Common Cause for Nature

Values and frames in conservation

About us

Common Cause

Initially a social change report published by several UK NGOs, Common Cause is a large and growing civil society network working to rebalance cultural values for a more sustainable society. Values are a driving force behind many of our attitudes and behaviours, and a ubiquitous presence in advertising, media, politics, and third sector campaigns. Working at the level of values helps us address the structural causes of ecological, economic and social injustice.

> *valuesandframes.org*

PIRC

Over the years, in working for environmental sustainability, we've found ourselves unwittingly contending with values in various areas of our work—most notably in the implicit assumptions behind policy and as a factor in people's resistance to communications. Now more than ever, we realise that a sustainable society involves more than the behaviours associated with environmental protection: consuming less, recycling more, using renewable energy and taking the train. It is also more community-focused, less prejudiced, more equal, and happier—because it values both people and the environment.

> *publicinterest.org.uk*

This report offers recommendations for the conservation sector and others on how to ensure their work strengthens the values that motivate people to protect and enjoy nature. Produced in collaboration with thirteen UK conservation organisations, it is based on original analysis of these groups' communications, workshop discussions, survey responses and in-depth interviews.

This report was produced with the support and input of the following partner organisations. The authors are grateful to staff in these organisations for their openness in reflecting on what they have learned from the research that they commissioned, and in reflecting on the implications that they foresee for their organisations. However, the specific recommendations of this report were developed by PIRC, and are their sole responsibility.

"**Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.**"

Rachel Carson

Contents

Although unflinching about the scale of the conservation challenge, this is an optimistic report. It highlights the possibility of the conservation sector achieving a more concerted approach to engaging their supporters and the wider public.

Foreword

On a hot afternoon in September 2011 people from a variety of conservation organisations gathered together for a workshop on 'Common Cause', hosted by Wildlife & Countryside Link.

The organisations represented by these people make a crucial contribution to the on-going struggle to protect biodiversity and conserve beautiful and ecologically important places – both nationally and internationally. They are each staffed by a dedicated and passionate group of people who are able to draw, in turn, upon the support of huge numbers of the public. As a result, these organisations can point to many important successes.

But despite the freedom to put conservation need squarely at the heart of all that they do, despite the passion of their staff, and despite the resources that their members and supporters provide, we know that these organisations must confront the fact that on a wide range of indicators, national and international, biodiversity is still in decline.

It is clear that if it is to be successful in achieving its goals, the conservation movement must be able to draw upon more vocal, and more dependable, public concern. On that late-Summer afternoon, we discussed the need to do something different to foster and build upon this public concern. Excitingly, the Common Cause workshop described a new way to understand people's motivation to address the big issues like loss of biodiversity. And by the end of the workshop the big question on our minds was 'how can we apply this to our sector and our challenges?'

This was the start of the 'Common Cause for Nature' project, and the report you are about to read. We started by asking ourselves some challenging questions about how we are currently engaging with our audiences: are we communicating with them in ways that inspire action and support for the issue, or are there ways in which we are inadvertently disempowering them and eroding support?

To address these questions we put our own communications under scrutiny, with the help of a very dedicated academic team: Dr Anat Bardi, Professor Paul Chilton and Dr Netta Weinstein. The resulting report has been written by another dedicated group, the staff at PIRC, who have pulled together the

masses of data and evidence generated by the research. We would like to say a huge thank you to both of these groups as well as all of our colleagues from the 10 other NGOs we worked with, who put in their time and energy to make this possible.

Although unflinching about the scale of the conservation challenge, this is an optimistic report. It highlights the possibility of the conservation sector achieving a more concerted approach to engaging their supporters and the wider public. It presents evidence that by working in such a concerted way, in awareness of the values that we engage through our work, the sector could achieve greater success in galvanising sustained public pressure for more ambitious action on conservation issues.

For us, this report represents the culmination of the project we began on that day in 2011 – but also a departure point. We hope the ideas in this report can stimulate even more collaborative working across the sector. We also believe that it will help us understand how the theory behind 'Common Cause' can be applied to our own work. The report contains lots of practical examples of where we are currently doing well, where we could improve and ideas for new approaches. We believe that by working together and applying this new approach to our communications we can do even more to help motivate public support for conservation.

Tom Crompton *WWF-UK*
Catriona Lennox *MCS*
Ruth Smyth *RSPB*

"Everything in nature invites us constantly to be what we are."

Gretel Ehrlich

Summary

Creating and maintaining a sustainable, wildlife-rich world requires active, concerned citizens and a political system capable of rising to the challenge. Governments, businesses and the public will need the space and motivation to make the right choices.

A large body of psychological research demonstrates that values – the things we consider important in life – are vital in creating this space and motivation. The values we hold are shaped by institutions, communications and experiences; the conservation sector inevitably shapes them too.

Thirteen UK conservation organisations with a broad range of remits came together in 2012 to commission this report. In it, we explore the values the sector promotes in its communications, campaigns and other activities. Original linguistic research was supplemented by numerous workshops, interviews, and a survey with those in the sector. By learning from what works, and reforming what does not, the sector can ensure the work it carries out cultivates the values that inspire action.

In the following ten pages, we summarise the report's key findings and recommendations.

Values and frames

Values motivate concern and action

The presentation of facts or data is rarely sufficient in motivating our concern and action. Sometimes this tactic can even be counter-productive: provoking avoidance responses because of the emotions evoked.

What motivate us, consistently, are our values. People access a shared set of values, though individuals prioritise each of them differently. Researchers have grouped this shared set of values into ten value groups, which can be further reduced to two key sets that relate to environmental concern. These are *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* values, and these two sets loosely correspond to two sides of our identities.

Intrinsic values relate to concern for others and the environment: relating to our civic side, and the side that is concerned about environmental issues. Extrinsic values relate to self-interest and financial benefit: our 'consumer' side. The table on the following page gives definitions for these values. These two sets of values are in psychological conflict with each other: it is difficult to act in line with both sides simultaneously.

Intrinsic Values

Self-Direction: *'Independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring'*

Benevolence: *'Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact'*

Universalism: *'Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature'*

These values are strongly associated with behaviours that benefit the environment and society.

Extrinsic Values

Power: *'Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.'*

Achievement: *'Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards'*

When held strongly these values are likely to make people more self-interested and reduce their willingness to act on behalf of the environment. These are values associated with material reward or validation from others.

Research shows that values can be temporarily 'engaged', making people more likely to act on them. After reading words related to *equality* and *fairness* (intrinsic values), we are more likely to volunteer. Reading words related to *power* and *wealth* (extrinsic values) will suppress our motivation to volunteer.

In other words, speaking to our 'consumer' identity suppresses our 'civic' identity.

Appealing to economic benefit, status and public image actively erodes our environmental concern, our long-term thinking, our civic motivation and even our wellbeing. Such communications instead make us more materialistic, less likely to act environmentally (such as recycling or conserving water), and less motivated to volunteer or be politically active.

Values can also be engaged through experiences. Exploring the countryside, for instance, may engage the intrinsic value of *unity with nature.* Over time, values are strengthened by what we read, see, and do. This means that our social, economic and political institutions

(including the third sector) play an important role in shaping our society: how much we care about the environment, how sustainably we live, and how we treat each other.

Frames communicate values

When we hear the word 'nature' we might think of *trees, animals, the outdoors*, or of particular memories and emotions. These associations will be evoked even if we are not consciously aware of it. Every word or concept is mentally connected to a number of associated words, memories, emotions and – importantly – values. This set of associations is known as a *frame*.

Switching words and phrases – or creating different associations between concepts (through metaphor, for instance) – can thus influence the way we understand a situation. Presenting the same information in a different way will change how people think, feel and respond to it. It will also change the values it engages.

These insights have real implications for the conservation sector. If appealing to extrinsic values or using extrinsic frames reduces motivation to actively support the environmental agenda, then the conservation sector must try and avoid these. And conversely, intrinsic values and frames should be used wherever possible.

Communications analysis

The Common Cause for Nature research team conducted original analysis on the communications of the 13 UK conservation organisations to investigate the values and frames they were using in messaging.

Intrinsic communications

We found that appeals to the values behind social and environmental concern were surprisingly rare, apart from those around *self-direction* (such as *challenges, discovery* and *activity*). Examples of intrinsic appeals included: *'Nature is amazing - let's keep it that way'* and *'I know that you share our vision of a future in which people and nature thrive alongside one another.'*

Frames identified that were associated with intrinsic values were centred on *discovery, working together, beauty in nature, and connection with nature.*

The analysis also showed that the communications failed to connect with the 'social' part of intrinsic concern. This might not be surprising, given that they were talking about environmental issues, but it reflects a wider misconception that the public responds to

messages in strict silos like this. In fact, our civic identity encompasses both environmental and social values: and appealing to either of these 'spills-over' into concern about the other.

» **The conservation sector should think about using intrinsic frames more often, as they are likely to foster environmental concern and motivate action.**

Extrinsic communications

Our *extrinsic* sides were regularly encouraged. We were told we could *'save nature'* while we shopped, and offered 10% discounts as if the natural world were any other consumer good. We were even called *'valued customers'* outright.

The *Transactional frame* presented conservation organisations as a business, selling a product (conservation) to a customer (members or the public). This is likely to engage our self-interested identity.

The *Ecosystem Services* frame presented the natural world in terms of the beneficial functions it performs. When expressed in social terms, it is possible such frames can appeal to intrinsic values. However, if a monetary value is attached to the provision of services the frame becomes more extrinsic.

Superhero frames presented conservation organisations as *superheroes* sorting out problems on behalf of others. The audience was instead in a passive role: only useful for the donations they provide, which is unlikely to motivate action. This frame also relied heavily on threat: which has the potential to generate emotional responses that impede action.

» **These types of frames should be avoided where possible: they have the potential to suppress environmental and civic concern.**

Explaining why

Messages often overlooked the causes of wildlife decline and other environmental problems. Without a clear idea of what causes a problem people find it difficult to understand why they need to act.

» **Wherever possible, communications should make the reasons for environmental problems clear.**

Conflicting values

About a quarter of communications that contained values placed opposing values together. The idea that appealing to a range of values will motivate more people is likely mistaken: placing intrinsic and extrinsic messages together can cause mental 'dissonance' or discomfort, and reduce people's motivation.

» **Organisations should avoid appealing to extrinsic values.**

Audience segmentation

There were significant differences in the values expressed to different audiences (business and government; the general public; members and supporters). Tailoring messages to different audiences should not mean appealing to extrinsic values. Communications should vary depending on the audience – civil servants might not be approached in exactly the same way as the general public – but where possible, communication with any audience should foster intrinsic values.

» **Organisations should explore ways of appealing to intrinsic values in different ways for different audiences.**

Measuring success

The values engaged in communications may at times undermine the campaign goals. Whilst a campaign may be successful in financial terms, for instance, it may simultaneously encourage unsustainable behaviours. Organisations should account for this: these impacts may at times outweigh the benefits accrued.

» **Monitoring and evaluation should account for the impact on values and consequent attitudes and behaviours.**

Values and the wider work of the conservation sector

The conservation sector collectively has a huge membership and a broad remit. The organisations within it interact with wider society in many ways. Among the thirteen organisations supporting this project, there were organisations that focused on research, volunteering, policy, landscapes, outdoor activities and learning, international conservation, and more. Each of these activities will interact with the values of those engaged: volunteers, staff, business, government and the wider public. How could the sector carry out these activities with values in mind?

Values-focused campaigning

Advocacy

The conservation sector is in a constant struggle to maintain the place of conservation issues on the public and political agenda. The values and frames in this debate play a vital part in how the public and decision-makers respond to calls to action.

The monetisation of ecosystem services has become an issue of public debate. The values inherent in much of this debate are focused on economic benefits; research shows that this tends to encourage our self-interested, materialistic side. The nature of current market practices in this arena are also individualised and disconnected from the true environmental and social value of 'services', as well as being actively damaging in some cases. We caution, therefore, that this discourse and practice should be avoided and challenged where possible, as it is likely to erode environmental concern.

Frames and debates are often shaped by others (like government departments): the sector in these cases may feel as though they cannot deviate from the language used. This suggests that organisations may want to start collectively thinking about setting the agenda and framing the debate themselves.

Intrinsic frames that the sector could consider in their advocacy are *environmental justice* or *rights.*

» **Organisations should where possible avoid advocating for the monetisation of the natural world; they should instead campaign for the inherent benefits of nature to be embedded in policy frameworks.**

Campaigns

Engagement with nature has a multitude of benefits, including those to health and wellbeing. In addition, experiences in nature can strengthen intrinsic values and thus have many other social benefits. The conservation sector has already carried out much work in this area. More could be done in addressing the barriers to people accessing nature: including socio-economic issues.

The sector is also not operating in a vacuum. Values are engaged, and will influence our thinking, throughout our daily lives. What are people seeing in the media every day? What are children learning at school? These factors can doubtless contribute to strengthening values over time, and will impact how people view the environment and their place within it.

The conservation sector, in working on some of these seemingly distant issues, could find that they have direct and lasting benefits for conservation. In strengthening intrinsic values in society, and challenging extrinsic values, NGOs should find public concern about the environment is strengthened, and lasting.

» **NGOs should focus on how to reconnect people with nature. In doing so, there will be new campaign areas that are highlighted by the values common to environmental concern.**

Engaging with others

How organisations interact with others – the means and processes – will engage with values in others through the experience itself.

Members, volunteers and the wider public

Creating the political space for the changes we need requires a citizenship that will consistently prioritise the environment. This will involve more than putting their hands in their pockets for small change; it will require campaigns, individual behaviour changes, and making the environment an election issue.

The experiences provided in volunteering schemes, sites, and outdoor activities are an opportunity for organisations to encourage motivated action for conservation issues. To do so, they should also reflect intrinsic values: co-operation, community, appreciation for nature, and concern for others. They should also avoid engaging with extrinsic values. And lastly, they should encourage active participation where possible.

This means that reserves should not treat people like passive consumers; volunteers should be given some autonomy; and members should be encouraged to be active arms of the organisation.

» **Encouraging values such as community, self-direction, and appreciation of nature, and treating people as active agents, can motivate broader and more sustained concern about the natural world.**

Private sector

Many businesses have a positive or neutral effect on society and the environment; some may have values much like those of the conservation sector. Others will have conflicting values, damaging the environment directly or promoting values that impede environmental progress.

There is space for third sector organisations to positively influence the companies they work with. However, assessing potential partnerships does warrant consideration. Questions that organisations may wish to ask include: Do the material changes achieved through such partnerships outweigh potential value impacts in the long term? Are the business' values well enough aligned to those of the organisation to strengthen, rather than weaken, intrinsic values?

» **Carefully assess the values implications of private sector engagement.**

How the sector organises

Many of the recommendations of the report suggest that the conservation sector might want to consider how it can support each other's efforts more. There are also implications for the experiences organisations create daily in the workplace.

Working together for a strong sector

To have the strength to challenge the dominant frames in common usage and campaign to address policies and institutions at the level of values may necessitate organisations working collectively.

Many third sector organisations are also connected by a shared set of values: this is true within and beyond conservation NGOs. The public and NGO members also do not exist in silos, often interacting with many different charities. Rather than the competitive threat this can seem, organisations should see this as an opportunity. Understanding these links can open up the potential for unlikely alliances.

» **Organisations should explore ways of supporting and working with each other to build lasting concern about conservation.**

Working practices

As well as influencing the external world, NGOs actively create an *internal* culture. Experiences at work shape the values of staff and therefore their responses both in work and in their wider lives. How decisions are made, how time is spent, working incentives, recruitment and career advancement, leadership, job security and holiday entitlement all impact on what people feel is important.

Leaders, structures and processes should therefore all also reflect the values of the organisation. Through doing so, NGOs can improve staff wellbeing, attract new members and supporters, increase trust and sustainable behaviours, encourage creative thinking, and improve on many other outcomes.

» **Embedding intrinsic values in working practices can reinforce organisational goals and staff commitment.**

A crossroads for conservation

Achieving the goals of conservation requires a public that demands change, and a political system capable of rising to this challenge.

An understanding of values sheds light on how communications and experiences can nurture a person's sense of connectedness to the natural world and motivate them to act. This understanding also highlights the countless conservation activities that are already doing just that, as well as new opportunities for creating change.

Fostering values such as self-acceptance, care for others, and concern for the natural world can have real and lasting benefits in conservation. By using this understanding to identify new areas for policies and campaigning, and by working together to cultivate these intrinsic values, we can create a society that is more compassionate, more connected to nature, and more motivated to protect our environment for generations to come.

Summary of recommendations

When communicating about conservation

Try to:

» Show how amazing nature is and share the experience of wildlife;

» Talk about people, society and compassion as well as the natural world;

» Explain where and why things are going wrong;

» Encourage active participation: exploration, enjoyment, and creativity.

Avoid:

» Relying on messages that emphasise threat and loss;

» Appeals to competition or status or money, or frames that imply a transaction between an NGO and its supporters;

» Economic frames;

» Attempts to motivate people with conflicting values;

» Segmenting audiences based on values.

When lobbying decision-makers

» Don't reinforce unhelpful terms and ideas. Avoid repeating language that appeals to values related to self-interest.

» Be proactive and set the agenda: do not simply respond.

» Encourage decision-makers to experience hands on conservation.

When engaging the media

» Be aware of the implicit values in the language you use.

» Think carefully before using celebrities.

When measuring success

» Measure what matters: connection with nature, values promoted, social wellbeing. Don't focus solely on economic measures.

» Consider not only the immediate material impact of your work, but also the values they and their outcomes will reinforce. Extrinsic frames might succeed in raising money or recruiting members, but will simultaneously diminish environmental concern. Devise new measures of success that reflect this.

When engaging people in nature...

» Act to increase public engagement with nature.

» Address barriers to engagement with nature.

» Build connections with community and affiliation.

» Promote self-directed activity in nature.

» Avoid engaging values that clash with this objective in activities in the natural world: transactional frames and extrinsic incentives or making nature feel threatening.

Encourage active participation

» Develop models for more active participation in your organisation for members and volunteers. This could be in existing spaces: at reserves or sites, or online.

» Connect with younger supporters: encourage their active participation in organisational activities.

» Minimise low participation and transactional engagement.

» Encourage community and volunteer involvement with projects, sites and data collection.

Campaign on Common Causes

» Consider new interventions that will strengthen environmental values and help change the culture: promoting intrinsic values in education, and weakening extrinsic values by backing curbs on commercial advertising or alternatives to GDP.

» Collaborate across the third sector. Explore new ways of collaboration based on common values and shared memberships.

In your working practices...

» Encourage practices and discussion at work that are in line with organisational goals, such as sustainability and inclusivity, and expressing organisational values.

» Promote collaboration, sharing and good communication throughout the organisation.

» Ensure accountability and transparency.

» Choose monitoring and evaluation techniques that reflect organisational values.

