

# Global Justice in Wildlife Conservation

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*Global Justice and the Biodiversity Crisis: Conservation in a World of Inequality*,

Chris Armstrong (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), 176 pp., cloth \$40, eBook \$39.99, Oxford Scholarship Online.

*Security and Conservation: The Politics of the Illegal Wildlife Trade*, Rosaleen Duffy

(New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2022), 304 pp., cloth \$35, eBook \$35.

There are myriad reasons why wildlife conservation matters. These reasons include anthropocentric ones; that is, protecting wild animal species ultimately serves human interests. They also include nonanthropocentric considerations; that is, conservation matters because (at least some kinds of) nonhuman animals morally matter in themselves and that we ought to protect their interests. Indeed, there is increasingly an acceptance of an ethics of wildlife conservation that is grounded in terms of what we owe directly to animals.<sup>1</sup>

But what do we owe to each other, our fellow human beings, as we together discharge our conservation responsibilities? In particular, in a world marked by extreme inequality and historical injustices, how can we ensure that the burdens, responsibilities, and benefits of global wildlife conservation are fairly distributed? Who gets to decide on global conservation goals and strategies? And to what extent should conservation objectives and implementation accommodate cultural differences, such as indigenous hunting and foraging rights? The colonial history of global wildlife conservation further complicates these questions.

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In this review essay, I will take it as a given that we have direct moral obligations to (certain classes of) animals. The central question is how we can square this commitment with our duties of global justice in the context of wildlife conservation. What are some of the injustices that are due to conservation efforts themselves, and how can we go about addressing these justice problems while staying true to our conservation obligations and moral duties to wild animals?

The two books under consideration are valuable contributions to this discussion. Rosaleen Duffy's book *Security and Conservation: The Politics of the Illegal Wildlife Trade* is an exposé of the hidden costs of conservation on people in the Global South. The author specifically documents the moral costs of the securitization and militarization of global wildlife conservation. Chris Armstrong's *Global Justice and the Biodiversity Crisis: Conservation in a World of Inequality* is a normative inquiry into the global justice challenges that arise from biodiversity conservation. Together, these books draw our attention to the justice problems that can arise from conservation itself and point to where more work needs to be done if we want to reconcile our duties to people with our conservation responsibilities.

## WHY JUSTICE MATTERS

One might argue that any conflict between the global justice and the ethics of wildlife conservation—that is, the tension between what we owe to people and what we owe to animals—is illusory. In the long term, one might say, if we do not take the protection of wild creatures and their natural habitats seriously, humanity will suffer the consequences of a catastrophic ecological collapse. We are all (humans and animals alike) in it together. There should be no pitting of humans against animals. On this view, justice ought to prioritize conservation.

But this attempt at sidestepping the tension between the ethics and justice of conservation is made too quickly. First, at the individual level, wildlife conservation objectives and practices frequently collide with local and immediate urgent human needs and interests. Take, for example, the increased chances of human-wildlife encounters that can be deadly for people. Telling certain people that they will have to accept, say, the dangers of living with elephants because we are all in this together is surely not a good-enough argument. Why should they have to put up with the near-term risks for the sake of all of us? they might ask. Yet these are the kinds of on-the-ground challenges that are the stuff of disputes among political ecologists

and conservationists. We cannot evade the problem by simply claiming that in the long run we are all in the same boat.

Second, and more generally, the fact that an ecological collapse will affect us all does not eliminate the relevance of justice. That is, justice is not irrelevant even in times of crisis. Yes, we should all be working together to avert this ecological calamity; after all, doing so is in our interests and our common responsibility. But this does not answer the question of how we can best *fairly* share the responsibilities and burdens of addressing this common problem. There can be more and less fair ways of realizing common goals. Even in times of an impending global crisis, justice matters because it matters how we allocate burdens, responsibilities, and harms among ourselves when we confront an emergency together. We see this in the more established and related debate on climate change justice. Addressing the problem of global warming is a common international responsibility. But in light of global inequality, we recognize that this common responsibility must be differentiated along different possible dimensions, such as a country's ability to contribute, its historical role in bringing about the problem, and so on. That there is a common and pressing crisis before us does not render the question of how to fairly share the duty to address the crisis irrelevant.

