not new. In the 1970s and 1980s the donor-backed Acclerated Mahweli Development Project in Sri Lanka partitioned the landscape into dams, irrigation fields and national parks and moved people around accordingly (Levy, 1989; Stegeborn, 1996; Gamburd, 2000). More recently two new national parks (Campo Maun and Mban et Djerem) have been set up in Cameroon in mitigation for the damage caused by the new

Chad–Cameroon oil pipeline, again funded by the World Bank. It is increasingly expected that large projects that damage the environment in some way should provide some sort of compensation. And where they destroy habitat it is only logical that they should protect another place to make good the wrong done. And it is only logical that the developers should seek the advice of conservation experts in the IUCN or WWF to help them to do this properly. Nevertheless the end result is that conservation and capitalism are allying mutually to reshape the world.

It is even possible for mining to increase the amount of space that conservationists find available to conserve. In many parts of the world mining companies are given concessions by governments – large plots of land that they need to drill for oil or mine for ore or gems. The space required for their operations can often be only a small part of the concession. But the remaining land is restricted to local hunters and farmers and can contain untouched vegetation and wildlife (e.g. Laurance et al, 2006). There are also cases of more fundamental alliances forming in which conservation interests and mining interests are (apparently) united to bring profound change to landscapes and livelihoods. Consider the development of the ilmenite (titanium dioxide) mine in the Fort Dauphin area of Madagascar by Qit Minerals Madagascar (80 per cent owned by Rio Tinto and 20 per cent owned by the Government of Madagascar). Rio Tinto claims that the project will provide the catalyst for 'broader economic development in the country while providing conservation opportunities' and it will provide 'net positive benefits, to biodiversity conservation.[4] The company has set aside zones in the mining project for conservation, which will form part of the national system of protected areas in Madagascar. It also set up an ecotourism project, which has been running since 2000, to allow local communities to benefit from the conservation initiatives established by Rio Tinto.[5]

The titanium mine is a perfect example of the global networks that allow the objectives of conservation and capitalism to go hand in hand. Qit Minerals Madagascar has been working with a range of environmental organizations since 1996 to develop social and environmental projects to mitigate the impact of the mine, including the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew, Missouri Botanical Gardens, Earthwatch and the Smithsonian Institute.[6] Indeed, other global conservation organizations operating in Madagascar have taken the decision that they need to work with Qit Minerals Madagascar to gain concessions to conservation and speak in terms that the Malagasy government and mining companies will understand. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Conservation International have argued that the areas set aside for conservation will be more lucrative in the long term through the development of ecotourism (Duffy, 2008b).

On the other hand, the mine has been severely criticized by Friends of the Earth who argue that the project was threatening unique forest resources and leaving local people struggling to survive in the area affected by the mine. Other researchers note that the case for the mine's proposed protected areas was based in part on the belief that forests needed protection from local people who were cutting down too many trees. However, satellite data analysis of these forests suggests that this may be a simplistic rendering of environmental change (Ingram, 2004; Ingram et al, 2005). Local communities have complained that the compensation payments are not sufficient since land prices have risen in that area and promises of employment have not materialized.[7]

These cases are stark examples of conservation and capitalism re-categorizing the landscape together. In many other cases the links and continuities between the two are more subtle – and also more pervasive. They are about changing attitudes to wildlife and landscapes, about introducing markets and commodifying nature, about adapting tourists' expectations, and tourists' hosts, and about modifying the societies and communities that live close to valuable nature, about the role models and inspirations that make us conservationists in the first place.

Sklair (2001) has examined the convergence of environmentalism and capitalism in his analysis of the 'transnational capitalist class'. According to Sklair, this class is composed of corporate executives, bureaucrats and politicians, professionals, merchants and the media who collectively act to promote global economic growth based on the 'cultural-ideology of consumerism'. He argues that this class is effectively in charge of globalization but also has to resolve crises that arise from its global growth strategy. With respect to environmental problems, he argues, following Gramsci, that corporations and what we call 'mainstream conservation' have colluded to form a 'sustainable development historical bloc' (Sklair, 2001, p8). The historical bloc offers solutions to the environmental crises that are inherent to global consumer capitalism, while all the time maintaining and strengthening an accompanying 'consumerist ideology'. Indeed, increased consumption becomes central to the solutions (p216). In this book we extend this perspective to argue that the global proliferation of protected areas and related conservation strategies reflect the emergence of this historical bloc. We argue that although these strategies may limit the growth of industry in some contexts, they simultaneously offer solutions to crises of the global growth strategy that makes the spread of industrial enterprise possible in the first place. Protected areas create new types of value that are essential to the global consumer economy.