Abbreviations

BBC   British Broadcasting Corporation

BCT   Bat Conservation Trust

CEO   Chief Executive Officer

CPRE   Campaign to Protect Rural England

FTSE   Financial Times and the London Stock Exchange

GDP   Gross Domestic Product

MCS   Marine Conservation Society

MP   Member of Parliament

nef   new economics foundation

NGO   Non-governmental organisation

PIRC   Public Interest Research Centre

PTES   People's Trust for Endangered Species

RSPB   Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

TCV   The Conservation Volunteers

TCVS   The Conservation Volunteers Scotland

UK   United Kingdom

VINE   Values in Nature and the Environment

WCL   Wildlife and Countryside Link

WWF   World Wildlife Fund

WWT   Wildfowl and Wetland Trust

ZSL   Zoological Society of London

"There is much to be proud of in terms of conservation success stories. However, despite these successes, there is cause for concern over the state of much of our nature."

State of Nature Report

Introduction

Creating and maintaining a sustainable, wildlife-rich world will require active, concerned citizens and a political system capable of rising to the challenge. Governments, businesses and the public will need the space and motivation to make the right choices.

A large body of psychological research demonstrates that values – the things we consider important in life – are vital in creating this space and motivation. Values are shaped by institutions, communications, and experiences, and the conservation sector inevitably shapes them too.

This report examines the values conservation organisations promote in their communications, campaigns and other activities. By learning from what works, and reforming what does not, the sector can ensure the work it carries out cultivates the kinds of values that inspire action.

1.1 Methodology

Thirteen UK conservation organisations with a broad range of remits came together in 2012 to commission this report. This reflected an acknowledgement across the sector that, despite differences, common problems are faced, and common goals pursued. We thank them for supporting this investigation, and for their willingness to reflect on their work.

We present the results of original linguistic research on these groups' external communications in Section 2 of this report. We also draw on many invaluable insights from those working in the sector, gleaned through workshops, interviews, surveys, and discussions on environmental forums.[i] A literature review builds on recent work in the third sector, and places these discussions in the context of existing psychological research.[ii]

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[i] There were 50 survey respondents; 10 respondents to questions posed on environmental forums; 15 in-depth interviews; and approximately 80 workshop attendees.

[ii] In 2010, *Common Cause: The case for working with our cultural values* was published by WWF, COIN, CPRE, Friends of the Earth and Oxfam. Arguing that the third-sector should re-examine its activities in light of the psychological evidence on values, the report prompted widespread discussion. Subsequent reports scrutinised the work of the international development sector (*Finding Frames: New ways to engage the UK public in global poverty* and *Building Global Citizenship in Australia*); climate change campaign communications (*Energy Security: A Toxic Frame for Progressives?* and *Communicating Climate Change and Migration*); the role of recycling in community change (*Our Common Place*); and the effects of advertising on our values (*Think of me as evil? Opening the ethical debates in advertising*).

We begin by outlining the issues conservation organisations face, and the psychological research on which this report is based (Section 1). After this, we present the findings of our linguistic research (Section 2) and consider their implications for the conservation sector. We then extend this analysis to the wider activities of the sector (Section 3). Finally, we offer some recommendations for further research and discussion (Section 4).

1.2 The challenges of conservation

The conservation movement has enjoyed many successes, in legislative terms, in protecting species such as red kites and otters (see timeline below), and in recent years, in expanding their memberships, volunteer bases and overall resources.

Yet despite these achievements, many key ecological trends continue in the wrong direction. This was starkly demonstrated in the recent *State of Nature* report,[1] the collaborative effort of many conservation organisations, which features a Watchlist Indicator (shown below) charting the decline of several key species. Other species and habitats are also under threat: each year, WWF's *Living Planet Report*[2] has documented a continuing decline in biodiversity and growth in humanity's environmental footprint.
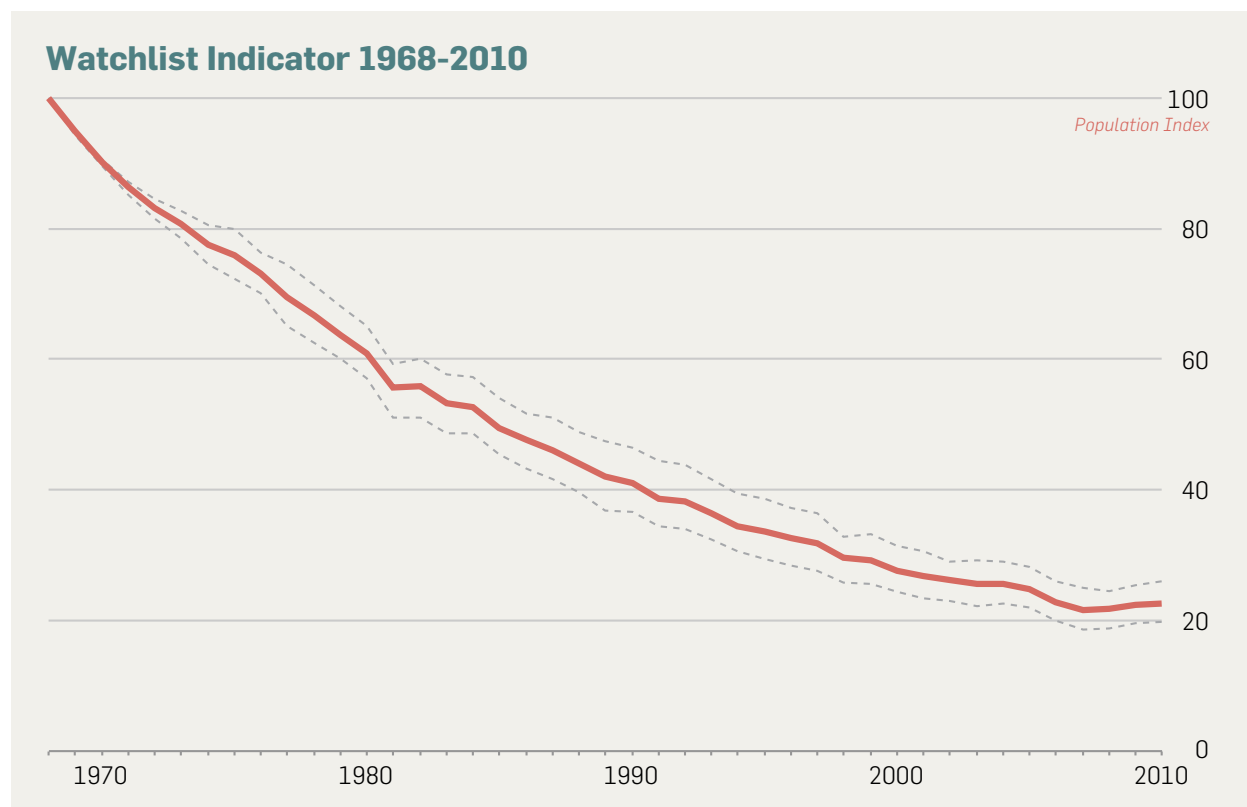
Figure 1: The Watchlist Indicator: the average population trend for 155 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species.

Conservation Legislation Timeline

1949   **The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act**: created national parks and Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

1979   **Birds Directive**: (Directive 2009/147/EC): introduced Special Protected Areas for the rarest bird species.

1981   **Wildlife and Countryside Act**: Amends earlier legislation.

1985   **Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order**: made it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird, their eggs, or their nests.

1992   **Habitats Directive**: (Directive 92/43/EEC): introduced Special Areas of Conservation for plant and animal species; amended and slightly weakened some provisions of the birds directive.

1994   **Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations**: (amended 2010): brought the Birds and Habitats Directives into force in the UK.

1995   **Environment Act**: gave national park authorities a duty to protect biodiversity.

2000   **Countryside and Rights of Way Act**: strengthened the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and added a new provision for public access to countryside.

2000   **Water Framework Directive**: (92/43/EEC): Set ambitious ecological targets covering all waters across the EU.

2002   **Environment (Northern Ireland) Order**: grants the Department of Environment for Northern Ireland the power to create Areas of Special Scientific Interest (ASSI).

2003   **The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive, England and Wales) Regulations**: brought the commitments of the Water Framework Directive into law in England and Wales.

2004   **Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act**: included more ambitious provisions for Sites of Special Scientific Interest than those set out in the Countryside And Rights of Way Act, and a general biodiversity duty for public bodies.

2006   **The NERC Act**: introduced a biodiversity duty for public bodies.

2008   **Climate Change Act**: set binding targets for the UK's carbon emissions.

2008   **Marine Strategy Framework**: (2008/56/EC): similar to Water Framework Directive, but with considerably weaker provisions for the marine environment.

Non-exhaustive list compiled using data from jncc.defra.gov.uk and http://europa.eu/pol/env/index_en.htm

These trends are not news to conservationists; nor are the serious deficits in public concern and political will. Urbanisation, overwork and cultural change have disconnected us from the natural world. This affects children in particular, but is far from limited to them.

Deploying influence and resources effectively requires careful decision-making and difficult trade-offs. Funding constraints, dwindling environmental concern and a government unsympathetic to the environmental agenda make these challenges more pressing still.

1.2.1 Conservation strategies

Conservations organisations generally adopt two broad strategies:[iii]

- Seeking leadership from key business and government actors;
- Mobilising the public.

Working with business and government

> '*I think we need to engage the private sector in order to achieve the changes we need to survive. Each engagement, on a personal level, will have a positive impact on the 'corporate individual'.*' — **Survey respondent**

Engaging businesses and governments is often seen as the most efficient way to effect change. It may be that a dozen or so key people – Ministers or CEOs – play a pivotal role in changing laws, policies and business practices. Conservation NGOs have invested a considerable amount of time and money on lobbying in recent years. Jason Clay of WWF claims[3] that changing the way 100 key companies operate could shift the global market to a sustainable state, and has spent a lot of time and energy engaging with these companies.

This strategy is often founded on compromise: organisations pursue politically realistic policies that happen to benefit the environment. Many conservation NGOs employ economists, in-house or as consultants, to point out where economic and environmental interests align. The implicit (sometimes explicit) message is: 'It doesn't matter whether you share our concern for conservation. This is a change that will deliver economic benefits, so it is enough that you support it on these grounds'. Examples include the economic case against Heathrow's third runway; the economic benefits of energy

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[iii] These categories were identified in workshop discussions about the sector's activities.

efficiency and renewables; and the valuation of landscapes in terms of tourism revenue. This approach poses inherent dangers, as we shall explore later.

> *'It feels like we've been fighting to defend the gains achieved by previous generations of conservationists more in the past few years'* **— Survey respondent**

Unfortunately, the changes to law and policy this strategy has achieved are not proportionate to the conservation problems they are designed to address. Moreover, even where successes have been achieved, there is no guarantee that they will last. The Government has often turned its back on environmental commitments for political reasons, attempting to sell off much of the forestry estate; reviewing the Habitats and Birds Directive, proposing to reform planning and opposing the EU's precautionary ban on neonicotinoids, to name only a few examples.

> *'Environmental policy is now in the hands of people... who have no more feeling for the natural world than the Puritans had for fine art. They are busy defacing the old masters and smashing the ancient sculptures. They have lit a bonfire of environmental regulations, hobbled bodies such as Natural England and the Environment Agency and ensured that the countryside becomes even more of an exclusive playground for the ultra-rich'* **— George Monbiot**

Less scathing analyses than George Monbiot's (above) find that political momentum on environmental issues is lacking. Wildlife and Countryside Link's annual *Nature Check* report finds that even when high-level commitments are made, they may not secure changes in practice. Of the twenty policy areas it reviewed, it considered only two to be well-designed and on-track (see figure below). The two seen as on-track and well-designed are its opposition to whaling (16) and support for a ban on the trade in ivory (17). In the opposite corner is the delay to the Marine and Coastal Access Act (14).

Working with decision-makers undoubtedly has its benefits, but its limitations are obvious. Existing political processes, rather than environmental needs, dictate the pace at which our efforts proceed. Organisations can only present policies they perceive as relevant to their audience: anything more ambitious can appear politically or commercially naïve, undermining the organisation's credibility and risking its access to decision-makers.

UK Environmental Policy, 2012

Well designed policy

Delayed

On track

Poorly designed policy
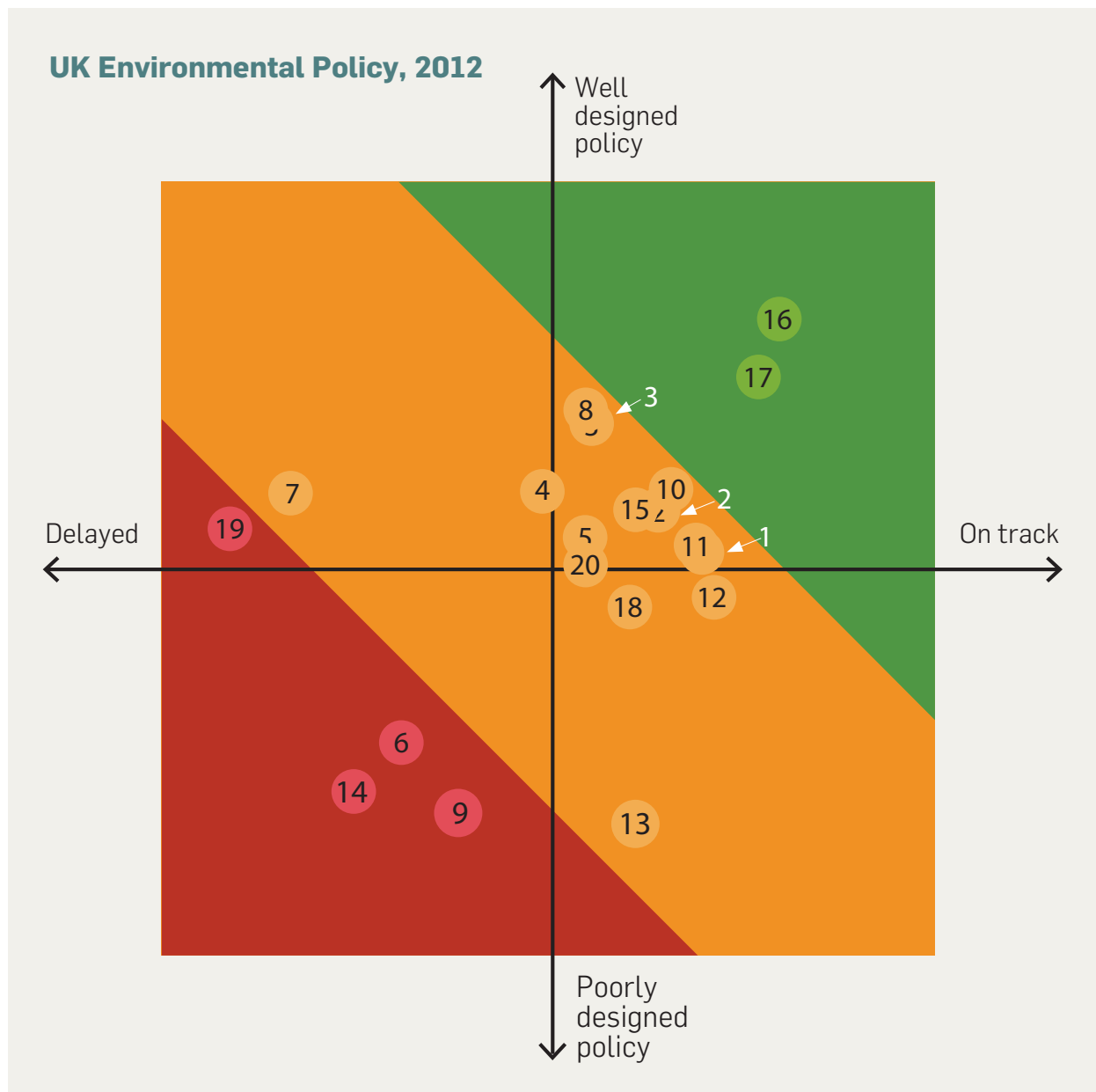
Figure 2: An overview of the Government's environmental policies.[4]

There is thus a tension between what is necessary and what seems possible. How should we handle this trade-off? Answers will vary, and different organisations favour different approaches at different times. There is arguably little point expending resources on unfeasible goals, however laudable; but steadily accumulating small victories has failed to achieve what is necessary: perhaps, despite the risk of failure, we should attempt to strike these problems at the root?

> *'Institutionalised. Stuck in an intellectual rut. We're watching the natural world deteriorate around us at an unprecedented pace, heading into the next global mass extinction, but we're unable to change what we do and challenge the causes of this decline in a meaningful way.'* **– Survey respondent**

More fundamentally, why do we lack the political space to respond in a proportionate way? Any serious answer to this question must acknowledge the deficits in public concern and engagement. Without wider public support, decision-makers and those that lobby them will continue to view more ambitious laws and policies as naïve and unworkable. The public, then, have a key role to play in tackling conservation problems.

Public programmes and campaigns

> *'[There's] a gulf between those who view conservation through the lens 'keeping things as they are' and those who begin with the bigger picture and approach conservation as part of a systemic issue for human society that includes climate change and massive social justice issues.'* **- Survey respondent**

As many conservationists recognise, it is necessary to foster deeper, broader concern among the general public. This may require more political or consumer action; more contact with nature; or more recruitment and more fundraising, to empower our organisations further. These objectives will often be complementary, but (as we argue in Section 2), some ways of soliciting donations and memberships may erode people's commitment to civic participation and engagement with nature.

Putting people in touch with nature is valuable in itself – whether directly, through volunteering, education, encouraging outdoor activities and opening reserves to the public; or indirectly, through changes to school curriculums, campaigns for more green spaces and calls for greater access to the countryside.

These programmes also raise funds and help achieve important conservation goals. Nevertheless, many of the people we spoke to worried about 'shifting baselines', or what one workshop participant called 'the new normal': the way in which each new generation becomes accustomed to a different level of biodiversity loss, landscape conservation and development. When David Attenborough warns that 'no one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced', he reflects a widespread sense of unease.

The sector spends a lot of time and money engaging the public, and has been rewarded with growing incomes and expanding memberships. But, as many of those we spoke to pointed out, this may change. Growing membership 'churn' (the number of old members

dropping out as new members come onboard), and years of government cuts have made third sector incomes increasingly unpredictable. At the same time, environmental concern[i], civic engagement and time spent in nature[5] appear to be in decline.