Put in a different way, the question of justice *for people* in the context of wildlife conservation does not disappear by simply claiming that the concept of justice has to be ecocentric and not merely people centered; or that we should understand global justice broadly to include nonhuman animals. The question is not a semantic one, of how we define justice. It is a substantive one of how we reconcile our duties to people and animals when these duties clash, as they frequently do in wildlife conservation. We can acknowledge, as I do, that we have direct moral obligations to animals (and we can label this a duty of justice if we like). Still, this does not escape the questions of how we ought to allocate these obligations among ourselves and how we ought to tackle the risks and burdens that global wildlife protection can impose on vulnerable people. This is what I mean by the justice problem in conservation. Without prejudice to broader notions of justice, to avoid tedium, I will simply use the terms "justice" or "global justice" to mean justice for people.

## CONSERVATION BURDENS AND HOW TO FAIRLY SHARE THEM

Chris Armstrong's *Global Justice and the Biodiversity Crisis* is the first book I am aware of that explicitly examines the problems of global justice in the context of

biodiversity conservation. It is thus an agenda-setting work. Armstrong is more broadly concerned with the biodiversity crisis and fairness in natural resource conservation than with *wildlife* conservation as such. Although he points out that any defensible account of biodiversity justice must be consistent with our moral obligations to animals, he acknowledges that he is not attempting to reconcile what we owe to animals with what we owe to fellow humans (p. 26). Animal ethics is kept in the background of his discussion. As a result, Armstrong does not address at length that which I take to be the central problem of wildlife conservation justice; namely, the tension between what we owe to animals and what we owe to people. (I will return briefly to this point at the end of the essay.) This is not at all a criticism of Armstrong's important work; it simply has a different scope and focus. Nonetheless, Armstrong's discussion of the burdens of biodiversity conservation and how these burdens ought to be more equitably allocated is instructive for the specific case of wildlife conservation.

What are some of the burdens of biodiversity conservation? Armstrong provides a helpful classification of the different types of conservation costs. These are the costs of "protection," "restoration," and "avoidance" (or the "opportunity cost" of nonexploitation) (pp. 54–55; also pp. 31–32).<sup>2</sup> These labels are largely self-explanatory: conservation sites have to be secured and protected against environmentally damaging activities; damaged natural habitats will have to be restored, which might include setting up expensive programs, such as rewilding and the reintroduction of native species; and finally, some people will have to pay the opportunity costs of not exploiting the protected environment. These burdens are not trivial. Indeed, the opportunity costs of nonexploitation can be especially burdensome for countries that are struggling with high rates of poverty. On this point, it is worth noting that Armstrong proposes a "moralized" account of opportunity cost, based on people's just entitlements, as opposed to what they would actually have to forego (p. 70). Armstrong's proposal seems right to me. Fleshing out conservation opportunity costs in terms of the set of options that are *actually available* to people takes existing inequalities as fixed, thereby disadvantaging those who have fewer options to start with. As he writes, "To accept *actual* opportunities as the relevant benchmark is to place the background context offered by the status quo beyond moral question" (p. 72). Armstrong argues, instead, that we understand opportunity costs in terms of the options that people should have in a more egalitarian world (pp. 77–79).