In sum, conservation is not merely about resisting capitalism, or about reaching necessary compromises with it. Conservation and capitalism are shaping nature and society, and often in partnership. In the name of conservation, rural communities will reorganize themselves, and change their use and management of wildlife and landscapes. They ally with safari hunters and tourist companies to sell the experience of new tourist products on the international market. In the name of conservation, mining companies, governments, international financial institutions and some conservation organizations work together to achieve common goals that suit the interests of conservation and capitalism. This set of relationships can be counter-intuitive, yet it is clear that they are forming powerful alliances, and can overcome local objections and protest.

As these types of interventions spread and become more sophisticated, it becomes increasingly difficult to determine if we are describing conservation with capitalism as its instrument or capitalism with conservation as its instrument. The lines between conservation and capitalism blur. While it is debatable whether this alliance of conservation and capitalism is capable of saving the world, there is no doubt that it is most capable of remaking and recreating it. One of the central premises of this book, therefore, is that dealing with the types of problems conservationists face will become easier if we recognize the dynamics of capitalism of which they are part. Similarly, understanding the problems conservation causes, how protected areas distribute fortune and misfortune, requires an analysis of the bigger picture of how they are incorporated into the broader economy.

In this book we will be describing, analysing and documenting these changes. We will be considering who wins and who loses from these processes, and what their consequences are for conservationists' own goals. The book is based on two questions, and structured by two tasks. The questions are:

1 In what ways do conservation policies and conservation interventions make wild nature more valuable to capitalist economies?
2 With what consequences is this value realized?

The tasks are first, to examine existing knowledge that social scientists have been creating in recent years about conservation policy and practice. A great deal has been written, and an overview is important. Our substantive chapters address the role of conservation NGOs and the international apparatus of conservation, indigenous people and local knowledge, fortress conservation, community conservation, ecotourism, and market-based conservation. We examine the different debates in each, summarizing existing knowledge and outlining unanswered questions. Second, at the end of the book, we integrate these into a broader argument, exploring the connections between these disparate processes, their contradictions and their future implications.

Conservation and conservation strategies

Can we talk about *all* forms of conservation thus, and *all* conservation strategies? The movement is diverse and referring to 'conservationists' or 'the conservation community' implies a unity of thought, values and practice that is simply not found. Conservation is an incredibly broad church and one that is riven with conflict. Within journals and meetings and in individual campaigns there are sharp disagreements about ethics, morals, practices and compromises.

There are conservationists who find solace in wild places without human presence, and those who love peopled landscapes. There are conservationists for whom landscape is irrelevant and only species matter, and conservationists whose concern is strictly their love of particular places and for whom global considerations are not particularly relevant. There are ardent conservationists whose experience of conservation needs and conserved places is virtual and vicarious, enjoyed through books, films, the internet and the celebrities who endorse them, there are those who live for their fieldwork, those who protest and campaign, those who educate and those who push policy. There are conservation bureaucrats who sacrifice family and field time to trawl a circuit of international meetings, and those who flourish in such environments.

There are particularly deep divisions about some issues. Consider for example the debate about trade in live animals or their products. The World Parrot Trust insists that the trade in wild birds is repugnant, resulting in many deaths for each live animal moved, and fuels the loss of species (Gilardi, 2006). Others suggest that it can raise funds for conservation, and bans merely drive illegal trades underground where it is harder to monitor (Cooney and Jepson, 2006; Roe, 2006). The fight about the ivory trade causes deep divisions in the conservation movement. The proliferation of elephants in southern Africa has resulted in overcrowding in some reserves and culls in others. There are powerful calls to make ivory trade legal in order to raise more money for conservation. Whereas in East Africa, especially Kenya, a strong stance against the ivory trade has itself been a powerful fund-raising tool.

