

Nature is not for sale!
2ND FORUM ON NATURAL COMMONS
2ND JUNE 5PM @REGENT'S PARK HUB



Panel 1: New directions in conservation: a closer look at 'value' and offsetting.

A new conservation paradigm is emerging among policy makers; that in order to properly protect nature, it must be given a 'proper value'. This usually means setting up ways to measure ecosystems and biodiversity in terms of pounds, dollars and euros so that nature, industry and economic growth can all appear on the same balance sheet.

This potent narrative underwrites much of the political energy that is currently directed at developing systems of 'biodiversity offsetting' around the world. Central to the concept is the idea that the 'value' of any particular item of biodiversity can be assessed against others and units of biodiversity value can be added up, divided and shifted around like figures in a spreadsheet. This is at the heart of the thinking behind 'no net loss' initiatives. It is an appealing (but fundamentally flawed) idea because it divorces the 'value' of biodiversity from the complex ecological, social and geographic relations that allow that biodiversity to exist.

Where did this new narrative for 'value' come from and how is it being engineered? Why is it treated as self-evident by policy makers and what does it conceal? This panel explores the new directions in global conservation policy, the difficult question of 'value' and its emergent role in environmental governance.

Facilitator: Sian Sullivan, Bath Spa University



Sian Sullivan is Professor of Environment and Culture at Bath Spa University. Her first degree was in Anthropology and Geography (1993), and her PhD was in Anthropology (1998), both completed at University College London. Prior to attending university, Sian lived on a protected area in Swaziland, Southern Africa. Here, she learned first-hand of the tensions that can arise between establishing landscapes as protected areas for biodiversity conservation, and the cultural landscapes and livelihoods of local people. Currently Sian is researching the ways in which financial terms, categories and assumptions are determining how it is possible to know nonhuman nature – through concepts such as 'ecosystem services' and 'natural capital', and through institutional structures that seek to 'financialise nature' so as to engender green economic growth.

Speakers in Panel 1

Jutta Kill, World Rainforest Movement



Jutta Kill, biologist by formal training, has worked as activist and researcher since 1993. She combines academic and action research with campaigning in support of forest communities. Her research has highlighted the role of voluntary certification schemes, carbon markets and the new economy with Nature in maintaining ecologically unequal trade and the associated violation of human rights and rights to land and use of peoples' traditional territories. Since 2000, she has contributed to the critical analysis of the trade with pollution permits as a false solution to the climate crisis and has documented the local impacts of numerous projects that produce emission credits traded in international greenhouse gas emissions markets.

Currently, her focus is on analysing the role carbon markets played for the emergence of the Green Economy concept. She is documenting how the financialisation of nature is bringing about a paradigm change in environmental legislation, where rules-based environmental legislation is starting to be replaced with market- and incentive-based environmental regulation. These changes facilitate the opening up of additional elements of Nature currently still outside the reach of financial markets, to trading and speculation, thus aiding a process whereby Nature's complexity and diversity is transformed into Natural Capital – the nature that capital can see.

John O'Neill, Manchester University



John's career has taken him to the universities of Lancaster, Sussex and Wales to his current post as Director of the Political Economy Institute, University of Manchester. He is a member of the Society and Environment Research Group and sits on the editorial boards of *New Political Economy*, *The Journal of Applied Philosophy*, and *Historical Materialism*. He is a member of the Society and Environment Research Group and is involved in a number of current European Projects on environmental values and justice including BIOMOT and EJOLT.

Morgan Robertson, University of Wisconsin-Madison



Morgan Robertson is a geographer specializing in the study of market-based environmental policy. At the US Environmental Protection Agency, he was one of the staff-level authors of the 2008 Compensation Rule regulating wetland and stream compensation and banking. He is currently an Assistant Professor of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has written extensively on wetland banking, ecosystem services, economic theories of value, and compensation under the Clean Water Act.

Mike Hannis, Bathspa University and editor of *The Land* magazine

Panel 2: Biodiversity offsetting and community rights

Access to nature is important for people's well-being, health, prosperity and happiness. Whether shale gas, a new road or a large housing development, new development projects have an undoubtable environmental and social impact.

Biodiversity offsetting propagates the myth that people and nature are completely separate, by promising to neutralize the environmental impact of development by protecting or improving biodiversity elsewhere. This may lead to an increase in developments that infringe on community rights and access to nature. Land

set aside for conservation within an offsetting scheme could lead to further land grabbing, taking land out of the hands of communities in order to serve corporate 'environmental' interests.

Nature is not something we can have elsewhere: it is not separate from people – this is the myth that offsetting propagates. We need to learn to live sustainably, meaning we need to challenge unneeded development, and make sure that development that does happen is as sustainable as possible.

What are the impacts of biodiversity offsetting likely to be on the ground, and what will it mean for communities struggling against development proposals? Owen Paterson MP said that offsets should be an hour's drive away – but how far is too far? And is this really the point? This panel explores the implications of biodiversity offsetting on people, and how community rights are articulated in the global North and South.

Facilitator: Fred Pearce, Journalist



Fred Pearce is a freelance author and journalist based in London. A former news editor of the UK-based *New Scientist* magazine, he has been its environment consultant since 1992, reporting from 83 countries. He also writes regularly for the Yale e360 web site in the US, and the *Guardian* and other newspapers in the UK.

Speakers in panel 2:

Ian Scoones, co-director STEPS Centre



Ian Scoones is a Professorial Fellow at the Institute of Development Studies at the University of Sussex and director of the ESRC STEPS Centre. An ecologist by original training, he works on the politics of science and policy around land and rural development issues, particular in Africa. He is co-editor of the *Journal of Peasant Studies* special issue, *Green Grabbing: A new appropriation of nature?*

Peter J Howard, Landscape Research Group

Sylvia Kay, Transnational Institute



Sylvia Kay joined the Agrarian Justice team of TNI in October 2011. She works as a researcher on a wide range of issues including land and water grabbing, food politics and questions around agricultural investment. She holds a BA in International Relations and Sociology from the University of Sussex and an MSc in Global Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science. She currently lives in The Hague, The Netherlands.

Kathryn McWhirter, Journalist and Shale Gas activist



Kathryn McWhirter is a journalist, author and translator specialising in wine, food and travel. She has written for publications including *The Independent on Sunday*, *The Daily Mail*, *The Financial Times*, *The Observer* and *Which?* The prospect of oil and gas company Cuadrilla arriving in her Sussex village of Balcombe two and a half years ago turned her into a campaigner, first against the local well, now against the threat posed nationally and worldwide to our health, environment and climate by fracking and other 'unconventional' means of extracting fossil fuels.

Sarah Walters, Woodland manager at Alvecote Wood



Sarah is a retired doctor who, after a career in public health medicine, bought an 11 acre ancient semi-natural woodland near her home with her husband Stephen Briggs. They added a 9 acre field to this site in 2010 and planted this with new woodland, wildflower meadows and wildlife ponds, and they are trying to develop a landscape-scale conservation project along the Anker Valley with other organizations and landowners. In 2013 Alvecote Wood won the Royal Forestry Society Excellence in Forestry award in the small woodland category for the best small woodland in the West Midlands and North West of England. Her woods are 200 hundred metres away from the proposed HS2 line

****There will be a small cocktail after the event until 20h30****