To be clear, it is not the fact of conservation burdens per se that raises concerns of justice. What gives rise to a justice problem is that these burdens tend to fall

disproportionately, and in some cases exclusively, on the globally disadvantaged. Consider that the vast majority of the global conservation and biodiversity hotspots are located in the Global South, where many countries are still struggling with high rates of poverty. The world wants, for example, Ecuador to leave the oil in the soil in the Ecuadorian Amazon and the Democratic Republic of Congo to cease the mining of cobalt in the Virunga National Park. But each of these expectations entails depriving these countries of a potential means of mitigating poverty.<sup>3</sup>

As things stand, the default position on who should bear the cost of conservation is essentially: “Your backyard, your problem.” Armstrong has referred to this as the “proximity principle.”<sup>4</sup> If a biodiversity or conservation hotspot falls within the sovereign territory of a country, it is that country’s responsibility to pick up the tab. The country presumptively has to absorb the protection, restoration, and opportunity costs, even when it is in the world’s interest that the site be preserved. One might prefer to call this “the territorial principle” since the key point is not proximity *per se* but territorial sovereignty. But Armstrong’s basic idea is clear enough.

As Armstrong notes, the proximity principle is plainly unfair. For one, it is morally arbitrary: a country is effectively penalized simply because it happens to have natural spaces within its borders that the rest of the world wants to protect. Moreover, in the world we live in, it is poorer countries, specifically countries in the Global South, that tend to find themselves saddled with the responsibility of protecting biodiversity hotspots. Applying the proximity principle in this context—that is, making already disadvantaged countries take full responsibility for protecting biodiversity in their territories for all of our benefit—is a case of compounding injustices.

Giving up on biodiversity conservation is of course not an option either. Some might think that in situations like this, we have no choice but to reject the principle of “permanent sovereignty” over resources; that is, the idea that a sovereign state has the sole right to use, manage, and dispose of its natural resources. Instead, one might say, the exercise of this self-determination right should be contingent on a country’s responsible management of resources within its borders.<sup>5</sup> If a country acts irresponsibly with respect to resources (such as its rain forests) upon which we all are dependent, territorial forfeiture or some form of international intervention will be permissible. But, as mentioned, this move is morally fraught since it arbitrarily penalizes countries that happen to have natural resources that the world happens to want to conserve. These countries would be effectively held to a higher

standard, as a matter of (bad) luck, than other countries in order to exercise their right of self-determination.

Territorial forfeiture, then, might be good for global conservation but not so good for justice. But there are other choices available. If conservation provides a global benefit, then the economic costs of conservation projects located in less well-off countries ought not to be disproportionately (let alone exclusively) borne by these countries alone. Instead, we should treat conservation as a global and common responsibility. This idea of co-responsibility for conservation was the impetus behind the Yasuní-ITT Initiative, proposed in 2007 by the Ecuadorian government at the United Nations General Assembly, which Armstrong discusses in some of his other work.<sup>6</sup> Under this initiative, Ecuador would refrain from exploiting oil reserves in its Ishpingo-Tambococha Tiputini (ITT) sector, an area within the Yasuní National Park, in exchange for an international contribution of \$3.6 billion, supported by wealthy nations, that would cover about half of the opportunity costs of not drilling. Unfortunately, this global cost-sharing arrangement was abandoned in 2013 due to a lack of international support as well as more complicated geopolitical reasons. The reasons for the program's failure are complex and will require more space to analyze than is available here. The relevant point is that this initiative illustrates a form that shared global responsibility for conservation can take. Its failure, due to the lack of international commitment and political complexities, does not prove the infeasibility of such proposals.<sup>7</sup>

In this spirit of fair burden sharing, Armstrong proposes alternatives to the proximity principle. These include “the contributor pays principle,” “the ability or capacity to pay principle,” and “the beneficiary pays principle” (p. 58). The contributor pays principle (CPP) holds that one's share of conservation burdens is proportionate to the amount it has contributed to the biodiversity crisis. The ability to pay principle (APP) says that one's share is determined by one's ability or capacity to carry the costs of conservation; and the beneficiary pays principle (BPP) holds that one's share should depend on how much one gains from conservation activities.