There is also disagreement about the use of violence or compromise for conservation causes. The Sea Shepherds are most effective in their use of limpet mines to combat whaling. They and Greenpeace fight regular battles with whalers on the high seas. Earth First! produced a field guide to monkey-wrenching (named after Edward Abbey's book *The Monkey Wrench Gang*) with instructions on salting dirt air strips (to attract wildlife to stir up the ground and make the strip unusable) and spiking trees with lumps of metal to injure, or deter lumberjacks. Major conservation organizations are cooperating with many large corporations to generate revenues, else win control over lands that, for example, extractive industries control from their concessions but which they do not require for the purposes of their mining. They are opposed by a radical fringe who insist that they have sold out and that true conservation should be about resisting resource use and high-consumption lifestyles.

It is important to distinguish conservation causes from concern for animal rights and individual animals. For example, animal rights campaigners will insist that killing animals for their skins or food is wrong, regardless of the funds any business can generate. Hence researchers combating the bushmeat trade in West Africa who recognize that people will need to eat wild meat and wish to control its supply and production more effectively are at odds with animal rights activists who wish to stop the trade entirely. In Kenya safari hunting has been banned, whereas in the rest of East Africa and in southern Africa it sustains a multimillion dollar business (Lindsey et al, 2007), with much opportunity for revenues to reach local communities (Novelli et al, 2006). The fox hunting ban in the UK is condemned by many country residents as an imposition by urbanites who do not understand how they relate to nature. Animal rights campaigners have also prevented the eradication of a grey squirrel population that had established itself in northern Italy. The grey squirrel is native to North America, but is larger and more competitive than the European red squirrel and tends to replace it where the two come into contact. It is the dominant species of squirrel in most of the UK. The resultant spread of the grey squirrel from their foothold in Italy will cause suffering to red squirrels on the continent, and other species on which the grey squirrels feed (Perry, 2004).

For conservationists combating the extinction crisis, the resources and political clout these causes enjoy can be frustrating. If scarce resources are directed at species that are relatively secure, or worse still, at individuals rather than species, the broader cause can suffer. The most recent case that best captures the feelings, and expense, at work arose in 2003 on South Uist, an island off the west coast of Scotland. The island is the home to breeding colonies of endangered birds, such as snipe, redshank, lapwing, dunlin and ringer plover which were threatened by a hedgehog population introduced in the 1970s by an individual seeking to control garden slugs. With no natural predators and light vehicle traffic, the hedgehog population grew to approximately 5000 by 2003.[8] Scottish Natural Heritage took the decision that hedgehogs had to be removed from the island, so they ordered a cull. However, the decision was highly unpopular with some sections of the community who formed Uist Hedgehog Rescue, which argued that the hedgehogs had a right to exist and that the cull was cruel. Their campaign attracted donations of over £30,000 from the public and attention from the *New York Times* and a Toronto radio station.[9] 'Operation Tiggywinkle' was launched, encouraging local residents to hand in hedgehogs for £5 per animal so that they could be flown to mainland Scotland and released in the wild there. (Representatives of Operation Tiggywinkle had negotiated a special 50 pence airfare for each animal with Highland Airways.) It is not at all clear how the moved animals, or the hedgehogs already resident in the recipient areas, fared as a result of the move.

It is also important to recognize the difference between conservation causes and broader environmental issues. Dowie (1996) observes that early conservation organizations and conservationists (who would have called themselves preservationists) were not concerned with 'environmental issues'. These come to the fore in the US in the latter half of the 20th century when concern about pollution, pesticides and energy become prominent, particularly after Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* (Dowie, 1996, pp23–28). In practice there is often a good deal of overlap between broader environmental issues and more specific concerns about wildlife conservation. Chemicals like DDT concentrate up the food chain and damage the eggs of raptors, dirty rivers are lifeless, and carbon offset policies have profound implications for tropical forest conservation. Dowie notes that the major conservation organizations in the US have become environmental organizations too. Nonetheless it is important not to conflate conservation issues with more general environmental concerns.

We realize therefore that we are generalizing horribly when we talk about 'conservation' and 'conservationists'. We are especially concerned in this book with a particular historical and institutional strain of western conservation, not because we believe that it represents the full diversity of people who call themselves conservationists, but because it dominates the field of conservation in terms of ideology, practice and resources brought to bear in conservation interventions. The ideas and values of this dominant strain of conservation are perhaps most clearly represented in the larger conservation organizations which dominate conservation funding. Because of its powerful position, we refer to this historical/institutional strain as 'mainstream conservation'.