A multi-country GlobeScan poll finds that, since 2009, environmental concern has been falling around the world. It has now reached twenty-year lows.[6]

Global Environmental Opinion, 1992-2012

"Very serious" issue
Average 12 countries

Shortage of fresh water

Depletion of natural resources

Water pollution

Air pollution

Loss of biodiversity

Climate change

Automobile emissions

80%

70%

60%

50%

40%

1992   1998   2000   2003   2006   2008   2010   2012
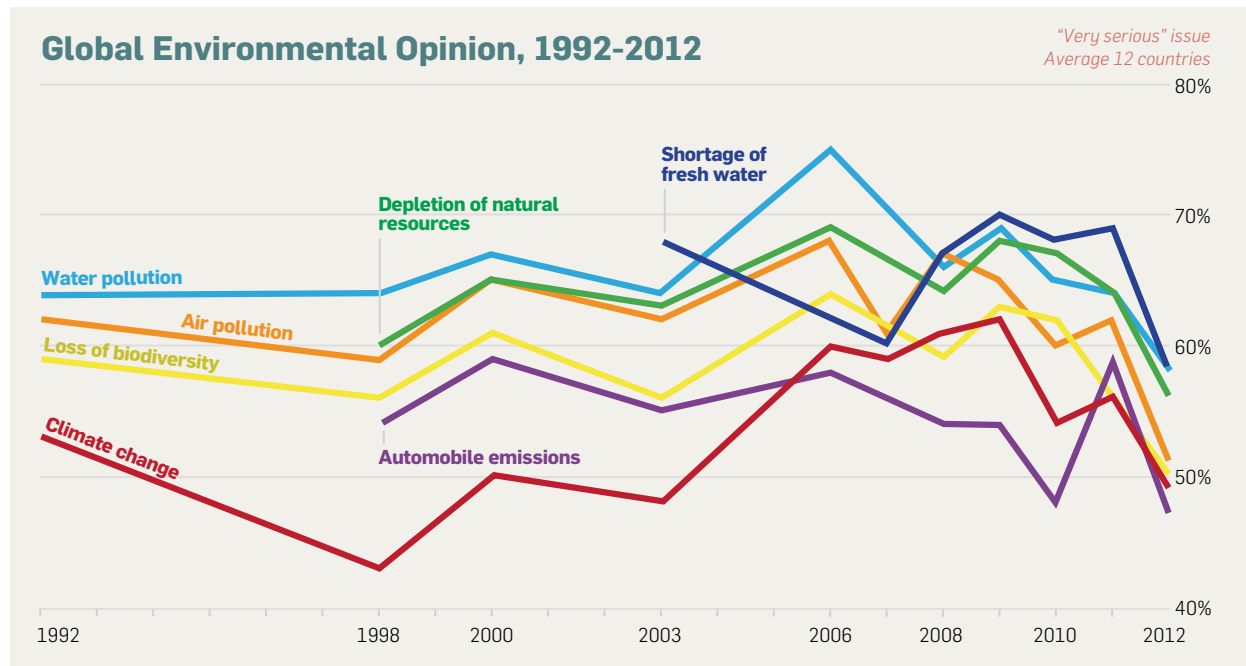
Figure 3: Public concern about environmental issues.[iv]

Only a minority of the public prioritise the environment as the most important national issue,[7] while just two in five people are prepared to pay more for a product that is more environmentally friendly.[8] Carbon emissions have continued stubbornly to rise, in the face of energy efficiency measures and economic recession – all in stark contrast with conservation groups' rising incomes and growing memberships over the same time period.[9]

– –

[iv] Average of 6,774 citizens of 12 countries (Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, Turkey, UK and USA) who answered 'very serious' to how serious each issue was.

Conservation NGO Membership, 1971-2011

Total members

Legend:
- Ramblers
- CPRE
- Woodland Trust
- Friends of the Earth
- WWF-UK
- Wildlife Trusts
- RSPB

Y-axis: 0, 500,000, 1,000,000, 1,500,000, 2,000,000, 2,500,000, 3,000,000

X-axis: 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1995, 1999, 2004, 2008, 2011
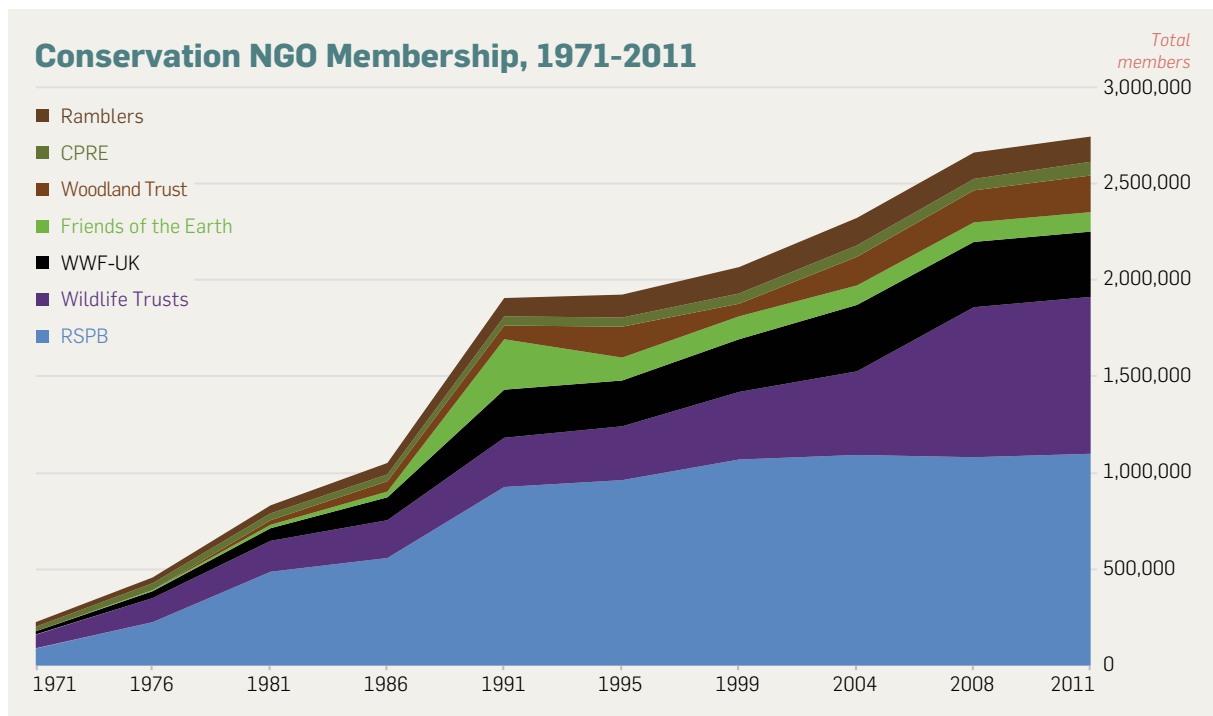
Figure 4: Membership of selected environmental and conservation NGOs.

Conservation NGO Income, 1970-2011

Total income

Legend:
- Marine Conservation Society
- Friends of the Earth
- Greenpeace
- Wildlife Trusts
- RSPB
- WWF-UK

Y-axis: 0, £50m, £100m, £150m, £200m, £250m, £300m, £350m

X-axis: 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010
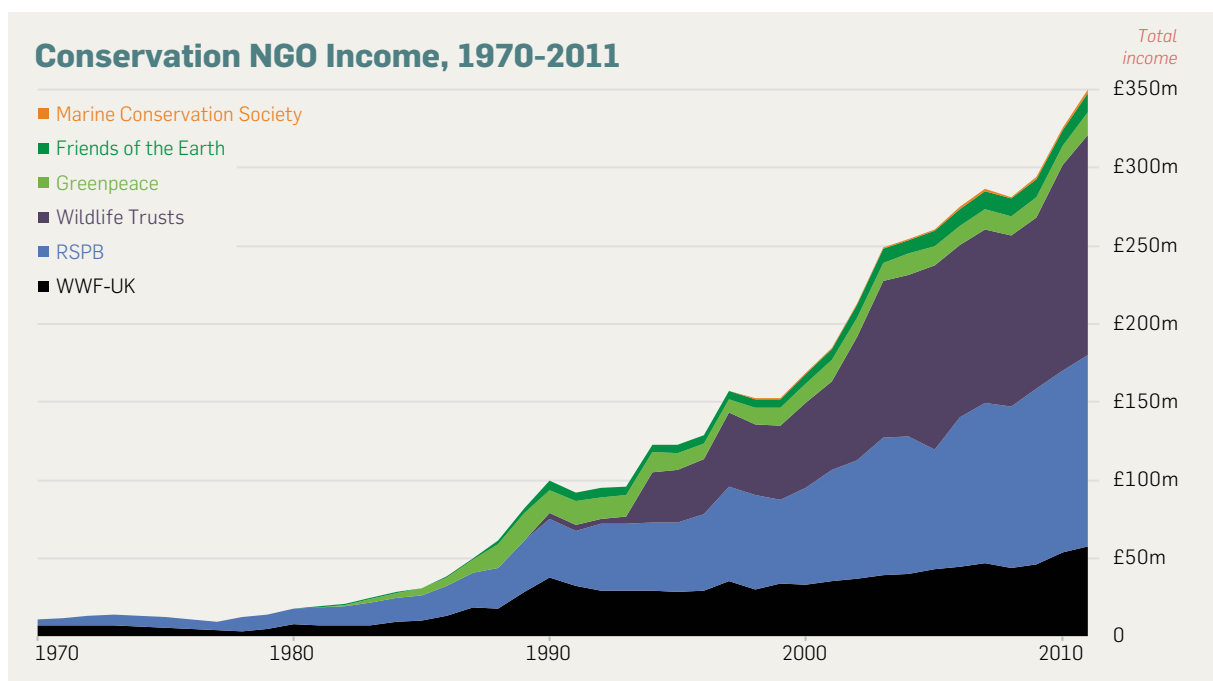
Figure 5: Income of selected environmental and conservation.

This raises a number of questions. First, are NGOs doing all they can to strengthen support for action and foster engagement with nature on the part of members, volunteers and the public? Second – and perhaps more challengingly – why do NGOs' soaring memberships not reflect a stronger, more active (rather than weaker) civil society? Could the methods by which success was achieved actually have eroded public concern? These are difficult and uncomfortable questions, but should not be ignored. One way we can begin to answer them is to consider how organisations appeal to society's values.

1.3 Why communicating the scale of the problem is not enough

Like many interest groups, conservation organisations try to motivate public concern by providing information about the scale of environmental problems. Unfortunately, the way we process and respond to such information is not always 'rationally', in the traditional sense of the word. When factual information threatens our identities, the facts tend to 'bounce off' – and sometimes even entrench our existing beliefs. As Dan Kahan, who has written extensively on the subject, writes:

'The prevailing approach is still simply to flood the public with as much sound data as possible on the assumption that the truth is bound, eventually, to drown out its competitors. If, however, the truth carries implications that threaten people's cultural values, then … [confronting them with this data] is likely to harden their resistance and increase their willingness to support alternative arguments, no matter how lacking in evidence.'[10]

1.3.1 Emotions and our ability to act

'In our work we've found that people dislike being made to feel guilty; they make small inroads and then see factories belching pollution.' **– Interviewee**

Reminders of the severity of environmental problems – the extinction of much-loved species or damage to the countryside, for instance – can provoke strong and unpleasant emotions such as fear, grief and guilt. In the face of such emotions, people will often deploy strategies that direct their thoughts elsewhere: avoid disturbing information ('I'd rather not read about it'); seek diversion in more immediate pleasures ('Might as well enjoy the time we have left before the apocalypse'); or deny the problem ('we've dealt with bigger issues in the past'; 'it's all a left-wing conspiracy').[11]

Threats narrow the focus of our attention. So when an issue inspires fear, we generally rate it as important. Overwhelming threats, however, are likely to induce a sense of impotence ('it's too big – what can I do about it?'). People consider climate change more important after looking at images depicting its potential negative impacts, such as scorched, cracked ground, but feel less able to do anything about it. When shown more optimistic images depicting solutions, on the other hand (such as a futuristic solar farm), people feel more able to act, but less concerned about the problem.[12]

There is then a delicate trade-off: how far should organisations describe problems and how far offer solutions? Which takes priority: concern or willingness to act?

Guilt and fear in particular make us feel more vulnerable, and less in control. Tell people they 'should' help – evoking guilt and obligation – and they will be less helpful than those asked whether they 'would' help – who are offered more control.[13] People also respond to feelings of insecurity by attempting to exert control elsewhere, or retreating into materialistic comforts – behaviours that can harm the environment.[14]

Positive messages, on the other hand, make us feel more positive and more empowered. They can also make us think more creatively. In one study, researchers split university students into groups, showing each group a short film designed to evoke a specific emotion: footage of penguins to generate amusement; 'fields, streams and mountains in warm, sunny weather' contentment and serenity; 'young men taunting and insulting a group of Amish passers-by in the street' anger and disgust; and a 'cliffhanger' ('prolonged mountain climbing accident') anxiety and fear. They then set the students a task. Those prompted to feel positive emotions were more likely to 'see the big picture', and more creative.[15] Fear and negativity focus our attention; positive emotions widen its scope. When we feel positive, we are also more willing to address our unhelpful or unhealthy habits. Groups shown a 'positive' film, for instance, sought out information that challenged their behaviour more often.[16]

For this reason, communications must take care when pointing to the risks of extinction: it can actually *reduce* people's environmental concern and willingness to donate.[17] This does not rule out the use of negative messages: we will need to communicate the severity of environmental threats, and this will help others recognise their importance. However, it does suggest that it is useful to be aware that such messages can inhibit action and evoke a sense of helplessness. Positive messages, pointing out opportunities to act, are more likely to motivate and empower.

1.4 Values motivate change

A large body of psychological research finds that values are an important driver of our beliefs and actions.[18] Values are the things we consider important in life, be it wisdom, equality, creativity, respect for elders or social status (to name only a few). They have been found to influence many social and environmental attitudes and actions, including how we vote; how much energy we use; how much time we spend outdoors; whether we care about climate change; recycle; or buy organic food.[19]

Following decades of cross-cultural research in countries around the world, social psychologists drew up a list of over 50 values.[20] These values appear to be universal: we all hold them, but differ in how we prioritise them.[21] Some are compatible. When we prioritise creativity, we are likely to prioritise curiosity; when not motivated by helpfulness,

We map these relationships in the diagram below. Compatible values appear closer together; conflicting values further apart. According to these relationships, we can sort values into ten groups.[23]
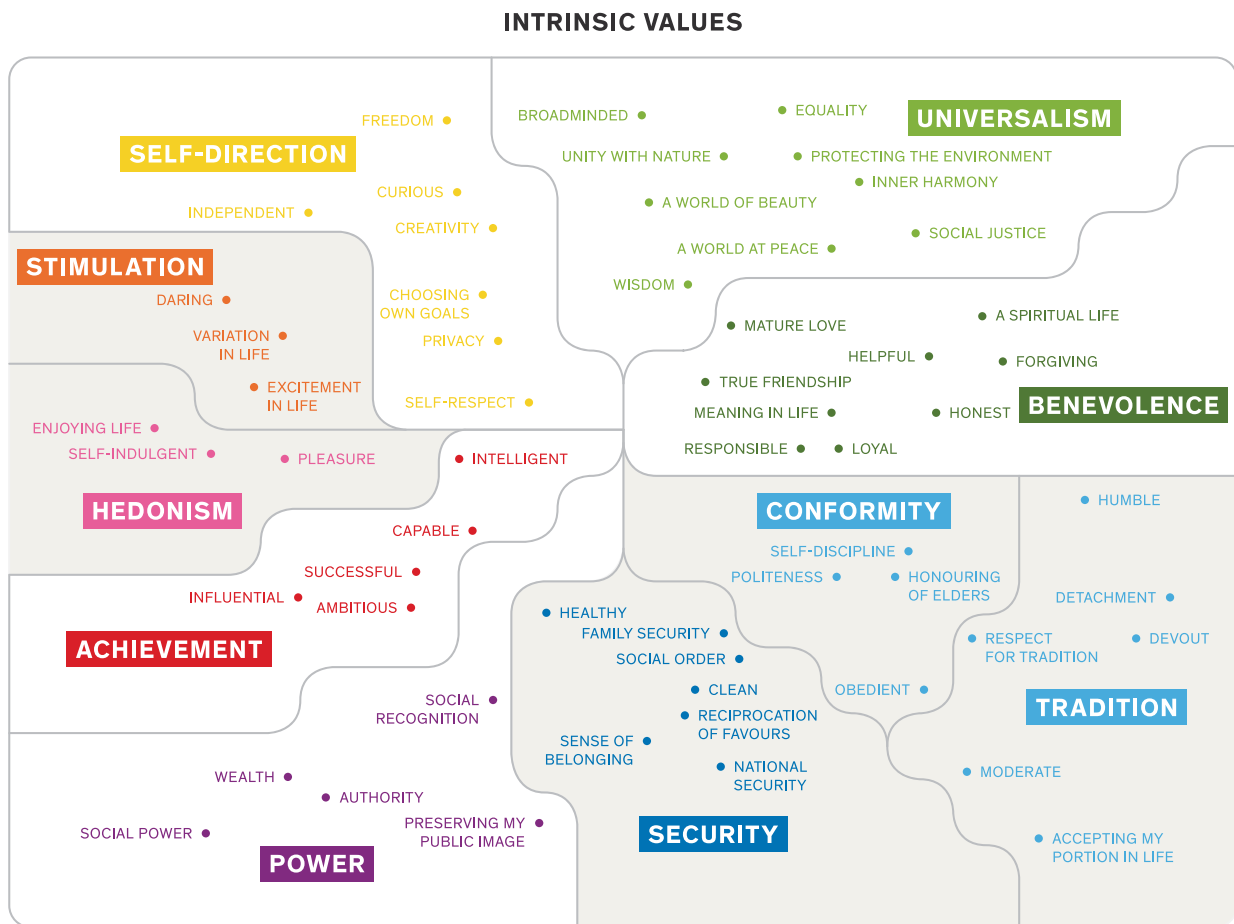
INTRINSIC VALUES

EXTRINSIC VALUES

Figure 6: Values map: statistical representation of the relationship between values.

Value groups

UNIVERSALISM
UNDERSTANDING, APPRECIATION, TOLERANCE AND PROTECTION FOR THE WELFARE OF ALL PEOPLE AND FOR NATURE.

POWER
SOCIAL STATUS AND PRESTIGE, CONTROL OR DOMINANCE OVER PEOPLE AND RESOURCES.

BENEVOLENCE
PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE WELFARE OF PEOPLE WITH WHOM ONE IS IN FREQUENT PERSONAL CONTACT.

ACHIEVEMENT
PERSONAL SUCCESS THROUGH DEMONSTRATING COMPETENCE ACCORDING TO SOCIAL STANDARDS.

TRADITION
RESPECT, COMMITMENT AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE CUSTOMS AND IDEAS THAT TRADITIONAL CULTURE OR RELIGION PROVIDE THE SELF.

HEDONISM
PLEASURE AND SENSUOUS GRATIFICATION FOR ONESELF.

CONFORMITY
RESTRAINT OF ACTIONS, INCLINATIONS AND IMPULSES LIKELY TO UPSET OR HARM OTHERS AND VIOLATE SOCIAL EXPECTATIONS OR NORMS.

STIMULATION
EXCITEMENT, NOVELTY AND CHALLENGE IN LIFE.

SECURITY
SAFETY, HARMONY, AND STABILITY OF SOCIETY, OF RELATIONSHIPS, AND OF SELF.

SELF-DIRECTION
INDEPENDENT THOUGHT AND ACTION – CHOOSING, CREATING, EXPLORING.

Figure 7: Values groups' definitions.