As Armstrong notes, these principles parallel the principles often proposed in the climate justice debate—the polluter pays principle, the ability to pay principle, and the beneficiary pays principle (p. 58).<sup>8</sup> And as in the climate justice discussion, Armstrong argues that a similar division of labor is applicable here: Different principles ought to be activated under different conditions (pp. 58–59). He foregrounds the CPP and APP. The CPP is first in line since it makes “moral sense,” as

Armstrong puts it, to make those that have knowingly “generated threats to biodiversity” and that could have done otherwise take on the first share of the burdens of addressing the crisis (p. 59). However, the CPP hits its limiting point when there is no identifiable and culpable agent to hold accountable. When this happens, the APP kicks in, assigning responsibility proportionately based on prospective actors’ ability to absorb conservation burdens. The BPP, in contrast, should play only a supporting role. According to Armstrong, deploying the BPP as a stand-alone principle can “lead us astray” since it wrongly neglects facts about contribution and ability (p. 65). For instance (this is my own example), caribou herd conservation will be of immediate benefit to indigenous communities in the Arctic region who rely on the animal for sustenance. Yet, given that global warming is the main reason why the caribou population is under threat, indigenous communities are not the ones who have contributed to the problem of declining caribou numbers. Nor are they in the best position to address the problem in terms of their material conditions compared to people in wealthier societies. So, allotting the cost of caribou conservation to indigenous groups would be patently unfair even though they stand to benefit directly the most. Still, the BPP can play “*some kind of role in determining the fair allocation of burdens, even if they are not all-important*” (p. 66). If some countries do not accept their conservation responsibilities as determined by the CPP or APP, then the BPP allows us to impute to them the further wrong of free riding when they also gain from the conservation efforts of others.

Armstrong’s introduction and formulation of these conservation justice principles gives us a useful platform for thinking systematically about conservation distributive justice. They represent fairer alternatives to the status quo biased proximity principle. Armstrong does not get into the details of the implementation and enforcement of these principles, which is outside the scope of his inquiry. What he does is provide us with the normative tools to assess as well as guide conservation practices, international conservation treaties, and the global governance of biodiversity. For instance, he gives us a framework for evaluating the moral costs of the “Half Earth” proposal (presented at various international conventions on biodiversity), under which half of the earth’s surface will be protected from economic development, which Armstrong discusses in one of his chapters (chapter 6, pp. 110–35). Looking at conservation through a global lens also highlights the necessity of “structural reforms” to address global inequality—including debt forgiveness, removal of harmful subsidies, and land reform—so that we can better meet the “goals of conservation and global justice simultaneously” (p. 135).



Armstrong's articulation and prioritization of his conservation justice principles will inspire discussion. For instance, some readers will think that his applicability conditions for the contributor pays principle is too restrictive: Why should it implicate only actors that have knowingly caused harm and that had been aware of the option to do otherwise? Do we not, in ordinary morality, take it that one has the duty to clean up a mess even if it was unintentionally or even accidentally caused? We do not think of this as unfairly blaming or holding the accidental or unintentional actor to be at fault, because we can distinguish responsibility (that is, the responsibility to take action) from culpability. That is, we can assign responsibility without necessarily assigning blame. I have the responsibility to mop up the mess in the kitchen even though I spilled the milk accidentally and blamelessly; I have the responsibility to do my share to fix our broken public educational system (by paying my share of property taxes, for example) even though it is not my fault that the system is broken.

Armstrong's ordering of principles will also instigate debates about the character of justice. Which of the principles best expresses the ideal of distributive justice? Is distributive justice fundamentally backward looking, in the sense that one's share of distributive duties depends on one's past actions? Or is distributive justice fundamentally forward looking, in the sense that one's share depends on one's ability to bear the cost or bring about the desired outcome? If we believe distributive justice to be prospective in this sense, then we might be moved to prioritize the APP instead of the CPP, contra Armstrong. Indeed, we could further argue for prioritizing APP on the ground that the urgency of the biodiversity crisis demands that we give the task to the most able actor in order to get the job done; or that fairness requires that we prioritize the interests of the worst-off by giving more responsibilities to those who are more capable.