Mainstream conservation is best recognized by its distinctive collaborative legacy: cooperation and network building between specific groups and interests that became strengthened and institutionalized over time. The collaborative legacy of mainstream conservation has its roots in the American conservation movement and the creation of national parks in the American West at the end of the 19th century. As Tsing (2004, p100) explains, early American conservationists, like John Muir, pursued strategies that revolved around the enrolment of urban elites in nature conservation and corporate sponsorship. This was easier and more effective than gaining the support of local people, who often saw exclusionary approaches to conservation as inimical to their interests, and who tended to be viewed as culturally backwards despoilers of nature (see also Bonner, 1993; Neumann, 1998; Burnham, 2000; Jacoby, 2001; Igoe, 2004b). The global network of conservation institutions that emerged from this process, and in the context of European colonialism, bore much stronger affinity to the views and interests of a narrow group of western elites than to those of people living in or near to the places conserved. This situation is starkly visible in two ways: 1) the displacement of people by protected areas globally; and 2) the oft decried cultural/political divide between predominantly urban-based conservation organizations and rural communities (Saberwal et al, 2001).

Another important element of mainstream conservation's collaborative legacy is the continuous presence of business interests (the exploration that led to the creation of Yellowstone National Park was sponsored by a railroad company) and the consistent intertwining of states, private enterprise and philanthropy. This can be seen in the early involvement of Laurence Rockefeller in buying up land for the creation of national parks in Wyoming (Muchnick, 2007) and the US Virgin Islands (Fortwangler, 2007), and the continued involvement of Ted Turner in buying up land for national forests in the American West (Mutchler, 2007). In fact, protected areas and other types of conservation interventions in many parts of the world could not exist without private support (Fortwangler, 2007; Igoe and Brockington, 2007). From this perspective, it is not surprising that mainstream conservation, and all that it influences and implies, has allied with capitalism. It stands to reason, therefore, that the recent proliferation of protected areas described above is directly linked to an intensification of this collaborative legacy.

But notwithstanding the power of mainstream conservation there is still a wide diversity of conservation activity, strategy and intervention. One of the better mappings of the varieties of activities available is found in Nick Salafasky and colleague's work (2002), a modified version of which we show in Table 1. These authors divide conservation activities into protection and management, law and policy, education and incentives. Note that the divisions within the conservation movement do not map easily onto particular strategies. There are sharp divisions within the mainstream as to which strategy might work best in different situations. In this book we will write least in the coming pages about education and most about protection in parks, and the diverse alternatives to protection in parks generally called 'community conservation'. Salafsky and colleagues' typology is helpful, but note that economic aspects and incentives are restricted to the last column only. We, however, see all forms of conservation policy and intervention as changing the relationships between people and nature and people and each other in similar ways to these 'incentivizing' behaviours. Moreover in the laws, policies, educational ideas and mechanisms of protection there will be countless interactions with the economy and markets. Neoliberal conservation is not restricted to raw market forces alone.

Monique Borgerhoff Mulder and Pete Coppolillo (2005) have also offered a useful typology of conservation strategies (Figure 1.2). They find two axes differentiating most conservation projects. First there are projects which differentiate between use and preservation, second those which distinguish between centralized state control and devolved local control. They map many of the conservation strategies Salafsky and others describe onto this matrix.

Both typologies are helpful because they emphasise that parks and protected areas, while being an important part of conservation strategies, are but one aspect of them. Likewise community conservation measures are but one part of conservation strategies. There are many others and a conserved world will be increasingly transformed in all its aspects. We think protected areas are important because of the area of land that they cover and because of the consistencies in protected area policy that exist internationally. They deserve special attention. Similarly, diverse forms of community-based conservation will be geographically important simply because of the sheer number of people living in rural areas where natural resource management will be important and an important part of their livelihoods. More than 50 per cent of the world's population is rural and most of these people are found in the developing world. These also deserve special attention. But they are just two of many possible conservation initiatives.