The distinction between intrinsic (self-direction, universalism, benevolence) and extrinsic (power and achievement) values is particularly relevant to social and environmental concerns.

People that prioritise universalism and benevolence are more likely to act out of concern for others and the environment – through charitable giving, volunteering and spending time outdoors. They are also more likely to trust others, and to engage more actively with the issues they care about.[24] By contrast, those that prioritise extrinsic values are likely to be more materialistic; less concerned about others' wellbeing; less concerned about the natural world; more self-interested; less trusting of others; less questioning of government; more militaristic; more racist; more sexist; and more prejudiced in general.[25]

Most importantly for those that care about the environment, people who strongly endorse such self-enhancing, materialistic goals also express more negative attitudes towards non-human nature. One cross-cultural study, for example, found that people who prioritise power and achievement tend to view humans as consumers of, rather than part of, nature, and show less concern about the impact of environmental damage on other humans, children, future generations and non-human life.[26] Where these self-enhancing values promote concern about ecological damage, this concern is limited to an egotistic consideration of how such damage might affect one *personally*. These values are also associated with significantly less positive attitudes towards the environment, and with lower levels of biophilia (the desire to affiliate with life).[27]

People who strongly endorse materialistic aims and extrinsic values say they are less likely to turn off lights in unused rooms, cycle, buy second-hand, recycle and reuse paper – among other positive environmental behaviours – and are less likely to engage in civic activism.[28] In a forest management game, highly extrinsically-oriented people were also less likely to conserve their 'trees' than those who endorsed intrinsic values more strongly.[29]

1.4.1 Values can be engaged

We are often advised to 'meet your audience where they are', normally with the implication that we must appeal to the extrinsic values of the public. But researchers find that people usually consider intrinsic values – especially benevolence (concern for those with whom you have close personal contact) – most important, while only a small minority prioritise wealth, image and success (extrinsic values). This seems to hold across a wide range of cultures: benevolence came first in over 60 countries, with universalism and self-direction usually in second and third place.[30]

Though we may generally prioritise certain values, however, we do not always act on them: people that prioritise extrinsic values will sometimes act out of benevolence, and vice versa. Different experiences evoke different values, and make us more likely to act on them: simply reading words related to benevolence, for instance, makes us more likely to help others. Images can also engage our values: looking at pictures of wild places fosters a sense of connection with nature, among other pro-environmental and intrinsic values.[31] Images and experiences that evoke awe – a jaw-dropping view of snow-capped mountain ranges, or a cloud of bats at dusk – can engage intrinsic values and influence our behaviour accordingly. The experience of awe, researchers find, makes us more patient, less materialistic, happier and more willing to help others.[32] Draw people's attention to the importance of particular values and you will increase the weight they place on them, bringing about temporary changes in their attitudes and behaviours.

The see-saw effect

Anything that evokes a value tends to suppress opposing values. Reading words related to power and achievement suppresses the opposing value of benevolence, for instance, and makes us less likely to help others. The relationship resembles a see-saw: as one value rises in importance, opposing values fall. People asked to reflect on the importance they attached to extrinsic values – such as popularity, public image and wealth – became less concerned about for the environment and felt less personally responsible for its protection.[33]

In another experiment, researchers drew peoples' attention to either the economic or environmental benefits of car-sharing. They then noted in which bin the participants threw away their scrap paper. People informed about environmental benefits went for the recycling bin. Participants given a mixed message – noting both environmental and financial benefits – were no more likely to recycle than a control group. The extrinsic appeals 'crowded out' the intrinsic.[34]

The spillover effect

When we evoke one value, we also evoke compatible values – sometimes with surprising results. People asked to reflect on the importance of broadmindedness, affiliation and self-acceptance (intrinsic values), for instance, subsequently considered climate change and the loss of Britain's countryside more important. No mention of the environment was made: engaging intrinsic values alone was enough to alter the group's attitudes.[35]

A message's effectiveness will depend not only on the information it conveys, then, but also on the values it engages. Values motivate concern and action on a huge range of issues. When we engage extrinsic values, we also reduce people's concern about the disabled, global poverty and human rights.

This poses a major challenge for anyone working on NGO communications. Appeals to extrinsic values may sometimes attract larger audiences – a valuable goal in its own right – but will strengthen extrinsic values and thereby encourage anti-environmental behaviours.

1.4.2 Values can be strengthened and weakened

Frequently engaged values become more important to us. If we regularly discuss the importance of helping, we will probably become more benevolent. If we regularly read about power and money, we will probably value power more highly. So our values change, when we are young especially, but also throughout our lives.

Any number of factors can influence our values, then: our education; families; friends; faith; the media; political institutions; laws; policies; economic conditions; campaigns; the time we spend outdoors; and so on.
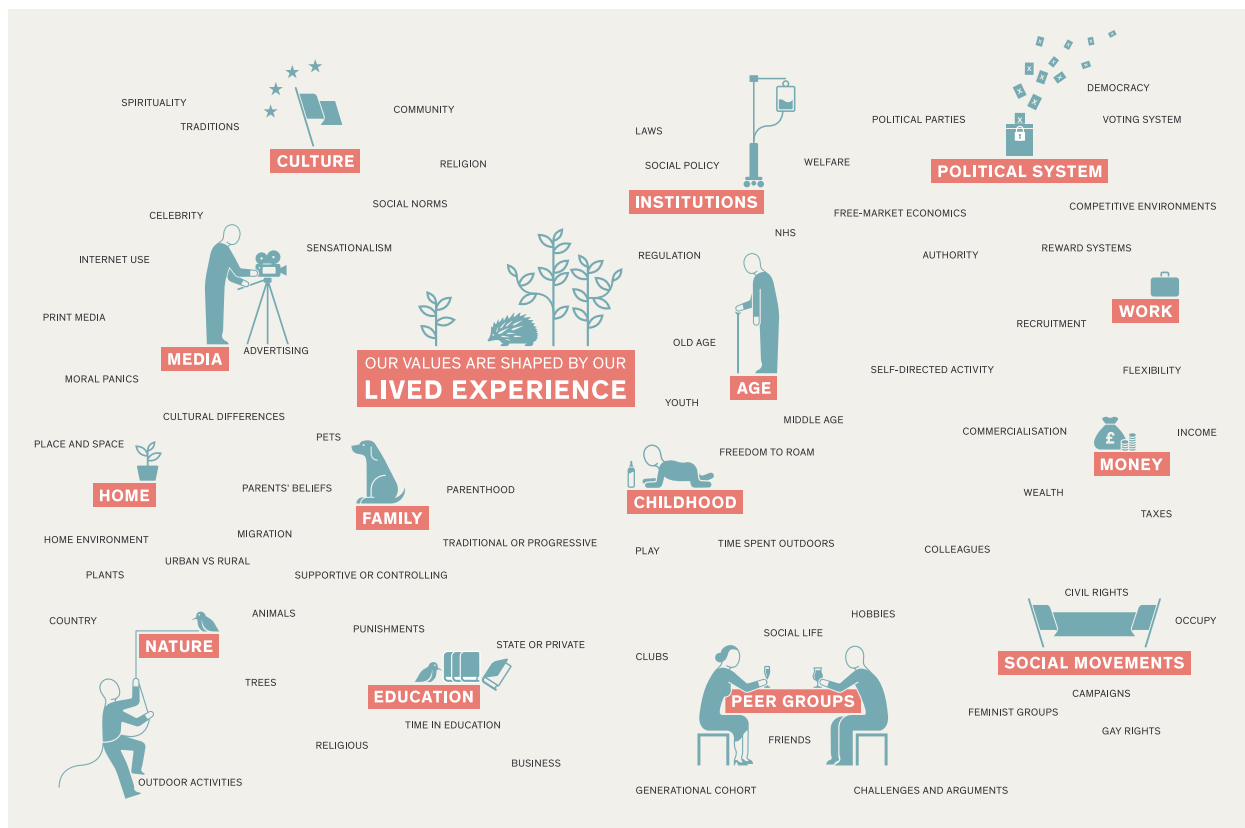
Figure 8: Influences on our values over the course of our lives.[36] (Those highlighted in red are derived from empirical research.)

1.4.3 Frames are the vehicles for communicating values

Values are connected with 'frames': patterns of mental association comprising concepts, worldviews and linguistic expressions.

> 'Fresh air, clean water and healthy, growing trees' feels better than 'conservation'.
> **— Survey respondent**

We associate every word or concept we know with other words, memories, emotions and values. The word 'nature' may evoke trees, animals, the outdoors, and perhaps particular memories and emotions – childhood holidays or feelings of contentment. We will evoke these associations when we hear or read the word, even if we are unaware of it. Implicit associations make us see the world a certain way; so do choices of words or phrases.

> 'There is a need to frame environment and people together more often. There is still a widespread sense that the needs and health of the two are in conflict.' **— Interviewee**

Consider the different connotations these phrases evoke:

- *Public funding / taxpayers' money*
- *Wildlife / biodiversity*
- *The value of nature / natural capital*

Different representations of the same referents can evoke very different feelings and responses. For instance:

- Participants in a 'Consumer Reaction Study' favoured wealth, image and success more than those in an (otherwise identical) 'Citizen Reaction Study'.

- Consumption-related words made people more competitive and less cooperative.

- In a water conservation game, the label 'consumer' made people less responsible, trusting and cooperative than the label 'individual'.[37]

Organisations often have to decide how to respond to frames created by others. When this occurs, the following questions should be asked:

1. What values does the frame embody?
2. Is a response necessary?
3. Can the frame be challenged? If so, how?
4. Can (and should) a new frame be created?

Example: The Red Tape Challenge

The Red Tape Challenge is a government initiative aimed at cutting legislation, which is presented as a 'burden' (a 'raft of regulations') that 'hurt business' and 'do real damage to our economy.'[38]

1. What values does the frame embody?

The frame presents legislation as a bureaucratic barrier that needs to be removed. Business interests are the top priority. This may promote power and wealth (extrinsic values) over society and environment.

The Government claims it wants to cut only 'inefficient' pieces of legislation, but 'challenge' implies that it aims to remove as much 'red tape' as possible. How different might the response have been to a simple 'review of existing legislation' or even 'review of cuts to environmental and social protections'?

2. Is a response necessary?

Participating in the consultation risks promoting and strengthening the negative frame. Failing to participate, however, risks environmental concerns being ignored altogether.

3. Can the frame be challenged?

Organisations could avoid using the language of government and challenge it wherever possible – in letters, consultation responses and face-to-face meetings. They might state, for example: 'If this is to be a fair, evidence-based review it should not use language that portrays legislation as an unnecessary barrier'.

4. Can a new frame be created?

A new, intrinsic frame could strengthen opposition. Organisations could:

> **Focus on the intrinsic value of nature:**
  'We in the UK are very lucky to have so many amazing landscapes, habitats and species, and laws that benefit both them and us. Our government's decisions should reflect the concern most people feel for wildlife – and ensure that everyone can enjoy the benefits of connecting with nature.'

> **Reframe the debate as positive rather than negative:**
  'There has been a groundswell of public support for new laws ensuring people can thrive in harmony with nature.'

> **Reframe 'red tape' as 'green foundations':**
  'Support our green foundations - laws that make sure people, landscapes and wildlife are properly looked after.'

Creating new frames: recommendations

Contesting the frames used by media and government is difficult, because they are being constantly reinforced. To change them, conservation groups will need to work together – possibly through umbrella organisations such as Wildlife and Countryside Link.

"Get creative in the forest!"

Values in the communications of the conservation sector

The research commissioned for this report examines values and frames in conservation groups' communications. We analyse the same texts using complementary techniques: a search, to see how often key value-laden words are used; and subjective analyses of the values and frames present.

It is based on a large body of research and on existing methodologies,[39] but its scale, subject matter, and use of methodologies in combination make it a highly innovative study and necessarily exploratory in nature.

2.1 Methodology

The research team asked the 13 partner organisations to collate all the communications they produced for external audiences in the last six months of 2011.[v] These were sorted into three categories according to their audience: 'general public'; 'members and supporters'; and 'business and government'. The researchers then analysed them in three ways described briefly below.[vi]

Table 1: Methodology

Automated quantitative analysis All texts; 3000 documents	An academic panel recorded interviews with staff from each organisation and analysed a set of texts from the conservation sector. On this basis, they compiled a list of search terms corresponding to each value. A computer program then counted the number of times each word appeared in the texts. As a control, we also counted the number of times these words appeared in the British National Corpus – a set of millions of documents designed to give a rough approximation of 'general English usage'.
Subjective quantitative analysis 10% of texts; 300 documents	We examined ten percent of each organisation's communications, making a subjective judgment about which values they endorsed, and how strongly. We then assigned each communication a score of between 0 and 3 to denote the strength with it expressed a particular value: 0 for 'not expressed'; 3 for 'strongly expressed'.

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[v] One organisation was not able to submit materials in time, and so was not used in this analysis. Another provided materials from two arms of its organisation.

[vi] For a longer explanation of this methodology, see the Methodology section.

Qualitative frames analysis Small subset; 13 texts	A cognitive linguist analysed a small portion of the documents in depth, examining the different frames they used and the values associated with them.[vii]

2.2 Values analysis

2.2.1 Comparison with general usage

Conservation groups did not seem to express any of the values more often than they were used in general English: there was no clear difference between the texts we examined and the 'general usage corpus'. Benevolence and universalism values in particular – which we might expect to appear frequently, since they express concern for others and for nature – were rarely endorsed. This may be a missed opportunity for NGOs to provide a strong moral voice in society, helping foster values of compassion and environmental concern.

2.2.2. How often was each value expressed?

The graph below shows how often the 13 organisations used the words associated with each value. (Examples of such usage in phrases and sentences appear in grey boxes throughout this chapter.)[viii]

_____

[vii] The longest document was selected from a random sample of each organisation's materials.

[viii] Direct references to organisations have been removed. Definitions are all from Schwartz, S. (1992).

Full Results
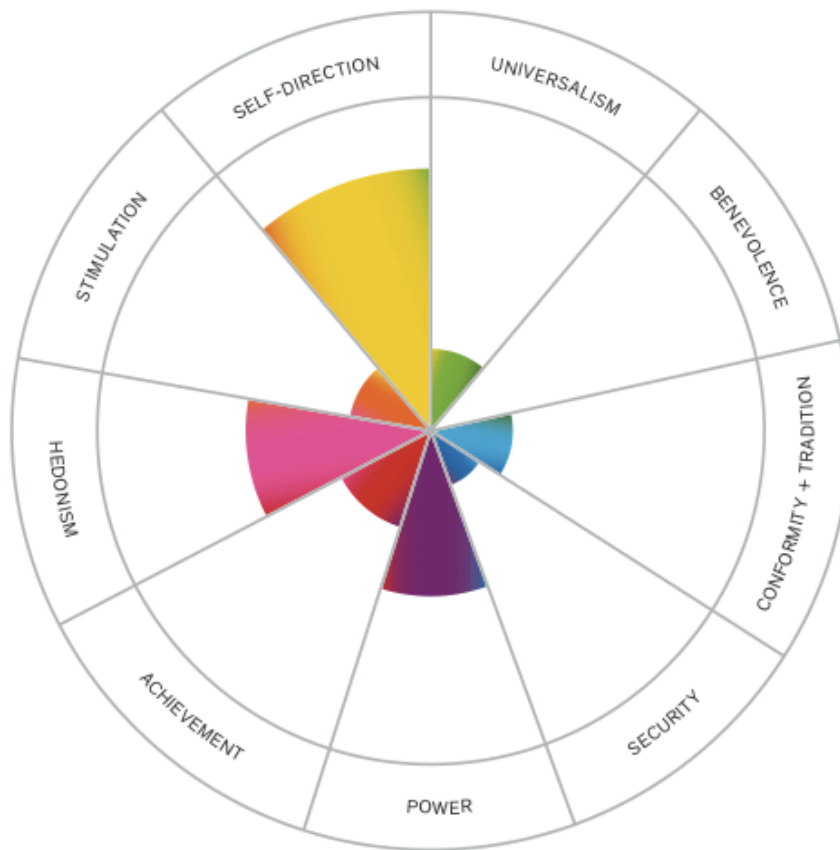
Figure 9: Average frequency of use of values words across organisations' communications, July-December 2011.

Appeals to intrinsic values

The results in the graph above show that words deemed to express self-direction values appeared with the highest frequency.

This is a rather striking result. While we might associate conservation groups with universalism and benevolence, they seldom used words associated with these values – perhaps reflecting dominant discourses in media and society.

This finding was surprising to the research team and the decision was made to search for another set of words, which we will term 'direct appeal' words. These were terms that would constitute part of a *direct appeal* for support. These were *assist, aid, give, contribute, save* and *support,* as well as extensions of these (such as support*ing*).

Direct appeals

Direct appeals, as we defined them, generally presuppose that an audience cares about environmental conservation: they therefore solicit support without appealing to any particular value. The results of our analysis are depicted below.
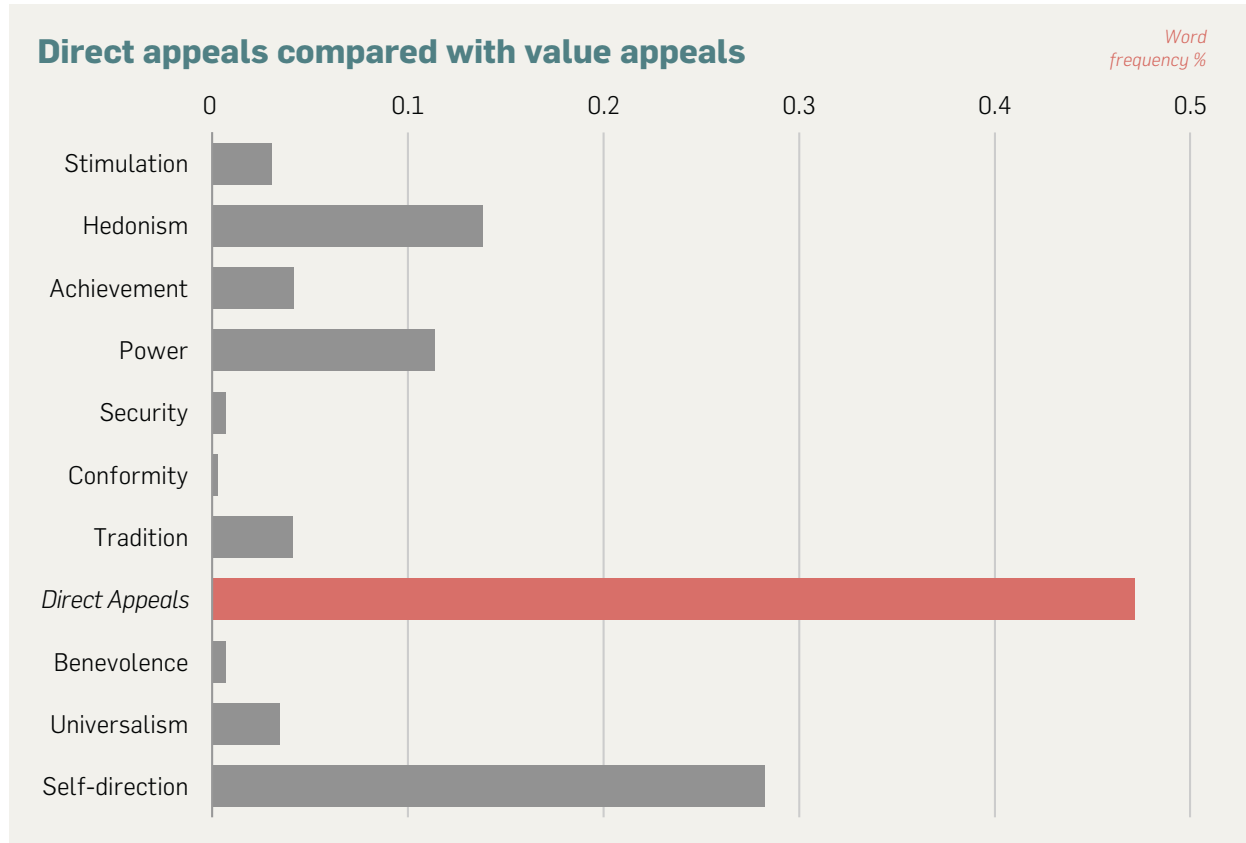
Figure 10: How often 'direct appeals' appeared, compared with value-relevant words

Conservation groups seem generally to rely on direct appeals when soliciting support. Though they may engage intrinsic values through the species or landscapes they mention, they pass up an opportunity to embed their messages in more active appeals to universalism values: *unity with nature*, *equality*, *broadmindedness*, and so on. Words such as 'help' and 'save' also evoke a sense of danger or threat. As we suggested earlier (Section 1.3), such messages can actually impede environmental action.