Whether one agrees with the specifics of his arguments, Armstrong's central point is compelling: we must not neglect global justice as we together confront the biodiversity crisis. His set of principles provides us with a starting point for how we can go about sharing the burdens of conservation more equitably. As said, this is an agenda-setting book, and a reference point for any future discussions on biodiversity conservation and global justice.

## THE MORAL COSTS OF WILDLIFE PROTECTION

If Armstrong gives us a normative analysis of the types of global burdens that result from biodiversity conservation, Rosaleen Duffy's area of research focuses on the



*personal* burdens and risks that result from global wildlife conservation activities and objectives. For instance, there is much public support among people in wealthy countries for protecting charismatic and “exotic” species in foreign lands. But this enthusiasm blinds those same publics to the price that individuals living in or at the edge of conservation sites and protected spaces are paying for this. Over the course of several earlier articles and books, Duffy has documented the various, often hidden, “local costs” of global conservation that individuals in poor communities at the forefront of conservation have to bear. As Duffy puts it in a previous book, “The ways that the western public sentimentalize elephants means that the realities of living with them are made invisible.”<sup>9</sup>

These realities include threats and violations against personal safety and subsistence directly resulting from conservation efforts. For instance, the establishment of parklands and the extension of protected park boundaries have historically entailed the expulsion and forceful relocation of communities from their ancestral homeland.<sup>10</sup> The establishment of protected areas also means that traditional subsistence foraging and hunting become classified as criminal activities in these areas. Moreover, wildlife protection can result in increased human-animal encounters, with dangerous and even fatal consequences for people, as well as damage to their means of subsistence.

In her more recent *Security and Conservation*, Duffy exposes another direct conservation cost to personal safety: the overpolicing and the militarization of wildlife protection. Duffy charts out the emergence of this “security-orientation” to wild animal protection, whereby the illicit wildlife trade is cast as a global security issue by linking it to the global narcotics trade and also as a source of funding for terrorism (p. 13). The environmental degradation that accompanies animal poaching is seen as a cause of human conflict in that it intensifies competition for scarce resources. This convergence of global security and conservation has led to the militarization of wildlife protection, wherein conservation is now cast as an urgent international security problem, backed by slogans such as the “War for Biodiversity” and implemented on the ground by military forces and private security contractors, both operating according to a “shoot to kill” policy in many cases and unaccountable to the public (p. 56). This is accompanied by a depersonalization of poachers as cruel actors and enemy combatants in order to justify these responses. This is not to suggest that one should deny the linkages between wildlife trade and global crime or that environmental destruction will induce more wars; nor should one deny the cruelty involved in the hunting and harvesting of animal parts. Duffy’s point is that framing

conservation primarily as an international security issue is both flawed and dangerous (pp. 16–17; also p. 29).

We have a responsibility to do better in terms of stopping illegal poaching and the suffering of animals that this typically involves, and to more effectively curb the international trade of wild animals and the consumption of animal parts that fuel poaching. But, as Duffy points out, the security orientation toward conservation is wrongheaded. For one, it puts too much emphasis on policing and enforcement, and shifts our attention and resources away from the root causes of poaching illegal wildlife trade and environmental degradation; namely, the problem of global poverty and the demand in rich countries for wildlife and animal parts. Thus, heavy-handed policing at best addresses the symptoms and not the source of wildlife destruction.

Strategic concerns aside, there is the more fundamental worry about justice. As noted above, framing wildlife conservation as a global security problem, reinforced by the metaphor and language of war, has licensed violent responses against poaching. This problem of militarization is aggravated by the fact that the “soldiers” in the war for wildlife include private operators who are not subject to public accountability. More worrisomely, there is an underlying racial element in the securitization of conservation and the enforcement brutality that attends it. In countries in Southern Africa, many of the enforcers are white mercenaries and ex-military personnel, and their victims almost always Black Africans (pp. 174–76).