Table 1.1 *A taxonomy of biodiversity conservation approaches and strategies*

Protection & Management	**Law & Policy**	**Education & Awareness**	**Changing Incentives**
Strictly Protected Areas *reserves & parks* *private parks*	Legislation & Treaties *developing international treaties* *lobbying governments*	Formal Education *developing school curricula* *teaching graduate students*	Conservation Enterprises *linked: e.g. ecotourism* *unlinked: e.g. jobs for poachers*
Managed Landscapes *conservation easements* *community-based management*	Compliance & Watchdog *developing legal standards* *monitoring compliance w/standards*	Non-Formal Education *media training for scientists* *public outreach via museums*	Using Market Pressure *certification: positive incentives* *boycotts: negative incentives*
Protected & Managed Species *bans on killing specific species* *management of habitat for species*	Litigation *criminal prosecution* *civil suits*	Informal Education *media campaigns* *community awareness raising*	Economic Alternatives *sustainable agriculture/aquaculture* *promoting alternative products*
Species & Habitat Restoration *reintroducing predators* *recreating wetlands*	Policy Development & Reform *research on policy options* *devolution of control*	Moral Confrontation *civil disobedience* *monkeywrenching/ecoterrorism*	Conservation Payments *quid-pro-quo performance payments* *debt-for-nature swaps*
Ex-Situ Protection *captive breeding* *gene banking*			Non-Monetary Values *spiritual, cultural, existence values links to human health*

Source: Adapted from Salafsky et al (2002). This table categorizes the types of tools available to conservation practitioners. Columns contain broad categories of tools. Each cell contains a broad *approach* (bold font) and then two examples of more specific *strategies* (italic font) under this approach. Reproduced with permission

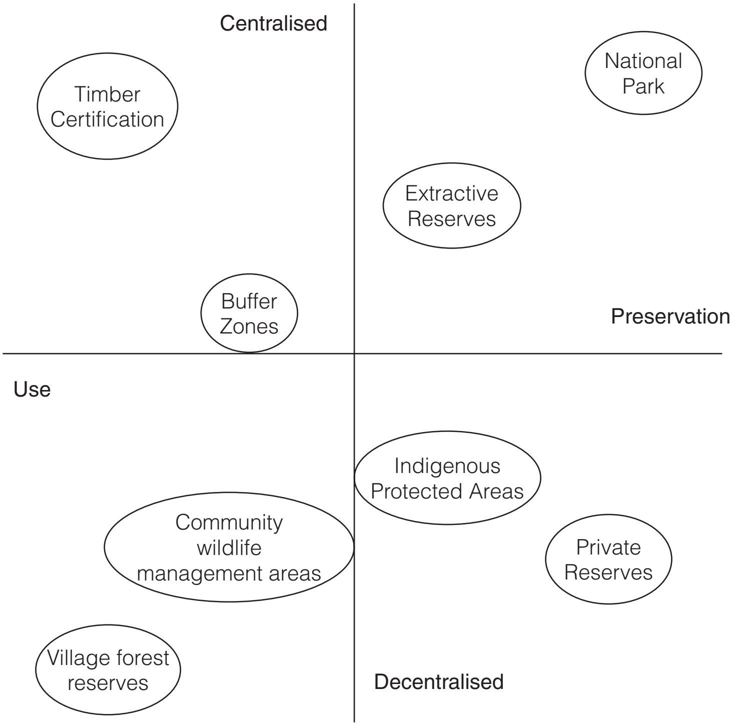
Centralised
National Park
Timber Certification
Extractive Reserves
Buffer Zones
Preservation
Use
Indigenous Protected Areas
Community wildlife management areas
Private Reserves
Village forest reserves
Decentralised

Figure 1.2 *A typology of conservation practice*

Source: Borgerhoff Mulder and Coppolillo (2005). Reproduced with permission

But just as important as the types of conservation strategy presented by these typologies are the processes and dynamics that produce the different strategies. Consider for example the relationships between conservation organizations and rural groups. There are many instances where conservation organizations provide valuable funds sought after by local groups (e.g. Murphree, 2005), which were well used and congruent with local objectives. There are other cases where they have fought with local groups against unjust regimes in defence of threatened environments (Hafild, 2005). Conversely Chapin (2004) and Dowie (2005, 2006) have alleged that large conservation NGOs are combining with corporate interests to the detriment of local landholders. Romero and Andrade (2004) have also criticized deals between conservation NGOs and timber companies, in which logging concessions are turned into conservation lands after timber extraction, because both land uses can deny resource use and exclude local groups.