Making Direct Appeals

Examples from the texts:

'Will you help us save [animals] from extinction?'
'Your membership helps us...'
'And believe me, they really need your help.'
'We need you to support our work...'

Universalism

While the frequency with which universalism was appealed to appears low, it is worth noting that it is also possible that such appeals may be particularly difficult to detect through word searches, as universalism is arguably more abstract and less tied to particular objects than other values. We may also have a sparser vocabulary to express universalism, which may not play a large role in our everyday discourse.

Expressing Universalism

Understanding, appreciation, tolerance and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.

Examples from the texts:

'Nature is amazing - help us keep it that way.'

'I know that you share our vision of a future in which people and nature thrive alongside one another.'

'This is the first step to creating a generation who care for each other and the natural world and understand the ways in which we can help to protect the planet by minimising our impact.'

'...protecting Wildlife for the future'

'...the best long-term outcome... for the country, the climate, communities and the countryside'

'...to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature'

'...working together for people and forests'

'The sights and sounds of nature are part of your everyday life – wherever you live'

Benevolence

Like universalism, benevolence (concern about the welfare of those with whom you have close contact) appeared infrequently. Various images, however – including those personifying animals – may be seen as implicitly embodying benevolence values, a topic we explore further in our frames analysis.

Appeals to benevolence values are sometimes difficult to distinguish from appeals to universalism. Benevolence values evoke a sense of *relationship* with another person, often part of one's 'in-group' (which might be a nation or a conservation group). Concern for nature or all life expresses universalism values. But appeals to benevolence may engage universalism values indirectly. 'Help us to help bats' invokes a supporter's relationship with the Bat Conservation Trust, but also with non-human nature. Key words that may denote appeals to benevolence include 'group', 'members', 'we', and 'community'.

Expressing Benevolence

Preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact.

Examples from the texts:

'You're no longer a visitor... you're one of the team.'

'Enjoy time with friends and family, learn more about your local area and even look after the environment'

'Without your support we would not be able to carry out our work safeguarding all the places we love to walk.'

'We want to help local authorities and developers work to give everyone equal access to green spaces and all the benefits that go with them.'

'Co–operate with people'

Self-direction

Self-direction values – expressed in words like 'choosing', 'creating', 'exploring', 'discovering' and 'learning' – appear most frequently; Only *direct appeals* crop up more often. This is encouraging, as such values are likely to bleed over into universalism values and bolster environmental concern, particularly if combined with appeals to community and pro-social goals.

Expressing Self-Direction

Independent thought and action –choosing, creating, exploring.

Examples from the texts:

'…your dream your decision'

'Choose your challenge '

'Discover, explore, conserve, share'

'Set personal goals'

'Discover new areas near you, meet new people and enjoy the beautiful winter scenery'

'Get creative in the forest'

'Take action.'

'My true nature is an inspiring creative project that invites young people to reflect on what nature means to them and why it's important'

'If you want to go on a journey of wild discovery… let us help you investigate the wonders of the natural world.'

'It's another way for us to bring people closer to nature using a unique combination of the arts and nature.'

Appeals to extrinsic values

Many texts included terms associated with power; achievement-related terms appeared quite rarely. As we point out above, engaging or prioritising power (and achievement) values saps our motivation to act on behalf of other people and the environment, but it can sometimes make sense to appeal to power values despite the risks. We explore this theme in more detail later.

Expressing Power

Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.

Examples from the texts:

'...increasing the influence'

'Schools can help to reduce their carbon footprint and, ultimately, save money.'

'Save money on holidays'

'The world's leading authority'

'We're freezing our prices for 2011, and with no VAT to pay on tickets, that all adds up to big day out at a surprisingly small price.'

'You can help by buying (or even selling) tickets, and there's a £5,000 top prize!'

'...high profile guests'

Expressing Achievement

Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.

Examples from the texts:

'Consider who the team will need to get on-side for their projects and help them achieve this.'

'Leading the way in Weston-super-Mare...'

'an aspiring... competition'

'It is not good enough to take a 'laissez-faire' approach to planning if we want to achieve and expect the right kind of economic growth'

Care is needed in reflecting on our analysis of words associated with both power and achievement values. The word power can refer to individual power or dominance – 'power-over'; alternatively, it can refer to *empowerment*, of communities, for example. The first is most likely to engage power values; the second may engage self-direction, universalism or benevolence. Similarly, achievement can be of group goals, or of individual aspiration for status. Talking about group achievement may be less likely to engage achievement values than talking about individual success: depending on the audience's relationship with that group. Where the context for group achievement is competitive (e.g. winning equipment for your school), we speculate that it is more likely to engage environmentally unhelpful achievement values than where the context establishes a spirit of co-operation ('with your support we have achieved great things').

There is also a distinction between 'mastery,' or demonstrating competence, and seeking achievement for the approval of others (based more on *image*).[ix] Further analysis showed that organisations were appealing to the 'image' achievement words significantly more frequently than the 'competence' achievement words, however.[x]

It is an open question whether simply using terms that evoke power and achievement ('a wealth of experience', for example) risks unwittingly reinforcing extrinsic values. Future research could explore this possibility.

Other values

Other values are less important to conservation goals, but are nevertheless worth examining, as all values are related to each other.[40]

Tradition and Conformity

Tradition and conformity – neither extrinsic nor extrinsic but compatible with benevolence values – appeared infrequently.

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[ix] In more recent work, Schwartz has in fact taken competence-related values out of achievement, though he ascertains that using the original model is still valid. See Schwartz, S. H., Cieciuch, J., Vecchione, M., Davidov, E., Fischer, R., Beierlein, C., Ramos, A., et al. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(4), 663–88.

[x] The frequency with which achievement was expressed was disaggregated according to words associated with 'image' (word such as 'expertise') and 'achievement' (words such as 'capable')

Security

Security values (related to the security of oneself and one's society), seldom appeared. This is encouraging, since security is close to materialism, power and other extrinsic values.[41] Security values appear to prompt environmental action only when it is in an individual's own interest.[42]

Stimulation and Hedonism

Appeals to stimulation and hedonism appeared more often. These values too are neither wholly intrinsic nor extrinsic. Hedonism values are adjacent to achievement values, which are known to have strong negative effects on social and environmental concern when primed.[43] Spill-over between hedonism and achievement values may therefore entail diminished social or environmental concern following their engagement. But it is also important to consider the wider context. Enjoyment and fun in the outdoors, or of nature for its own sake, is more likely to engage with intrinsic values; self-indulgent hedonism or competitive fun may evoke extrinsic concern. Again, this may be something for future research to explore.

Expressing Hedonism

Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.

Examples from the texts:

'Pamper yourself, safe in the knowledge that all the ingredients are good for the planet and good for you'

'...enjoy feeling good knowing you're helping save a species'

'So while you're switching off the lights this year, why not take the opportunity to enjoy a candle-lit sustainable dinner?'

Stimulation values are likely fairly neutral with regard to social and environmental outcomes, because of their position on the values map – however; again, this is certainly context dependent. As many of the examples alongside show, excitement or novelty is often couched in enjoyment of nature, which may well also engage universalism values. We will discuss this further in Section 2.3.

Expressing Stimulation

Excitement, novelty and challenge in life.

Examples from the texts:

'This truly is a wildlife spectacle – a blizzard of wings, a mass of black and white and a cacophony of sound.'

'Wildlife can be seen all year round, but the geese provide a great autumn and winter spectacle.'

'... a day of adventure'

'Take a walk on the wild side of the reserve.'

'Big value, big animals... your big ticket to adventure'

2.2.3 Tailoring the message to the audience

Consciously or unconsciously, the 13 NGOs produced very different messages depending on their audience.

Members and supporters
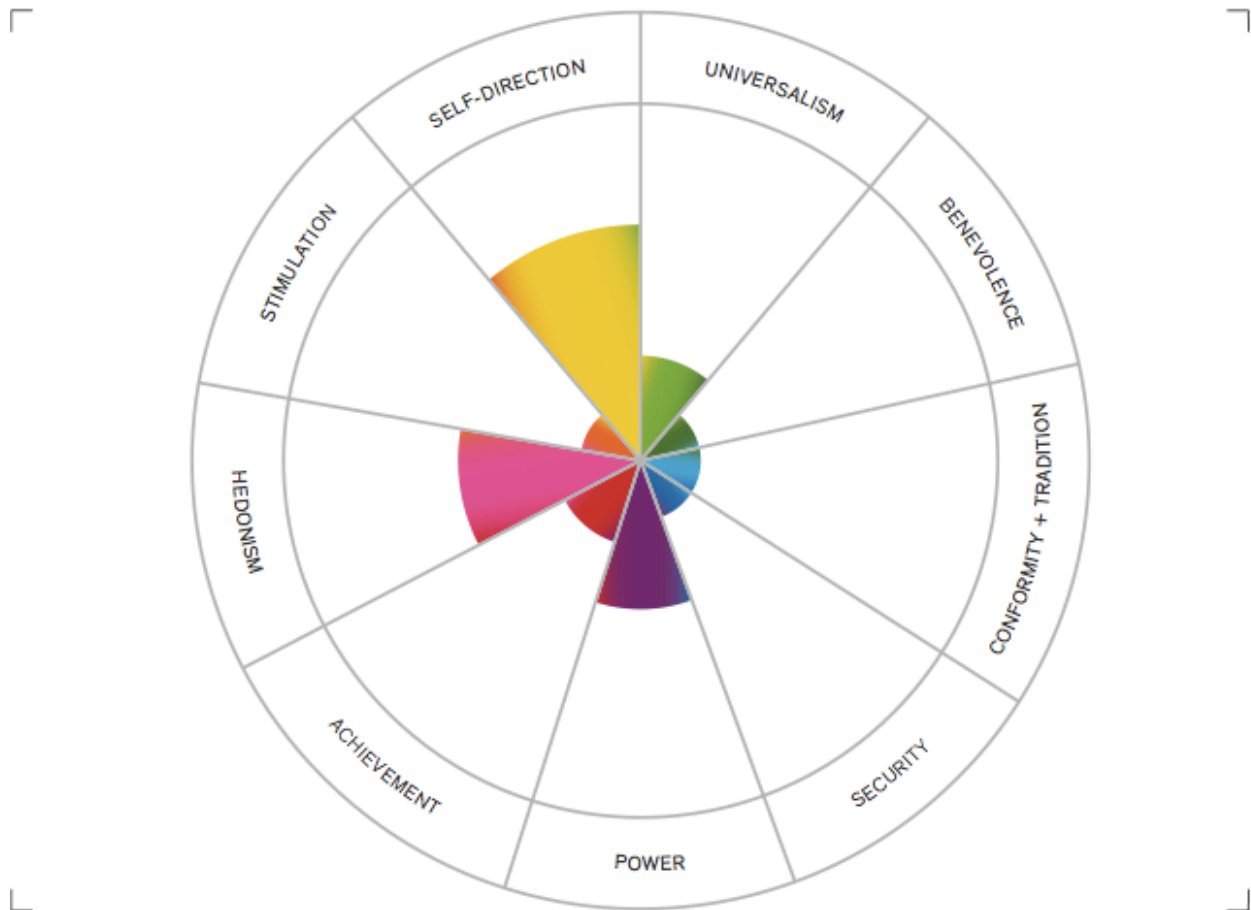
Figure 11: Average frequency of values words in organisations' communications, July-December 2011, to members and supporters.

Communications aimed at members and supporters focus particularly on *direct appeals* or, albeit less frequently, appeals to self-direction (*creativity, autonomy*) and hedonism (*enjoying life, pleasure*). That NGOs ask established supporters for help especially often will come as no surprise. Having established a relationship with members and supporters, organisations seem more prepared to be particularly explicit in making direct appeals for assistance. Yet these organisations apparently neglect to engage intrinsic values in other ways. Engaging these other values – making them more overt – would be likely to provide a basis for simultaneously strengthening those universalism values associated with motivation to give, upon which organisations must rely for direct financial assistance or volunteering.

Appeals to extrinsic values, by contrast, will undermine these values. Yet such appeals are precisely what we found: when speaking to members and supporters, NGOs invoked power and achievement values more often than when speaking to the general public. This may reflect current drives to show 'value for money', or effectiveness with funds; efficiency, or influence. Competitions and giveaways – another popular tactic – can similarly reinforce extrinsic values, and hinder conservation objectives.

The general public
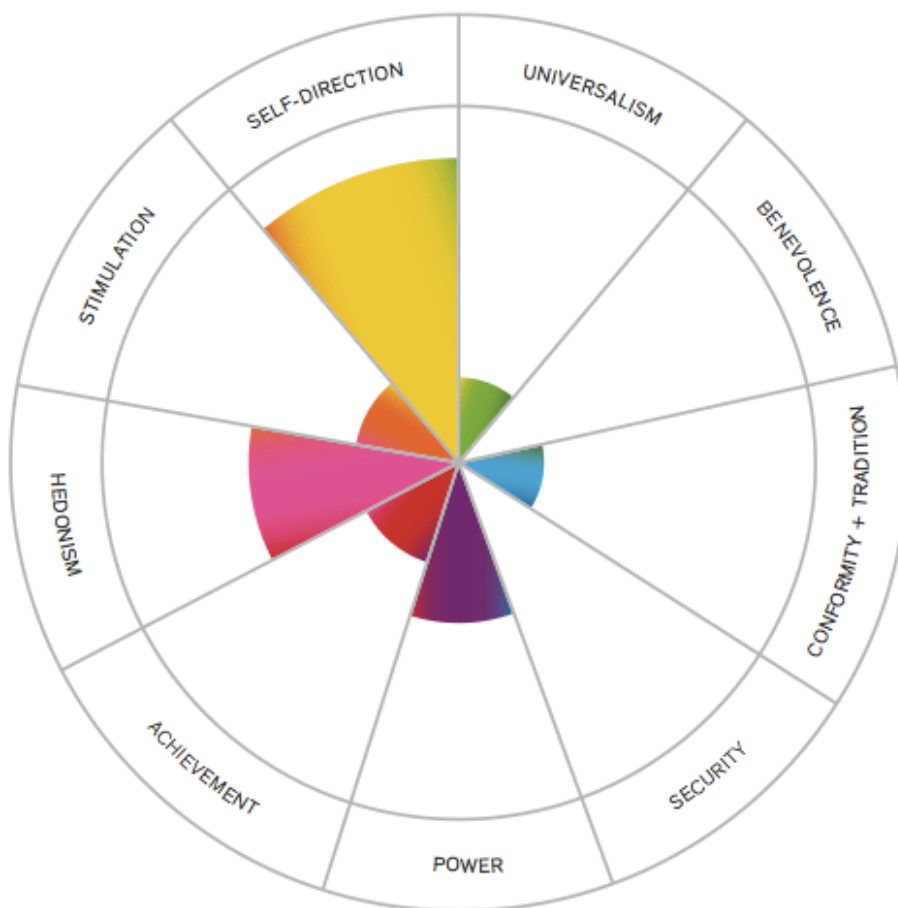
Figure 12: Average frequency of values words in organisations' communications, July-December 2011, to the general public.

Communications designed for the general public used fewer direct appeals, but more appeals to self-direction, hedonism and stimulation than messages aimed at members and supporters.[xi] They also appealed to stimulation more often that messages aimed at business and government. Both our automated and subjective analyses noted that stimulation was uniquely prominent in public appeals. This may reflect a desire to 'sell the

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[xi] Though the automated analysis suggested clear differences, the close reading did not support this finding with regard to self-direction and hedonism.

sizzle':[44] to engage a jaded public obliquely through exciting messaging. When speaking to established supporters with firmer environmental sympathies, NGOs probably consider this tactic unnecessary. Little empirical work explores the social and environmental impact of hedonism and stimulation values, but this may be a useful avenue for future research.

Business and government

Figure 13: Average frequency of values words in organisations' communications, July-December 2011, to business and government.