In the conclusion of her book (pp. 197–200), Duffy outlines solutions to this securitization of wildlife conservation. She notes the need to address global inequality (a central driver of the international wildlife trade, as noted), and the need to rethink the human-nature relationship. But most significantly for Duffy, we must also bring about greater participatory or deliberative fairness in conservation decision-making by “decolonizing conservation” (pp. 198–99). The securitization of conservation has deep colonial roots. It is premised on, and perpetuates, the colonial model of “fortress conservation,” in which conservation entails the protection of “pristine” wilderness, from which people, even those from local communities who have long lived on and off the land sustainably, are to be excluded (pp. 68–69; 198–199). The securitization of conservation also replays the colonial myth that local communities do not care about or value conservation, and that wild animals must be protected from these communities by Western “conservation heroes” (p. 198). As Duffy notes, the colonial history of conservation continues to “shape many modes of its [current] thinking and practice” (p. 198). A

“decolonized” conservation might be open to different ideals of the human-nature relationship and models of conservation. It could give communities at the forefront of conservation a voice in decision-making, take local perspectives and knowledge seriously, and “address the often hidden-politics of race in conservation” (p. 198).<sup>11</sup>

Decolonizing conservation does not imply a rejection of universal conservation values and scientific standards. If “fortress conservation” is rejected, it is not because it privileges science over traditional knowledge, but because it is based on bad science. That is, it is not because there are no universal and objective scientific standards with regard to conservation success, but because fortress conservation has been proven to be scientifically flawed.<sup>12</sup> What decolonization demands is that conservation biologists be more cognizant of the colonial history of conservation and take the extra precaution that their conservation methods and practices do not reproduce colonial conservation attitudes and modes of implementation. It means adopting a posture of epistemic and moral modesty and a readiness to reflect on one’s own commitments. It will require that conservation biologists do not dismiss outright the potential scientific validity of traditional ecological knowledge, and that they properly acknowledge the contributions of local partners in the production and dissemination of conservation scientific knowledge.

Wildlife conservation ethics has much to learn from the interventions of political ecologists like Duffy. Political ecologists are motivated by the interplay between political and economic structures and the natural environment, and some like Duffy have drawn our attention to the potential social and moral perils of wildlife protection efforts. Acknowledging the unfair local costs of global wildlife conservation does not mean that we must cut back on our conservation activities and tone down our commitment to protect wild animals. What it means is that we must go about the business of conservation in ways that do right by our fellow human beings. Conservation biologists do not need to see political ecologists as the enemy but as collaborators in the common cause of achieving justice in conservation.

## CONCLUSION

As the two books under consideration remind us, what we owe to *people* matters even as we together address the biodiversity crisis or engage in wildlife protection. As I mentioned, we should not see this insertion of justice into the mix as a pushback against a conservation ethics that takes animal morality seriously, contra the worries of some conservation biologists. Indeed, Armstrong notes that a full

account of conservation justice will have to be compatible or even integrated with what we owe to animals (pp. 26–28), and Duffy suggests bringing animal welfare and conservation justice “into conversation with one another” (p. 199). The key take-home point of these books for conservation ethicists is that what we owe to other people remains important alongside our common obligations to the nonhuman natural world.

Yet these obligations frequently collide in the practice of wildlife conservation. For example, protecting wild animals can result in increased instances of human-animal encounters, often to the detriment of humans. It would be wrong to transfer all of these risks and burdens back to animals.<sup>13</sup> Humans have to accept their share of risks in relation to other animals. What justice in conservation requires is that we allocate the risks that rightly fall on the human side of the equation fairly among ourselves. It should not be simply passed on to the most vulnerable. Conservation projects may have to be extra creative in coming up with mechanisms for sharing such burdens among people and accept the extra costs of implementing these measures. This is what fairness in conservation means.<sup>14</sup> For example, beehive fencing, which exploits the elephant’s natural fear of bees, has been tested as a solution to human-elephant encounters.<sup>15</sup> Strategies like this no doubt involve extra effort and add to the material cost of elephant conservation programs, not to mention the need to experiment and the readiness to go back to the drawing board. But this is what justice, what fairly sharing in the costs of conservation, minimally demands in this case.