To understand these alliances, conflicts and outcomes we must recognize that quite different conditions of government and civil society operate now compared to those that drove protected area formation in a pre-neoliberal era. Instead of discreet government departments, private enterprises, NGOs and communities, there are global networks that interpenetrate and elide these categories (Sklair, 2001; Igoe and Fortwangler, 2007). Such networks include people from the community level to the global headquarters of major corporations, multilateral agencies, and transnational conservation NGOs. Sunseri (2005) and Dzingirai (2003) have shown how these networks facilitate the exclusion and eviction of people from new conservation areas in Tanzania and Zimbabwe respectively.

Mbembe (2001) has argued that these networks are forged in conditions of fragmented state control. They are effectively bargains in which outsiders, such as conservation NGOs, bring money and other external resources, on which officials from impoverished states are highly dependent. The officials in turn bring the legitimacy and power of sovereignty – the means of coercion that make it possible to gain advantage in struggles over resources traditionally the exclusive purview of the state (Mbembe, 2001, p78). Mbembe called these arrangements 'private indirect government'.

Private indirect government is particularly significant to our argument because the data in Figure 1.1 may well be a substantial *underestimate* of the extent of conservation's territorial gains. These data omit private and community-based protected areas. Yet these are precisely the means by which the reach of conservation is extended in neoliberal regimes. Where conservation's neoliberalism is rolled out, new types of 'territorialization' emerge – demarcation of spaces within states for the purposes of controlling people and resources (Vandergeest and Peluso, 1995). This may be achieved through privatization (such as the extensive private protected areas in South Africa, Scotland and Patagonia). It may also be achieved by presenting collective legal titles to rural communities, allowing them to enter into business ventures with outside investors (Lemos and Agrawal, 2006, p310). Finally, it may be achieved through state-controlled territories that are made available to investors through rents and concessions. In all these processes elite global networks of government agents, NGOs, communities and their representatives and private enterprises can be strongly involved and profit from their involvement.

Finally a note about terminology and some things we will not be considering in such detail. Whole books have been written about trade and conservation, and the role of conservation conventions and international agreements, including for example Sara Oldfield (2002) *The Trade in Wildlife: Regulation for Conservation* and Jon Hutton and Barnabas Dickson (eds) (2000) *Endangered Species, Threatened Convention: The past, present and future of CITES*. We will be examining these, but not in as much detail as other sources. Attempts to reconcile conservation concerns with the development needs of the poorest are sometimes called Integrated Development with Conservation Projects (IDCPs) or Integrated Conservation with Development (ICD) (Wells et al, 1992; Barrett and Arcese, 1995; Wells et al, 1999). However, this terminology can be used in a confusing way. It can refer to donor-driven projects that try and support both the conservation sector and related development concerns in that geographical area.

These have experienced ample and justified criticism for being insufficiently integrated and failing to deliver on conservation (and often development objectives) (Wells et al, 1992; Wells et al, 1999). Sometimes the same terminology can refer to any scheme that advances both development and conservation objectives, be they donor driven or not. We eschew the term below. We prefer 'community conservation' referring to conservation initiatives that place some power in the hands of rural groups who live close to the resources in question – but can include all sorts of donor input into policy and its application.

The outline of the book

We will be covering a number of key issues in this book affecting conservation debates. Here we summarize chapter by chapter what they are and what we will be examining in each case.

We turn first to an account of the growth of protected areas historically and geographically, describing the main patterns in different regions of the world. Here we examine the power of the *idea* of protected areas. We note that there are historical and conceptual limitations of current notions of protected areas, and the difficulties of listing them in databases and categorizing them. But, with these limitations firmly in mind, we then offer a short history of the spread and growth of protected areas since the creation of Yellowstone in the USA and draw out a number of common themes from recent developments.

In Chapter 3 we consider the changing prerogatives for conservation, considering the desire to conserve wilderness and the crisis of biodiversity decline – 'nature's end' – afflicting diverse ecosystems and species. We argue that the value of wilderness in defining conservation goals is limited, but that there is clear evidence of a substantial increase in extinction and endangerment rates. We also discuss the limits of science to give conservation a mandate to act.