Many messages aimed at business and government were direct appeals, but failed to engage universalism or benevolence values. In fact they often appealed to power, using words like 'status', 'control', 'authority', 'exclusive', 'elite', 'famous', 'celebrity', 'profit', 'economic benefit', and 'economic performance'. NGOs may deploy such terms because they see them as the natural language of business and government; but this approach carries risks. It may reinforce their use; sap environmental concern in its audience; and encourage elites to recycle such terms in public. There is no obvious solution to this problem, but there is a clear case for caution. There is no straightforward answer, but there is a clear argument for caution in adopting this approach. We discuss this issue in more detail in Section 3.
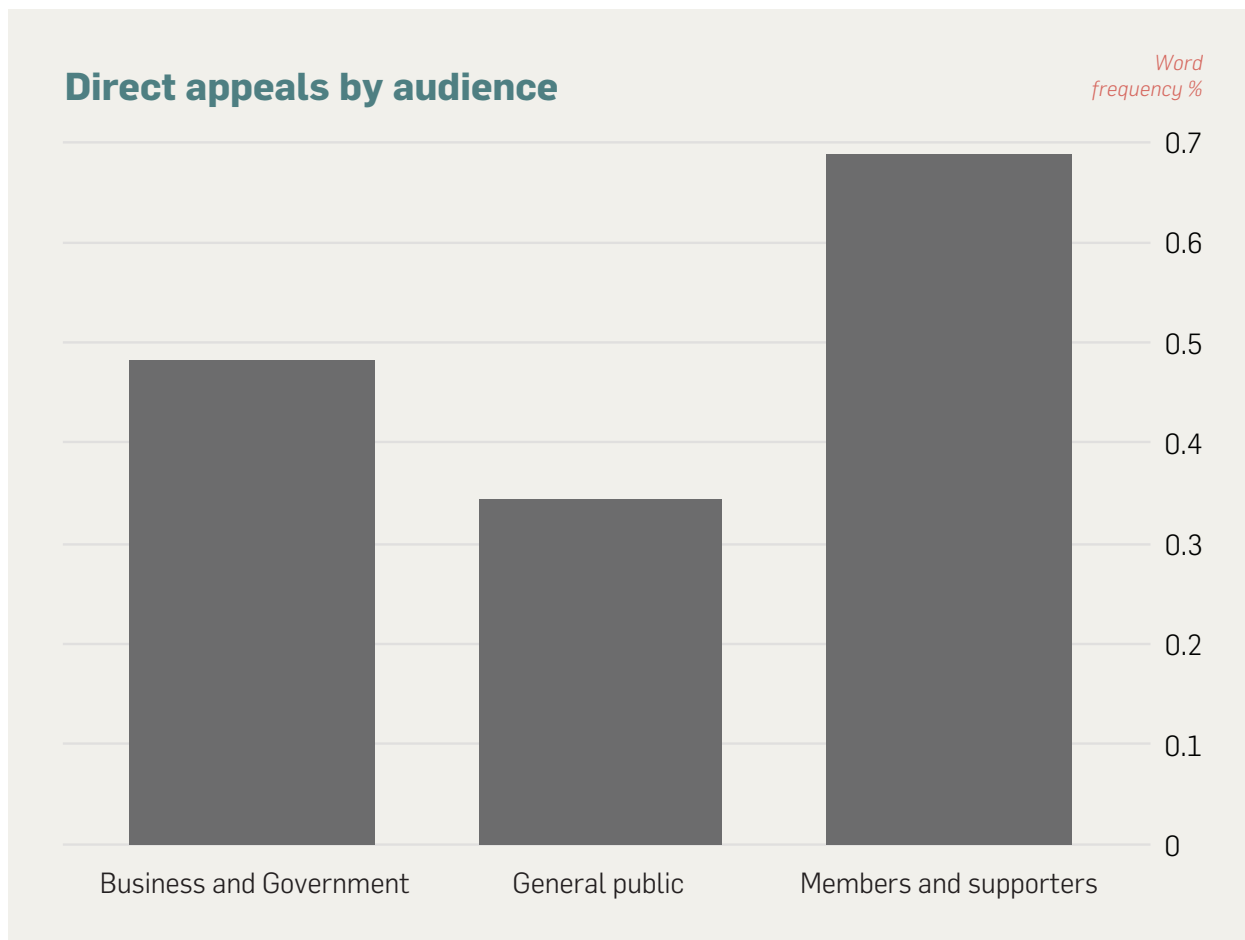
Figure 14: Differences in frequency of direct appeals to different audiences

2.2.4 Values conflicts

Some texts appealed to conflicting values simultaneously. The researcher recorded a conflict whenever a text scored highly on both intrinsic and extrinsic values: in 27% of values-based messages for members and supporters, and 20% of those directed at the general public.

'Covering all the bases' by appealing to multiple values might seem sensible, but is in fact counterproductive. Even ignoring the risk of reinforcing extrinsic values, such messages are less persuasive: readers struggle to reconcile the opposing values, and are left with a sense of dissonance.

Below are some examples of values conflicts, taken from the texts we analysed. Each combination of phrases or sentences appears in the same document.

> **Example 1:** *'BE RESPONSIBLE, USE LESS, REUSE MORE AND RECYCLE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE'; '[win]…a new shirt for the school football, netball or rugby team'; 'you could be a Bottle Champion!'*

An appeal to benevolence ('be responsible') closely precedes an appeal to achievement ('be a Champion'). Psychologically, these values are almost perfectly opposed; placing both in a single text is likely to engender a sense of dissonance and incoherence. Appeals to achievement will also erode social and environmental concern.

> **Example 2:** *'We run a weekly lottery with a jackpot of £1000'' 'And there's a rollover prize… up to £8,000!'; 'we rely on you to fund our work and as I said before, we're incredibly grateful for your generosity.'; 'Your support will help to preserve our natural heritage for future generations to enjoy'.*

Here, the combination of power values ('a jackpot of £1000'), benevolence values ('we rely on you to fund our work'; 'your support will help') and universalism values ('future generations') generates dissonance.

> **Example 3**: *'Save money on walking holidays'; 'Increase the value of your donation by 25% at no extra cost to you'; 'In short, walking is magic'; 'It's a very social activity with the added bonus of helping me stay fit and healthy.'*

This juxtaposes values of all kinds: power ('save money'; 'no extra cost to you'); universalism ('walking is magic'); benevolence ('social activity'); and security ('helping me stay fit and healthy').

> **Example 4**: *'As well as being in with a chance of winning a cash prize, you'll also have the satisfaction of knowing that you're doing more to help us protect birds, their habitats and the wider environment.'*

This sentence combines strong appeals to achievement and power ('winning a cash prize') with appeals to benevolence and universalism ('help us protect birds').

> **Example 5:** *'You can purchase … tickets with camping … for just £99, with all profits going to [the organisation] directly – save money AND the environment!'*

The final phrase is likely to cause dissonance: it is difficult to prioritise money and profit (power values) and environmental protection (universalism) simultaneously.

2.2.5 Variability within the sector

In the graph below, we show how appeals to values varied across organisations. The bigger the bar, the greater the variability.[xii]

Variability of values communication
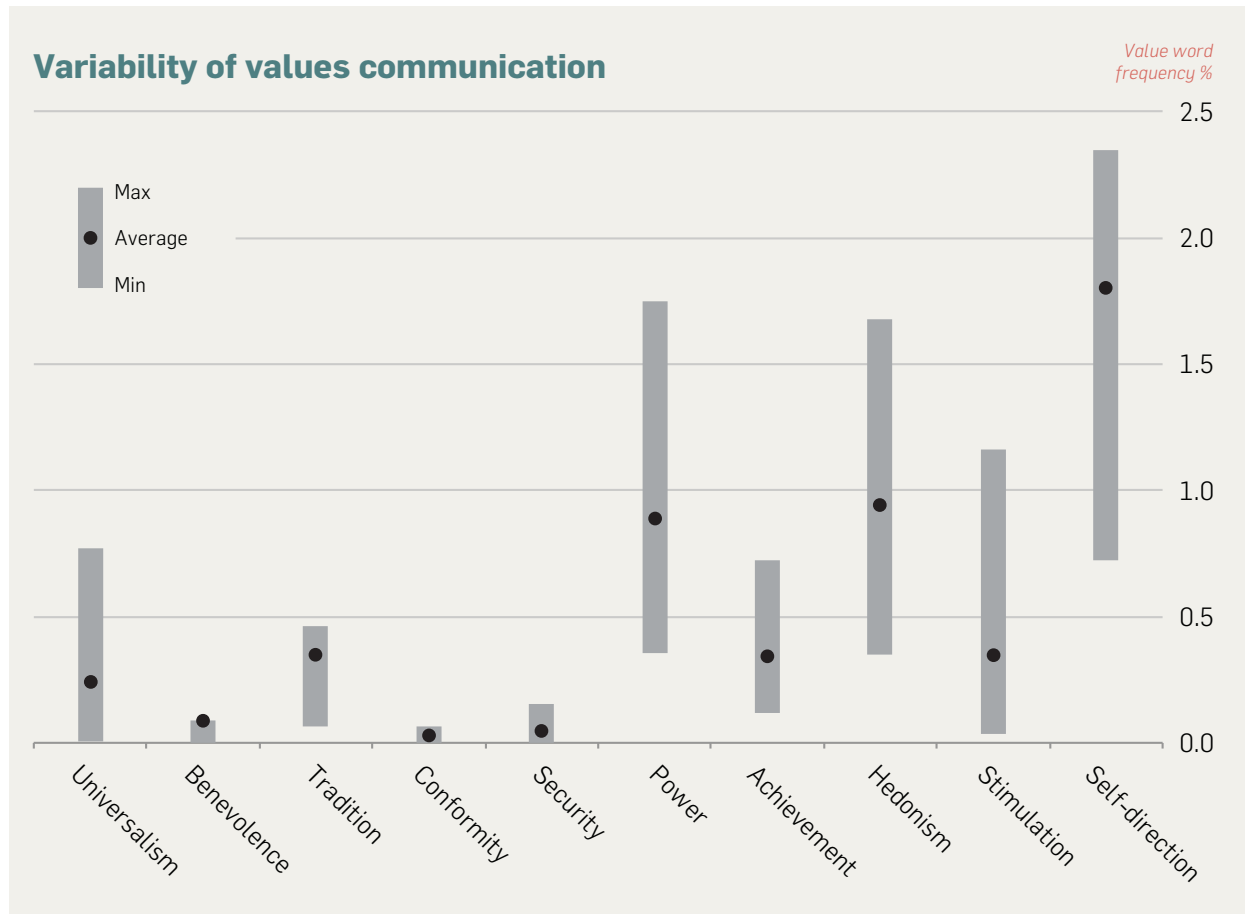
Figure 15: The variability of values expressed across organisations (aggregate all audiences).

Clearly, there were big differences between organisations. One used power-related words five times as much as another. How often each group used universalism values also varied widely. [xiii] In general, the more the sector used a particular value, the more organisations varied. All of them, for instance, avoided benevolence, conformity and security.

Four of the thirteen organisations had averages very close to the average; five have one or two values that are different; and the other three have larger differences from the average.

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[xii] Calculations were made using the automated results.

[xiii] Strikingly, one organisation did not seem to appeal to universalism at all.

One organisation that promotes outdoor experiences appealed to self-direction and stimulation values more often than others; another made the most frequent appeals to both universalism and power.

This variation probably reflects, in part, organisations' diverse remits. Those that often engage policymakers may invoke power values more often; those that work locally may rely on appeals to benevolence; and so on.

However, it may also point to a fragmented sector – singing from different hymn sheets – weakened through its lack of a coherent narrative. Building lasting public and political concern may require a concerted effort from those with the environment at the heart of their missions. We will return to this in Section 3.

Our findings: a summary

- No value was invoked more often than general usage would predict.

- NGOs invoked different values when addressing different audiences.

- The use of some values varied widely across the sector.

- NGOs seldom appealed to universalism and benevolence, though direct appeals for assistance appeared to mobilise such values implicitly.

- Self-direction values were invoked most often.

- Words denoting power values (wealth, status and dominance) appeared relatively often.

- Of those messages that invoked values, around a quarter appealed to at least two conflicting values simultaneously.

2.3 Frames analysis

 After reviewing the texts, the analyst compiled a (non-exhaustive) list of 32 frames. The full list appears in the Methodology section. Many seemed value-neutral, but others did not. Below, we describe and discuss the frames we believe merit closer examination. The table below summarises these.

Table 2: Frames in communications

Intrinsic Frames		Extrinsic Frames	
Frames that relate to connections with other peoples, with and nature, and creative or collective action		*Frames that relate to self-interest, wealth, power and threat*	
Connection with nature	Shared experiences and connection to the natural world	**Transactions and consumers**	Commercial relationships and the public as 'consumers'
Nature Is beautiful	The beauty of the natural world	**Utility and commodity**	Money as the main focus - as a means of valuation, or to enact change
Discovery and exploration	Exploring nature and the outdoors	**Defender and threat**	Powerful defenders protecting weak victims from threats
Working together	Joint action and community co-operation		

2.3.1 Intrinsic frames

Several frames embodied intrinsic values (concern for nature and other people).

Connection with nature

Two frames in particular – *Shared Habitat* and *Universe and Universality* – emphasised connection with nature, but seldom appeared.

Both frames express universalism and benevolence values, emphasising our appreciation of and connection with nature. Wonder and awe, both of which foster pro-environmental action and personal wellbeing,[45] were prominent, while images as well as texts emphasised the direct experience of natural beauty.[xiv] As these frames are likely to reinforce intrinsic values, NGOs should consider using them more often: they are likely to encourage environmental concern and action.

> *Examples:*
>
> 'Our vision is of a world where [animals] and people thrive together'
>
> '...this brilliant world we all share'
>
> '...to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature'
>
> 'The sights and sounds of nature are part of your everyday life – wherever you live'

A third frame highlighting our connection with nature, *Animals like us,* emphasised our connection with nature by personifying wildlife. Animals had a 'family life', 'homes' and 'jobs' (beavers were 'engineers'). Depicting animals as part of a human 'in-group' may appeal to benevolence values; so might images that make us feel closer to a particular animal. Whilst likely a successful method in appealing to people's benevolence values in many cases, this may not be framing that will work for conservation issues that are more complex or cannot be anthropomorphised. If the dominant 'conservation' frame is based on appeals to benevolence (those like us or near us) and photogenic animals, organisations may struggle to press for conservation frames around complex issues such as water policy, or that require universalism values, as they are further away in space or time. However, it may possible to use these frames to create metaphors for understanding more complex issues too. This is another area that may deserve further research.

– –

[xiv] A separate frame, *Subjective Experience*, emphasised first person narrative, emotional terms, vision and the senses.

Nature is beautiful

A related frame focused particularly on the beauty of the natural world is 'Nature is beautiful', and it seems to relate strongly to the universalism value of 'a world of beauty'. This highlights a positive relationship with the natural world and is likely to engage intrinsic motivations.

> *Examples:*
>
> 'Many of Britain's canals are now lush green corridors brimming with wildlife'
>
> 'With the beautiful orange and golden leaves crunching beneath your feet, autumn is the perfect time to get walking'
>
> 'Wildlife can be watched from a hide nestled among trees with good views of the river'
>
> 'We've forgotten how beautiful our wildflowers and grasses are, and this is a great way to see them.'

A related frame was, *Landscapes.* Our researcher felt that further investigation was needed before we could discern with confidence its effects on audiences' values. In some cases, it may describe a shared habitat for nature and people and engage intrinsic motivations and lasting concern for the natural world. In others, it could invoke stereotypical visions of rural idylls, and relate to tradition and benevolence: communities, farming, shared local areas ('our lives and our landscapes'). Within these frames, there were occasional hints that national interests were prioritised. This might succeed in generating concern about particular issues, but risks undermining causes that transcend national boundaries: illustrated in phrases such as 'We want to see a countryside … where efforts to combat climate change haven't harmed the landscape'.

> *Landscape examples:*
>
> 'English countryside'
>
> 'Rural shops and services are closing, and increasingly intensive farming is changing the character of the landscape'

Discovery and exploration

Frames such as *adventure*, *discovery* and *exploration* – sometimes in *wilderness*[xv] – emphasise visual experience and curiosity, often relying on first-hand accounts. These frames are likely to promote appreciation for nature and inquisitiveness (universalism and self-direction), as well as excitement and fun (stimulation and hedonism). The former are intrinsic values worth encouraging, but some care should be taken with the latter, which are closer to extrinsic values.

Examples:

'Explore acres and acres of stunning scenery and herd-fulls of huge outdoor enclosures overlooking the beautiful Chiltern downs'

'With the beautiful orange and golden leaves crunching beneath your feet, autumn is the perfect time to get walking'

'Discover new areas near you, meet new people and enjoy the beautiful winter scenery'

'If you want to go on a journey of wild discovery... let us help you investigate the wonders of the natural world.'

Working together

Two more intrinsic frames – *Joint Action* and *Community Cooperation* – emphasised nature and community, and depicted audiences working for change alongside organisations and others. Using words such as 'we' and 'together',[xvi] they generally imply practical, collaborative action such as volunteering (though they often preceded appeals for money). As these frames seem likely to promote intrinsic values – particularly universalism, benevolence, community, affiliation and self-direction – NGOs should consider using them more often.

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[xv] The idea of wilderness was not common – workshop attendees pointed out this was because many conservationists don't consider there to be any in the UK any more.

[xvi] Where 'we' includes both the organisation and its audience, or society at large.

Examples:

'Take part in our campaign actions, the more people who take action, the stronger our campaigning can be'

'...by acting together, we can save it.'

'...taking part in... together'

'...work together in... community-based...'

'...people coming together...'

2.3.2 Extrinsic frames

Transactions and consumers

Several frames evoked monetary relationships, depicting a group's members and supporters as *Consumers* pursuing transactions with a *Seller* or *Company*.

By making a purchase, donating, or joining an organisation, the 'consumer' can receive goods and services: a gift, magazine, or access to a reserve. This frame appeared implicitly whenever messages suggested an audience could get something for its money. In some cases, audiences could collect points to exchange for goods later, or acquire status symbols ('wear with pride!'). The frame *Money Maximisation* ('multiply your [donation] by 10') resembled adverts offering chances to 'double your money'.

The NGO became a *Seller* or *Business*, manufacturing, marketing and retailing a product or service for profit. Thus, 'The [animals] have also proved their pulling power in our shops, as more than 10,000 ... products have been sold since its launch.' (The same text's later reference to a bank, our researcher pointed out, only reinforced this frame.)

Clearly, these frames are likely to reinforce power values such as wealth and materialism, which are likely to set back conservation efforts.

Examples:

'As a valued customer, we like to keep you up to date and informed about product news and special offers'

'BUY ONLINE & SAVE 10%!'

'It costs just £1 for one chance of winning and is a really great way to show your support for our work.'

'It costs just £3 a month.'

'So how would you feel about giving £2 a month for two chances of winning our lottery each month?'

'You'll even get a free snack and M&S voucher!'

'We're freezing our prices for 2011, and with no VAT to pay on tickets, that all adds up to big day out at a surprisingly small price.'

'You can help by buying (or even selling) tickets, and there's a £5,000 top prize!'

'Save 5% on your next holiday'

'Pre Order Your Copy HERE to get it in time for Christmas and save money'

'Save Nature while you shop!'

Utility and commodity

The texts sometimes portrayed nature as a source of benefits to human beings. When these are social, spiritual and aesthetic benefits, the frame might reinforce intrinsic values. But it risks promoting a self-interested instrumentalism ('protect nature and help yourself'), most of all where such benefits are economic. This was particularly the case in communications that highlighted the economic benefits of nature – which is likely to engage power values, related to concern about money and self. These were infrequent in the small sample analysed – presumably because organisations intuited this was not a frame that would resonate with those who cared about nature. We will discuss this in more detail later.

Utility examples:

'...the vital role wetlands play in our lives'

'...provide health benefits'

'...providing breathing space'

'We need to protect Britain's walking environments and promote the healthy, social and environmental benefits of walking to all.'