Still there are instances in which the contest between what we owe to people and our duty to animals is more intractable. For instance, is culling wild animals for subsistence permissible?<sup>16</sup> Or what if there is no reasonable mechanism to limit deadly human-wildlife encounters?<sup>17</sup> How do we balance human interest against animal interests or rights? The problem of competing moral demands between humans and animals is not, of course, limited to wildlife conservation. But wildlife conservation is where the conflict between our obligations to people and to animals comes to a head most perspicuously. Addressing these conservation dilemmas will require more direct engagements with animal ethics than we find in Armstrong’s and Duffy’s books (which is beyond the scope of their inquiries), and it will require the search for a more integrated understanding of our moral duties to both animals and people.

There is another aspect of conservation justice that is less discussed in both books. Armstrong notes “cultural loss” as one of the significant conservation

burdens, and Duffy speaks of the importance of decolonizing conservation, as noted above. But how should we understand the place of culture in conservation? To what extent should conservation goals and practices accommodate cultural differences? What are the limits of cultural claims? How is cultural loss to be compensated? Consider, for example, the conflict between indigenous rights (for instance, to hunting practices) and animal protection. How can we settle these tensions without veering into cultural relativism on the one side, in which cultural demands are taken as conclusive, and replaying the history of moral imperialism and cultural intervention against indigenous peoples on the other? Should there be exemptions on cultural grounds? Or should we expect a change in cultural practice? If this is the case, how should we account for this cultural loss? These are recurring issues in conservation biology, and cases like those of indigenous hunting rights vs. conservation are among the common “textbook” examples of conservation ethical dilemmas. These problems cannot be fully addressed by the kinds of distributive principles Armstrong discusses, and the deliberative fairness and decolonization that Duffy is committed to will require some prior understanding of the limits of justified cultural claims. It seems, then, that there needs to be a cultural dimension to conservation justice, alongside the dimensions of distributive and deliberative justice that Armstrong and Duffy bring to the table.

In sum, for a more complete account of justice in wildlife conservation, we will need to both bring animal ethics more squarely into the discussion and develop a better understanding of the place of cultural rights in conservation. But Armstrong and Duffy’s books are indispensable for these further inquiries. Most importantly, their books remind us that global conservation is not cost-free and that we should strive to share and distribute these costs fairly among ourselves. Even as we take our duties to wild nature and wild animals seriously, we must not forget that we also have obligations to people, especially to those who are among the globally disadvantaged.

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Clare Palmer, Bob Fischer, Christian Gamborg, Jordan Hampton, and Peter Sandøe, *Wildlife Ethics: The Ethics of Wildlife Management and Conservation* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2023).

<sup>2</sup> See also Chris Armstrong, “The Burdens of Conservation,” ch. 10 in *Justice and Natural Resources: An Egalitarian Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2017), pp. 220–46, at p. 221.

<sup>3</sup> Of the seventeen “megadiverse” countries, defined by Conservation International as countries with significant numbers of endemic plant species and a large number of any plant species, only two—the United States and Australia—are in the Global North. See Michael Purton, “World Environment Day: An A–Z of the World’s 17 Megadiverse Countries,” World Economic Forum, June 4, 2024, [www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/06/environment-day-biodiversity-world-megadiverse-countries](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2024/06/environment-day-biodiversity-world-megadiverse-countries).

<sup>4</sup> Armstrong, “Burdens of Conservation,” p. 222.