Chapter 4 examines the effectiveness and consequence of parks. Here we have found a confused literature that has often failed to ask the right questions, else involved debates that have talked across each other. We examine how well parks have conserved vegetation and wildlife and find that they generally do work well, but that it is much harder to tell if or where they are better strategies than more community-based initiatives. We then examine the consequences of protected areas noting that they can distribute diverse forms of good and ill fortune to different sectors of society. We consider two confused debates that have arisen with respect to the role of conservation in causing and reducing poverty and the role of local people in supporting conservation.

Chapter 5 looks at the operation of community conservation initiatives in more detail. We look at four things: the complexities of 'community' and how to understand what might be hidden by the term; the politics of devolution; the operations and requirements of common property resource management; and a detailed discussion on the complexities of co-management. The chapter is predicated on our insistence that community conservation will, like 'fortress conservation', necessarily distribute fortune and misfortune to different groups. We argue that it is helpful to interpret these changes as part of the ways in which rural groups become more legible and accessible to capitalism.

Chapter 6 takes a careful look at the nature and politics of collaborations between indigenous people and conservation causes. We note the ways in which indigenous groups have been disadvantaged by protected areas, we consider how they and conservationists have found common cause. These alliances are often built on built on paradoxes and ironies as indigenous leaders and groups negotiate the structured institutions of neoliberal capitalism. We examine at the end of the chapter some of the problems and exclusions that arise.

In Chapter 7 we examine one of the key debates in conservation: the role of tourism. Tourism has become a major argument in justifying the maintenance of protected areas; and in particular conservation organizations, national governments and the private sector amongst others have argued that through the development of tourism protected areas can become major revenue earners, especially for developing countries. In this chapter we analyse how tourism is one mechanism through which the twin objectives of conservation and capitalist development can be pursued.

Chapter 8 considers in more detail a number themes that have frequently surfaced in the preceding chapters – namely the role of the international conservation apparatus. We focus on international agreements governing trade, conservation NGOs and Transfrontier Conservation Areas. These are some of the arenas where the cutting edge of conservation practice is most clearly visible and the interconnections between conservation and capitalism can be most clearly seen.

In Chapter 9 we explore a number of developments in conservation practice that well illustrate our thesis that conservation and capitalism are remaking the world in partnership. We look at conservation and carbon markets, the work of certification and the growth of private parks. We end with a detailed discussion on spectacles of consumption as one of the key means by which conservation imagines what it would like the world to be like and one of the key mechanisms by which it attempts to achieve that vision. Finally we draw these arguments together by considering how our ideas about conservation and capitalism fit with broader analyses of the power and transformations of capitalism. Here we draw on the work of Marx, Debord and Baudrillard to discuss what the changes we see in conservation might portend for capitalism more generally.

Notes

1 Caution is required because of the gaps in, and incompleteness of, the data on which see Chapter 2, also Chape, S. et al (2005) 'Measuring the extent and effectiveness of protected areas as an indicator for meeting global biodiversity

targets'. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 360: 443–455; Lemos, M. C. and Agrawal, A. (2006) 'Environmental governance'. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 31: 297–325; West, P., Igoe J. and Brockington, D. (2006) 'Parks and people: The social impacts of protected areas. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 35: 251–277.

2 http://arctic.fws.gov/purposes.htm (accessed 12 November 2007).

3 www.anwr.org/ (accessed 12 November 2007).

4 www.riotintomadagascar.com/ (accessed 10 November 2007).

5 www.riotintomadagascar.com/development/ecotourism/index.html (accessed 10 November 2007).

6 www.riotintomadagascar.com/overview/impact/index.html (accessed 10 November 2007).

7 www.foe.co.uk/resource/press_releases/rio_tintos_madagascar_mini_22102007.html (accessed 10 November 2007).

8 'Operation Tiggywinkle', *The Guardian* (UK) 7 April 2003, at www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0, 3604, 931040, 00.html#article_continue (accessed 12 November 2007); for more information on the Scottish Natural Heritage Uist Waders Project see www.snh.org.uk/scottish/wisles/waders/ (accessed 12 November 2007).

9 'In for the Quill', *The Scotsman* (UK) 3 April 2003, at news.scotsman.com/topics.cfm?tid=372&id=393372003 (accessed 12 November 2007).