Commodity examples:

'How restoring nature makes us wealthier'

'...good for [the environment]; good for the economy'

'The key finding of the NEA is that the benefits that we derive from the natural world and its constituent ecosystems are critically important to human well-being and economic prosperity'

Defender and threat

Defender was the most common frame, and generally appeared in *Direct Appeals*. It portrays the organisation as a knight in shining armour: a heroic 'lone ranger' or 'sole protector', whose special skills make it the 'only one' able to protect a 'dependent', 'critically endangered' victim. The audience often became a subordinate helper, who could support these heroic efforts through small acts ('...if you can give, even a small donation, this will help us achieve so much more'). The frame reflects both the reality of a 'critically endangered' environment and the constraints on NGOs which, when competing for funds and media attention, must present their work as important and effective.

Defender is an ambiguous frame: apparently benevolent (helping the weak), but portraying a heroic agent that may embody power and achievement values. It gets our attention by emphasising threat and danger, but its portrayal of a largely passive audience makes us feel helpless, powerless and even apathetic. It neglects more helpful self-direction values, which emphasise autonomy and competence,[46] and offers little scope for participation. Big problems are met with requests for small actions ('... the brink of extinction ... [action] costs just £3'). All in all, it is likely to be highly disempowering.

2.3.3 Omissions

Causes

Words and grammatical forms evoke frames. In the right context, words like 'protect', 'save', 'safeguard' and 'rescue' will trigger the *Defender* frame:

'Defender protects *Victim* against *Villain/Causer of harm'*.

When you evoke a frame like this, these slots (italicised) need to be filled. Leave them empty and your audience will fill in the blanks themselves, using memories or intuitions of their own.

> *''Cause' and 'blame' are very difficult to disentangle, and in the sector we probably shy away from expressing any concept of blame, because it's not considered productive.'*
> **— Interviewee**

Yet the majority of texts did not always fill these slots, usually failing to identify a problem's cause. NGOs perhaps presupposed such background knowledge, but relate to a broader issue of organisations at times feeling that discussing the root causes may be challenging to audiences. This may be because issues such as diffuse pollution or the Common Agricultural Policy are complex and difficult to explain. It may also be in recognition to the issues discussed above around threat: that big problems can paralyse people. It can also arise from disagreement in the sector about exactly what the specific

causes are. Or it might relate to a discomfort in conveying issues that imply that urgent or particularly difficult changes are required. This ambiguity is potentially unhelpful, for two key reasons:

- Audiences may lack adequate knowledge, be confused about root causes and misunderstand what an appropriate response looks like.

- Even if the assumption is correct, and people are aware of the scale of the problem, there may be dissonance created in regards to the scale of the problem versus the scale of the action they are being asked to take. This is a well-versed argument within the climate change community.

Clarity legitimises and strengthens frames, steering audiences towards appropriate solutions.

This balance between talking about big problems and their causes, whilst not creating feelings of fear and paralysis, is one we will return to later (Section 2.4.3).

'There seems to be a disparity in contemporary messaging around climate change. On one hand, the world is being told that climate change is the largest crisis humanity has ever face; on the other hand we are being told that if they recycle, drive less and maybe sign the odd petition they are doing their part in solving the problem. These two polar narratives cannot simultaneously exist in a cohesive world-view, and thus much of the apathy that emerges could be attributed precisely [to] this dichotomy that leaves the public faltering in the space between these two extremes.

'Contemporary organizations tend to follow this trend in culture by asking for lowest common denominator actions from their members - signing a petition, for example - in the hopes that the simplicity of the ask will enable broad participation. But many people can smell the relative futility of such minimal actions in the face of such a terrifying problem, and thus are disempowered by the limited frame of actions they are being offered. In movement building, which is an emotionally grounded experience, I have found precisely the opposite to be true - provide a space for people to dream big dreams, and it is that quality of imagination which ignites the part of us that truly believes change is possible.' - Staff member of 350.org, personal communication.

Social frames

NGOs rarely mentioned values and frames not directly related to nature conservation. This comes as no surprise; but since all intrinsic values motivate environmental concern, may be a missed opportunity. Conservation groups should therefore feel able to promote liberty, equality and social justice openly.

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2.3.4 Summary

What can we conclude from this analysis? Because it uses only a small sample, our frames analysis cannot cover everything, but we hope our values analysis fills some of the gaps.

Power and achievement values (personal success, wealth, power over others, status, competition and so on) were expressed much more often than benevolence and universalism, which appeared rarely. This corroborates our finding that the more intrinsic frames also appeared rarely. In other words, despite conservation organisations, and the staff within them, consistently expressing intrinsic concern for the environment,[47] this did not appear to translate into their communications with others.

This ought to cause concern. By relying heavily on extrinsic appeals, conservation organisations may unwittingly strengthen materialism and self-promotion, weakening concern for the natural world. The following section will discuss the implications of these findings.

2.4 Communications of the conservation sector: reflections and recommendations

Research consistently finds that intrinsic values – appreciation for the natural world, the desire to protect it, and concern for others' wellbeing – motivate environmental concern. Appeals to extrinsic values, such as self-interest and money, actively suppress our concern about conservation.

We therefore recommend the following, discussed in the following sections:

» Prioritise intrinsic frames.

» Avoid extrinsic frames.

» Active supporters are better than passive ones. Encourage and empower your audience by using frames that portray them as participants and collaborators.

» Organisations should avoid scare tactics.

» Try to explain the root causes of the problems you talk about.

» In general, appeal to the most helpful values of every audience, even if their dominant values are environmentally harmful.

» Rather than repeat harmful frames imposed by others, try actively framing the debate.

» The values you promote will affect groups across the third sector. Your choices will either support their work or undermine it.

2.4.1 Use intrinsic frames

Studies find that *intrinsic appeals* make us care and make us act. When they read them, people donate and volunteer more. (They also feel happier and healthier). When two different petrol station leaflets read 'Care about the environment? Get a free tyre check' and 'Care about your finances? Get a free tyre check', more people took the first (indeed no-one took the second). Follow-up studies found that the intrinsic message made people feel better about themselves – they wanted to feel environmentally conscious rather than greedy.[48]

By neglecting intrinsic frames, the conservation sector may have missed an opportunity. Organisations might even wish to consider running campaigns that do not appeal for funds, but simply promote interaction with nature.

Talk about the beauty and diversity of nature

Connection with nature, Beauty in nature, Discovery and exploration, and Working together all embodied intrinsic values. Try to use them more often.

Limit the use of frames that may negatively impact other conservation issues. Take care when using frames that could undermine other conservation causes.

Animals like us and *Landscapes* both embodied intrinsic values (notwithstanding the ambiguities of the latter), but might make us care less about issues that clash or conflict with them.

> **Intrinsic framing: example**
>
> The National Trust's two-year Time Well Spent campaign featured such lines as: 'Our time', 'Family time', 'Past times', 'Time to see something new', 'Time to get involved', 'Time to feel free, 'Time to be together', and 'Precious time'. These were coupled with pictures of Trust grounds and greens of all varieties, with people enjoying the outdoors together.
>
> The campaign is highly positive and focuses on personal, shared experiences. It is likely to engage strongly with intrinsic values of appreciation of nature and community, friendship (our time), and self-direction (get involved, feel free, something new) through frames such as those described: connection to nature, beauty in nature, discovery and exploration, and working together.

2.4.2 Avoid extrinsic frames

Extrinsic appeals might sometimes attract attention; and organisations may feel great pressure to use the language of politicians, commercial advertisers and mass media. But be careful. Conservation goals cannot be sold like a car or a beer, and appeals to power and achievement actually sap our concern, make us recycle less, volunteer less, and donate less.

Avoid transactional frames

'*[I'd like to see] less emphasis on materialism and consumerism, more emphasis on individual and collective responsibility for ensuring a just future*' **- Survey respondent**

We care less about people and planet when in the role of *consumers* than in the role of *citizens* or *individuals*.[49] In similar fashion, a *Business* frame makes us more selfish and materialistic than an *Ethics* frame.[50] *Consumer* and *Transaction* messages – which often appeared in our sample – therefore pose serious risks. Try to avoid offering discounts, along with anything based on status, image and economic benefits.

Do not emphasise money

It is unlikely that conservation organisations – or others who rely heavily on the donations of others – can escape talking about money. But in many messages, money and consumerism often risked subsuming other concerns. Take care to avoid this.

The use of celebrities in campaigns

In the Common Cause and Finding Frames for Development reports, the authors suggest that the use of celebrities in campaigns – whilst successful in gaining attention – might be unhelpful in achieving the broader goals of the campaign. This is because much celebrity culture is associated with excess, materialism, image and wealth – extrinsic values, which are known to suppress concern for the environment.

One study found that the use of the image of a celebrity in a climate change communication decreased people's concern and also decreased their motivation to act. It would therefore be recommended that organisations consider these factors before using celebrities in their campaigns. This is not an inflexible rule. Hugh Fearnley-Wittingstall and the cross-sector Fish Fight campaign, for instance, are well-suited: Hugh is known for his ethical concerns and food rather than a celebrity lifestyle.

2.4.3 Framing the role of the audience: passive actors versus active agents

Many communications framed the audience as a largely passive actor supporting a heroic defender (the conservation organisation) through small actions like donating, or as a consumer engaged in a transactional relationship. Even more intrinsic frames – a community of concerned people co-operating, for instance – cast the audience in a supporting role: they became part of the 'community' through donations alone. At the same time, many messages conveyed a sense of threat, which can induce apathy, despair and paralysis.

While this still has the potential to motivate support, it may pass up an opportunity to encourage active involvement. Research by Engaging Networks and others has found that while some are unable to engage in other ways, many donors are quite willing to go beyond donations by campaigning or volunteering.[51] Many everyday actions will also have a positive impact on conservation efforts.

The concept of 'adding value' to members and supporters was raised by a number of workshop participants and one interviewee. It was noted that this primarily meant *monetary* value: what would make people *donate* more?

> '*Only recently have [we] been trying to develop a 'supporter' relationship: … from supporter or campaigner to financial supporter*' **– Interviewee**

This may go some way to explaining why achievement and power values (and Consumer frames) appear in these communications so often. NGOs may be trying to achieve a healthy return on their investment. If such frames erode environmental action and concern, however, they may be implicated in high rates of membership 'churn', and in the longer term may even erode people's willingness to act.

Encouraging wider action: examples from the texts

'Working with local and neighbouring organisations, groups and people to identify and map opportunities for connecting and restoring habitats'

'Take part in our campaign actions'

'Action centre: help shape the future'

'Personal travel accounts for 20% of London's CO2 emissions – so please do your bit by travelling to the picnic sustainably!'

Active agents

Frames emphasising autonomous, creative action are likely to motivate people, and may even prompt them to go beyond the stated goals of a campaign. Many of the texts we looked at appealed to self-direction quite effectively; and activities such as volunteer schemes probably encourage it elsewhere.

2.4.4 Explain why, but avoid scare tactics.

Conservationists often emphasise threats – understandably, and much of the time justifiably. But a careful balance must be struck: skirt over a problem, and organisations will fail to inform the public. Scare them too often or too much, and organisations will foster apathy, despair, denial and paralysis. Many of those we spoke to were already well aware of these risks.

Where possible, offer people a chance to participate besides donation; an opportunity to scale up their responses. This may help address the dissonance between big problems and small actions. Many organisations already do; we present some examples on the right. In the box below, we analyse a text from Defra and demonstrate how it might have encouraged positive action by incorporating different frames.

Threats, causes, and positive action: The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on biodiversity loss

'Our planet and its ecosystems supply us with all the natural resources we need to survive - essentials like clean air, water, food and fuel. Contact with nature is good for our physical and mental health.'

This highlights the benefits we receive from nature in terms of our security. More emphasis could have been placed on our attachment and connection to nature.

'Biodiversity - the variety of life on earth - is declining, with up to a third of all animals threatened with extinction. Climate change is contributing to this decline, causing the diversity of life to be lost at a faster rate than ever before. A 1°C rise in global temperatures threatens the survival of 10% of these species.'

Here, the text could have mentioned the causes of climate change. An appropriate addition might read: 'The scale of climate change we are currently seeing is largely caused by human energy and resource use.'

'In England, much of our biodiversity, including many of our birds, butterflies and plants, is declining. Our wildlife areas are too disjointed and fragmented, which makes it harder for wildlife to flourish and respond to climate change and other pressures, like pollution.'

This could have explained why wildlife areas have become fragmented, mentioning the built environment and agriculture.

'All countries need to act to improve biodiversity and preserve natural ecosystems. Otherwise the natural environment, wildlife and human life as we know it are all at risk.'

The text continues by discussing the actions needed to address climate change, including international agreements. Conveying a sense of threat while emphasising government action in this way risks disempowering its audience. A more encouraging and empowering message might read 'We can also act together, in our communities and local areas.'

2.4.5 Audience segmentation

The ubiquitous advice to 'meet your audience where they are'[52] implies that this audience is highly diverse, and can be sorted into monolithic blocks according to their different values – one motivated by 'cool', another by health and security, and so on.

In fact, most people put intrinsic values first – especially benevolence – and few prioritise extrinsic values. In over 60 countries, in fact, benevolence came top, universalism and self-direction second or third. Power consistently came last.[53] Segment audiences according to their interests, culture or location, then – not their values.

When discussing community forest management, for instance, it might be most appealing to talk to children and youth groups about outdoor activities that are available, or the opportunity to learn skills or about wildlife. Parents might be most interested to hear about the health and wellbeing benefits for their children in taking part in these activities. The local council will also be interested to hear of these benefits; they may also be interested to hear how the work ties in with national environment targets. And community conservation groups may be interested to hear of the work with wildlife and how more of the local community are connecting with nature. All of these are intrinsic concerns and should be encouraged.

Talk about people

People care about wildlife and the environment for different reasons. Some will not acknowledge the conventional discourse of conservation, but will connect with it through other shared values.

Many climate and development groups appeal to *Environmental justice*, a frame that both encompasses and branches out from environmental protection. It links human wellbeing and natural flourishing, demanding justice – fairness, freedom and protection from exploitation – for both. It therefore embodies universalism values such as equality, social justice and unity with nature, and provides a positive, overarching goal.

Two examples are worth mentioning. The slogan of Oxfam's Grow campaign: 'Food. Life. Planet.' links a tangible issue (the food system) to sustainability and social justice at local, national and global levels.[54] Incredible Edibles, a group focused on planting vegetables in public spaces, has influenced local food systems, educated people and fostered a sense of community, without even explicitly using a 'justice' frame.[55]

Innovative campaigns that do not advance conservation goals directly, then, can nevertheless engage intrinsic values and foster environmental concern.

Communicating with business and government

Many of those we spoke to in the course of this project argued that we had to engage certain audiences – large corporations or the Treasury, say – through appeals to wealth and profit. Judging from the material we examined – which appealed to power values much more often when speaking to business and government – this is precisely what NGOs have been doing. 'Trade-offs' may be required in such cases, and intrinsic values sacrificed to achieve important objectives.

It is worth treating this tactic with care, however. Such communications may diminish environmental concern even in elite audiences, or to legitimise the economic appeals that business and government direct at the general public. Nor are audiences hermetically separated: supporters and the general public may also read these messages, especially those in which the media takes an interest (think of news such as 'Bees are worth £26 billion to the global economy, and £200 million in Britain').[56] This is an argument also made by communications agency Futerra in *Branding Biodiversity* (see box below).[57]

> 'Need is essential for policy makers and business. For these audiences, the Love message is too soft, and the economic rationale is a far stronger incentive for change. The Need message is being communicated more often and more effectively to a business and policy audience. However, too often these audiences are passing the same message on to the public, as part of their political argument or marketing. And that doesn't work. Policy audiences need to learn to use the Love message too.'
> **– Futerra, 2009**

In practice, appeals to intrinsic values may be difficult to pull off when facing decision-makers, especially when time is short and you are under pressure. There is no right answer – but simply asking the question is an invaluable first step.

2.4.6 Looking beyond conservation: how the communications of the sector affect other causes

When extrinsic values are reinforced – by measuring success in economic terms, for instance – we set back other social and environmental causes, because of the attitudes and actions such values promote.

Organisations could exploit the 'threat' of mass immigration to foster concern about climate change, for instance. But in doing so, they would reinforce values that impede action on climate change, discourage an internationalist outlook, and profoundly harm groups that work with refugees and asylum seekers.

Frames such as *Joint action* or *Environmental justice*, on the other hand, foster concern for social justice and equality. This might not be a conservation priority, of course – but organisations should at least consider their broader impacts; and wherever possible, uphold the principle 'do no harm'.

Organisations do not exist in silos: just as your messages will affect others, others' messages will affect you. Raising awareness of this fact across the third sector will allow for greater unity, co-ordination and reciprocation. Organisations could sign up to a set of Values Principles, pledging to minimise appeals to extrinsic values and unhelpful frames.

2.4.7 Conclusions

The conservation sector has achieved some remarkable successes, raising its income and membership numbers considerably over the last two decades. Yet, while it has helped 'mainstream' many of its concerns, its communications are perhaps not doing enough to challenge the extrinsic frames in dominant discourse.

Some of the tools used to achieve short-term gains may also set conservation back in the longer term. They might not even be the best tools for the job in the short term. In addition, they can undermine other causes – poverty, human rights, climate change and international development.

Values and frames in NGO communications: a summary

Extrinsic values and frames

Power and achievement were expressed more often than benevolence and universalism. Three frames embodied these values:

- Consumers and transactions
- Defender and threat
- Nature as a commodity

Intrinsic values and frames

Benevolence and universalism values were seldom expressed, but words related to self-direction appeared often. Four frames embodied intrinsic values:

- Connection with nature
- Natural beauty
- Discovery and exploration
- Working together

Many of these texts were Direct Appeals. These presupposed intrinsic values in their audience, but often appeared to rely on Defender and threat frames.

The role of the audience

Many communications framed the audience as largely passive. This may be a missed opportunity: appeal to self-direction values, and you can promote more active involvement.

Communicating threat

Negative, threatening and shocking messages can discourage action. Use them with care, and balance them with positive, intrinsic messages that offer solutions.

Audience segmentation

'Meet your audience where they are' does not mean 'appeal to extrinsic values'. In reality, most audiences will prioritise intrinsic values: appeal to these values in a way that makes sense to the group you are talking to.

Audiences such as the Treasury may only listen if you speak in economic terms, but take care: your messages could have a wider impact than you intend, particularly if your audience recycles them for public consumption.

Set the agenda

Rather than rely on frames created by others, set the public agenda using new frames of your own.

Cultivating intrinsic values across the third sector

The public do not exist in silos according to the issues they support; nor do charities' communications, which affect others through the values they promote. The entire third sector needs to start taking this into account.

Recommendations

» **Encourage active participation: exploration, enjoyment, and creativity.** We found many appeals to intrinsic self-direction values (independent thought and action, exploring/creating). This is positive: keep it up.

» **Nature is wonderful – say so. Explain why it needs protecting**. Do not simply ask for help: explain why it is needed. Many people love the countryside and wildlife; appeal to these motivations before you ask for money.

» **Avoid** asking 'Will you help us save animals from extinction?' **before** pointing out 'wildlife is amazing, and something we can enjoy together.'

» **Talk about people**. There are many ways to engage intrinsic values. Appeals to community, loyalty, fairness and tolerance will all bolster environmental concern, simply by activating the right values.