<sup>5</sup> See Margaret Moore, “The Biodiversity Crisis, Biodiversity Hotspots, and our Obligations with Respect to Them,” *Social Philosophy and Policy* 40, no. 2 (Winter 2023), pp. 482–502 for one discussion.

- <sup>6</sup> Chris Armstrong, "Fairness, Free-Riding and Rainforest Protection," *Political Theory* 44, no. 1 (February 2016), pp. 106–30.
- <sup>7</sup> For more on the initiative and why it failed, see Matthieu Le Quang and Mariana Ortega Breña, "The Yasuni-ITT Initiative: Toward New Imaginaries," *Latin American Perspectives* 43, no. 1 (2016), pp. 187–99.
- <sup>8</sup> Darrel Moellendorf, *The Moral Challenge of Dangerous Climate Change: Values, Poverty, and Policy* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- <sup>9</sup> Rosaleen Duffy, *Nature Crime: How We're Getting Conservation Wrong* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 220.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 54–56. See also Joseph E. Mbaiwa, Barbara N. Ngwenya, and Donald L. Kgathi, "Contending with Unequal and Privileged Access to Natural Resources and Land in the Okavango Delta, Botswana," *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 29, no. 2 (July 2008), pp. 155–72.
- <sup>11</sup> See also Lauren F. Rudd, Shorna Allred, Julius G. Bright Ross, et al., "Overcoming Racism in the Twin Spheres of Conservation Science and Practice," *Proceedings of the Royal Society B* 288, no. 1962 (November 2021), Art. 20211871, pp. 1–9.
- <sup>12</sup> Moses Elleason, Zhuoli Guan, Yiming Deng, Aiwu Jiang, Eben Goodale, and Christos Mammides, "Strictly Protected Areas Are Not Necessarily More Effective than Areas in Which Multiple Human Uses Are Permitted," *Ambio* 50, no. 5 (May 2021), pp. 1058–73; and Michael-Shawn Fletcher, Rebecca Hamilton, Wolfram Dressler, and Lisa Palmer, "Indigenous Knowledge and the Shackles of Wilderness," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 118, no. 40 (September 2021), [www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2022218118](https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2022218118).
- <sup>13</sup> Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka, *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 200–2.
- <sup>14</sup> Nyeema C. Harris, Christine E. Wilkinson, Gabriela Fleury, and Zoliswa N. Nhleko, "Responsibility, Equity, Justice, and Inclusion in Dynamic Human–Wildlife Interactions," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 21, no. 8 (October 2023), pp. 380–87. See also Joseph Hamm, George Holmes, and Julia Martin-Ortega, "The Importance of Equity in Payments to Encourage Coexistence with Large Mammals," *Conservation Biology* 38, no. 3 (June 2024), Art. e14207.
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Abstract: There is a plurality of reasons for taking wildlife conservation seriously. These reasons include nonanthropocentric ones based on animal ethics. But in an unequal world, global conservation can impose disproportionate burdens on people who are already disadvantaged. What are some of these costs, and how can we better reconcile what we owe to people as a matter of global justice with what we owe to animals? We can call this the global justice challenge of wildlife conservation. While advances in animal ethics and animal science have contributed to our understanding of the animal side of conservation morality, what we owe to people in the context of conservation is comparatively underdeveloped. The two books under review are valuable contributions to this discussion. *Security and Conservation* by Rosaleen Duffy is an exposé of the hidden conservation costs that are borne by people in the Global South. The author specifically scrutinizes the moral costs of the securitization and militarization of wildlife protection. *Global Justice and the Biodiversity Crisis* by Chris Armstrong is the first book-length normative inquiry into the global justice challenges that arise from biodiversity conservation. Together, these books draw our attention to the justice problems that can arise from conservation itself and point to where more work needs to be done if we want to harmonize our duties to animals and people.

Keywords: animal ethics, conservation ethics, global justice, global security, wildlife conservation, war for biodiversity