» **Find creative ways to appeal to intrinsic values**. Conservation-related issues such as food, farming, rights and justice, for instance, may have a broad appeal.

» **Talk about the root causes of environmental problems, but avoid scare tactics.**

» **Talk openly about your organisation's values** and you will strengthen them in others.

» **Avoid appeals to competition, status or money** (extrinsic values): they make people less likely to act on behalf of the environment.

» **Avoid frames that imply a transaction between an NGO and its supporters.** Treating people like consumers encourages them to prioritise money and self-interest.

» **Be aware that your messages will affect other causes** through the values they promote.

"You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make."

Jane Goodall

Values and the focus of the conservation sector

Our analysis paints a picture of a conservation sector perpetually on the back foot – reacting to threats by requesting money, and adopting dominant discourses when explaining issues to the public. Why, given the resources at the disposal of the sector, must they go to these lengths to be heard? Where are the groundswells of public support for action? Why should organisations be forced to cajole both politicians and the public on every issue in isolation? Communications strategies only explain so much; for the full picture, we must survey a much broader terrain.

The conservation sector has a huge membership and a diverse remit, interacting with wider society in many different ways. Among the thirteen organisations supporting this project were groups focusing on research, volunteering, policy, landscapes, outdoor activities, education and international conservation. Each of these activities engages particular values – but which ones; with what effects; and to what end?

The sector does not operate in a vacuum. Values are engaged, reinforced, and influence our thinking throughout our lives. What, for instance, do we see on TV every day? What are children learning at school? What impact do policy changes have on our experience of life? And what role does (or can) the conservation sector play in all of the above?

In what follows, we consider what values the sector reinforces through the focus of its advocacy and campaigns.

We have been assisted throughout by many of those working in the sector, who have participated in surveys, forum discussions, in-depth interviews, and workshops.[xvii] We supplemented this research with a wider literature review.

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[xvii] There were 48 survey respondents; 10 respondents to questions posed on environmental forums; 13 in-depth interviewees; and approximately 80 workshop attendees.

3.1 Advocacy for nature

Any communication can both prompt an immediate response and foster attitudes and actions towards other people and the environment. Regardless of whether they achieve the former, they will cultivate certain values, and this cultivation has consequences.

The conservation sector has a big role to play in advocacy for the natural world. Organisations are engaged in a constant struggle to raise awareness and maintain pressure, in order to protect and conserve nature. They must therefore maintain a major presence on the public and political agenda. The terms of debate we promote will influence how decision-makers and the public think about the environment and respond to calls for action.

3.1.1 Setting the agenda

How effectively are conservation groups setting the public agenda? Perhaps not very effectively: according to our analysis, they may be promoting the same values as everyone else. They also use frames (particularly economic frames) created by others, even when these do not completely match their own values.

As in the case of the Red Tape Challenge, an organisation may feel constrained by the terms of debate that policymakers dictate. In doing so, it is worth fostering awareness of commonly-used frames; consciously avoiding those that harm conservation causes; and considering setting the agenda, using frames that embody intrinsic values.

Many people we spoke to questioned whether NGOs had the power to shift public debate. In our view, their size and influence – particularly when working together – suggest that the answer is yes. This is the sector that introduced national parks, proposed and achieved the founding of Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and saw the Countryside and Rights of Way Act passed. To take a rather different example: following the early successes of the US civil rights movement, the value of equality jumped four places – from seventh to third – in the public's priority list.[58] When it comes to shifting values and frames, civil society has real influence.

By informing the public and bringing issues to light, we help lay the basis of political change. When we appeal to intrinsic values at the same time, we do so particularly effectively – because we help generate concern about other major issues.

Commentators frequently dismissed the Occupy movement for not achieving anything. Where, they asked, were the tangible political or economic changes? Yet, in terms of its impact on the public debate, Occupy's achievements were phenomenal. The '1%' and '99%' (terms expressing universalism values of equality and social justice) became common

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political currency, finding their way into the mouths of politicians and commentators of diverse political persuasions, the world over.

Political scientist Joe Brewer and cognitive linguist George Lakoff call this 'cognitive policy'. In their words:

'Material policy consists of the nuts and bolts, what is done in the world to fulfil policy goals. Cognitive policy is about the values and ideas that both motivate the policy goals and that have to be uppermost in the minds of the public and the media in order for the policy to seem so much a matter of common sense that it will be readily accepted.'[59]

Consider what a huge impact the conservation sector could have by creating a frame as powerful as 'We are the 99%'.

Are any such frames already in circulation? One possible contender is 'detachment from nature'. Richard Louv's 2005 book *Last Child In the Woods* coined the phrase 'Nature-Deficit Disorder', arguing that children in the industrialised West were deprived of contact with nature and its associated benefits. The issue has received attention from newspapers, programmes such as *Cotton-Wool Kids*, and reports such as *Natural Childhood* and *Free-Range Kids*. (It is worth adding a note of caution: the medicalised framing of *nature deficit disorder* helped get the media's attention, but may have limited its accessibility, and even have promoted unhelpful *security* values such as health and family security.)

3.1.2 Influencing decision-makers

When working with business and government, NGOs have had to moderate their messages to appear reasonable and professional. They have even, our communications analysis suggests, adopted the language of such groups – putting economic considerations (and associated extrinsic values) first. This is a risky strategy, since it will reinforce unhelpful values in both the corridors of power and (if such messages are recycled) the wider public sphere. Its successes, moreover, while notable, are neither proportionate nor guaranteed to last. (See Section 2.4.4 for more on communicating with this audience).

3.1.3 Advocacy in practice: Ecosystem services and the valuation of the natural world

> *'Over a period of about 15 years, an eye-opening metaphor intended to awaken society to think more deeply about the importance of nature and its destruction through excessive energy and material consumption transformed into a dominant model for environmental policy and management in developing countries and for the globe as a whole.'*
> **— Noorgard, 2010**

'Ecosystem services' started out as an explanatory tool, describing the crucial role of nature in supporting human life. It was a reaction against decision-making processes that had failed to include environmental considerations. By the 1990s, the economic valuation of these services had become a key decision-making tool, and market mechanisms were soon applied to the environment much more often.[60]

Many people raised the topic of 'ecosystem services' during workshops, so we included a question about it in our survey.[xviii] Responses were mixed. More people (11) were opposed than supported the idea (3 people), but most (34 people) expressed varying degrees of discomfort and pragmatic accommodation. They mentioned two key reasons for using the frame: its explanatory power in assessing and communicating the value of nature, and the success with which it has been applied in practice.

Below, we discuss four key manifestations of 'ecosystem services':

    a) 'Ecosystem services' as a frame or 'eye-opening metaphor';

    b) The valuation of ecosystem services;

    c) Making an economic case for conservation;

    d) Managing the environment through market mechanisms.

An 'eye-opening metaphor'[61]

> *'When people grasp the concept of ecosystem services, they always have a better understanding of the inextricable link between people and the environment, and are thus more motivated to take environmental action because of values associated with justice and rights.'* **— Interviewee**

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[xviii] Question phrasing: 'Do you have any thoughts on the benefits and risks of using monetary valuations of nature as a persuasive or decision-making tool?'

Does the frame *ecosystem services* enhance our understanding of the natural world and our place within it?

As its creators intended, it helps us understand that the environment sustains and supports human life. Recent campaigns on pollinators and neonicotinoids, for instance, have emphasised the vital role of bees in the food system. Perhaps this raises consciousness, and even fosters intrinsic values?

The frame, however, is also instrumentalist and materialist: it presents nature as an asset to be exploited. It is unlikely to nurture the sentiment of humans as part of, rather than separate from, nature. Whether the benefits of understanding the services provided by the environment outweigh these limitations is a question future research should explore.

Values in valuation

Perhaps the actual process of putting a value on nature engages people and enhances their appreciation for the natural world?

A key issue is the inescapable role of money in the valuation. Studies have found that:

- Simply seeing a dollar sign on a screensaver makes us less likely to help others.[62]

- Touching money makes us less caring towards others.[63]

- The words 'consumer' and 'business' make us less environmentally conscious, less ethically-minded, and less trusting.[64]

In short, thinking in frames related to money can suppress intrinsic motivation. As their power values are engaged by the economic framing, people may essentially place a lower value on the environment.

The method of reaching valuation is itself a key component of how people respond. 'Willingness-to-pay' methodologies have well-documented flaws. The prices people will ascribe to environmental services can have very different meanings to individual respondents:

- how big a charitable contribution they would make;

- a political statement about the asset's value;

- an almost random number in response to a seemingly meaningless question.[65]

People will answer differently depending on knowledge, values and context. There are also clear issues with how money and prices mean different things to people in different socioeconomic situations, reflecting inequality and power.[66] This is without even starting to

consider whether we can even capture the 'true value' of nature in purely economic terms. One conclusion of a report commissioned by the Government in 2008 to carry out a valuation of England's Ecosystem Services stated, for example, (fairly obviously) that some services may 'in fact be infinite in value'.[67]

> '[I]t is considered that the values presented are likely to significantly underestimate the full value received by society from many of the services, some of which may in fact be infinite in value. Therefore these values should be viewed as lower bound estimates.'
> — **O'Gorman and Bann, 2008**

In contrast, when people are able to discuss their answers in groups, they reach very different conclusions from individuals in willingness-to-pay surveys. One study found, for instance, that people's initial willingness to pay for the services provided by a tropical forest ecosystem was around 30% of their household income. Following a deliberative process, it was valued as effectively infinite (as people were unwilling to make any trade-off).[68]

This is likely because such processes engage with intrinsic concerns more effectively than individual valuations. They encourage participants to think within a 'social' frame ('what should society do?') rather than an 'individual interest' frame ('what do I want?').[69]

Secondly, the opportunity to share ideas and consider those of others prompts deeper reflection. It draws out the things people value most, and prompts reflection about what others value. Thirdly, when we think about the natural environment for an extended period, we focus our attention on what it means to us.

The process can therefore be a valuable learning experience: participants in the aforementioned study felt they better understood their own values, as well as the links between environment and culture.[70] This suggests that the method of valuation is crucially important here: where it is necessary, group processes that allow deliberation will allow for a better analysis.

Making an economic case for conservation

Once a price has been put on an ecosystem, a cost-benefit analysis can determine whether to preserve it or exploit it.

> 'The UK's parks, lakes, forests and wildlife are worth billions of pounds to the economy, says a major report. The health benefits of merely living close to a green space are worth up to £300 per person per year, it concludes.' — **Richard Black, BBC News**

The big numbers provided make good headlines, and appeal to time-pressed decision-makers.[71] But this is where the 'eye-opening metaphor' becomes a potentially damaging public frame. The idea that bees contribute billions of pounds to our economy is simple and appealing, but the monetary framing will suppress intrinsic concern for (say) ecosystems, food chains and wild flowers.

> 'The true value of nature can be shown for the very first time thanks to groundbreaking research by hundreds of UK scientists.' **— Defra, 2011**

In addition, there are areas of public policy still discussed purely in terms of morality and principle; attempts to impose economic values are considered distasteful. Research suggests the environment still lies within this category. Putting a price on nature was extremely unpopular in the US; and UK audiences find economic frames less convincing than intrinsic frames (such as those that emphasise nature's benefits to communities).[72]

> *'I think it's a bad idea as in times of wealth, what you run the risk of doing is placing a monetary value that someone might pay.'* **— Survey respondent**

Ceding the intrinsic case poses other risks. One species might be economically valuable, another not: economist Dieter Helm suggests some species possess 'negative value'. One witness at a hearing on Canada's proposed tar sands pipeline argued that oil spills benefit the economy, since clean-ups provide work for local businesses.[73]

Making a clear 'business case' for environmental protection may first present itself as the most logical course of action. However, in doing so, organisations are reinforcing this framing as the legitimate, and ultimately the only, terms of debate. Organisations are likely to find they have less legitimacy – or weight – in trying to make a case for conservation using non-monetary terms in the future.

> *'According to the government's National Ecosystem Assessment, properly managed ecosystem services could deliver an extra 30 billion pounds a year to the UK economy…. Presumably, we must be happy to kiss goodbye to the plant or animal or park or playground or mountain that doesn't hold its value in this context, or finds itself outbid by the profits which might accrue from a new office block, road or airport.'*
> **— Ruth Davis, 2013**

Green groups contesting the expansion of Heathrow, for instance, recently had to start from scratch after the economic argument for expansion seemed to have beaten their own original one on the same grounds from several years earlier. It is difficult to measure the

effects of either campaign, but note the different reasons people gave for their stance on the issue: supporters economic, opponents environmental.[74] The economic case failed, then, and though it may have got people's attention, probably suppressed environmental concerns by appealing to money.

Any frame used often enough without challenge will dominate public discourse and individual thinking. As cognitive linguist George Lakoff argues, frames we are repeatedly think in become our 'common sense' – very difficult to reason beyond. The creeping dominance of particular frames can shift the ideologies of entire populations and advance the interests of powerful political groups. This means that even successfully making an opposing case using the frame in question is still acting to reinforce it, and the values it embodies.

When we monetise ecosystems, we apply a *market* frame, containing efficiency, profit, and consumers, and with the logic that applies economic reasoning to workers rights, disability rights, or women's participation in the workforce. By continuing to reinforce this frame, we disarm and marginalise those that need to argue in other terms. Whether to accept or resist the monetisation of nature is therefore a matter we should debate publicly.

Managing the environment through market mechanisms

Market incentives and disincentives (Markets for Ecosystem Services and Payments for Ecosystem Services) have been in use in some form or other for several decades; and there have been marked increases in commodification (or marketisation) of environmental services in the last two decades.

Despite their various successes, these schemes have not gone uncriticised.[75] They impose a 'complexity blinder', for instance, obscuring the non-monetary value, complexity and interconnectedness of natural systems.[76] They also exacerbate socio-economic inequality: first, by making former 'public goods' accessible only to those with money; second, by singling out particular 'providers' as deserving of rewards.[77] These effects – the inequality, money-focus, and marginalisation of human and environmental issues – all relate to power values.

A study carried out with farmers in Wales shows these complexities in practice. Interviews with them revealed how many held motivations that are highly aligned with conservation values: concern for the future wellbeing of their communities, families and local environment, for instance. Payments allowed them to maintain their farms, but they did not feel this was a sustainable solution, and expressed the need for a more connected approach whereby they could secure their livelihoods, community wellbeing, and protect the environment through fairer prices for food and more local food systems.

This illustrates the 'complexity blinder': payments obscuring the underlying needs and issues. It also highlights how other solutions could provide a fairer situation for many others and how it is therefore not addressing these inequalities.[78]

One last consideration, less frequently explored in relation to ecosystem market practice, is what Michael Sandel calls the 'corrosive effect' of marketisation, and what others have described as 'motivational crowding-out'.[79] It is the *see-saw effect* in action: where consideration of the extrinsic concerns of prices and power suppresses intrinsic concern. As the 'consumer' and 'citizen' studies suggest, people in market contexts behave quite differently from those in civic contexts. For instance:

- In a market promising gains of up to €10, people became 30% more willing to let a mouse die.[80]

- When a nursery imposed a fine for late collection of children, parents showed up late *more often*.[81]

- When informed that a toxic waste dump might be sited near their homes, residents of Swiss towns became 50% *less likely* to acquiesce when offered money in compensation.[82]

There are countless other examples. Financial incentives transform social goods into market goods, exchangeable at the user's convenience. It comes as no surprise, then, that payments for Ecosystem Services have been found to be likely to undermine social and environmental motivations (possibly including those of non-recipients, who would previously have carried out such tasks for free).[83]

This should not lead to the conclusion that markets and the environment can never comfortably co-exist: consider the longstanding means in the planning system of reconciling market and non-market considerations in relation to land use decisions. The market scenarios that have been studied look primarily at models that relate to individuals, self-interest frames, and monetary incentives: which have clear links to extrinsic motivations. Other economic or market methods are possible: such as group or community schemes, or social enterprise-type models that are focused not only on profit but social and environmental benefit. These are much more likely (as with group deliberation) to encourage intrinsic motivation and lasting environmental concern.

> '[We should] unpack 'sustainable economic development' so that economics doesn't dominate sustainability' **— Survey respondent**

Ecosystem services: framing and practice

This section has covered both the framing issues of ecosystem services and valuation and the practice of valuation and market-based systems for managing ecosystems. These are clearly linked, but have distinct implications. In the following sections, these will be summarised with recommendations.

Using the ecosystem services frame

In public

Monetary framing of the environment seems likely to suppress environmental concern. Some have also argued that once we have reached the stage of valuing services, a market for these is inevitable.[84] Organisations should try to avoid it, especially when addressing a mass audience. It may be worth exploring reframing the same content in intrinsic terms: rather than *'Our reserve contributes millions of pounds to the local economy'*, say *'Our reserve benefits local people, attracting visitors who come to enjoy our fantastic wildlife'*.

Talking to business and government

There are some audiences such as the Treasury, focused heavily on economics, for which organisations may feel there is no other language to use. However, organisations could consider talking in intrinsic terms about why their membership cares about nature in communications before going on to use more extrinsic frames. The trade-off might be made in this circumstance to focus on the economic benefits in communications, making a conscious effort to make attempts over the longer-term, and perhaps in one-to-one conversations, to get across the intrinsic arguments too.

When speaking to other business and government audiences, try to limit such language even further. Try promoting intrinsic values in the individual's 'personal' rather than a 'professional' capacity. Mention other issues – community, family, local constituency issues and so on – that might engage their intrinsic vales; and encourage decision-makers to spend time in the areas affected by their decisions. WWF's Itchen Initiative on sustainable water management, for instance, took decision-makers to the river in question.[85]

> *'I think we need to engage the private sector in order to achieve the changes we need to survive. Each engagement, on a personal level, will have a positive impact on the 'corporate individual'.'* **— Survey respondent**

Using 'ecosystem services' positively

For all audiences, using ecosystem services as a frame to focus on social and environmental benefits – such as human wellbeing, enjoyment, connection, sociability – should engage with intrinsic values. Conservation organisations may feel this is a good way of getting a variety of audiences to connect with the natural world. The finding that deliberation in groups around ecosystem services enhances both their understanding and how much they value it also suggests that finding ways of encouraging people to interact, discuss and engage with this could be a useful communicative method: perhaps at visitor sites or in other work with groups.

Highlighting nature, not just people

Others may feel that the frame is still too human-centric, and may wish to focus on another frame. One such frame could be the language of *rights*, which still has some traction in the political sphere. This was not a frame identified in the communications analysis in the previous section,[xix] but the concept of nature having 'rights,' like humans, has been given new life in recent years. From Ecuador and Bolivia to New Zealand and Pennsylvania in the US, nature or particular environmental features have been afforded the legal rights of human entities.[86] The UK's 'Eradicating Ecocide' campaign similarly aims to criminalise the destruction of nature. Few UK conservation organisations have signed up to the campaign – perhaps considering its aim politically infeasible – but the frame itself has strength in its appeal to justice and equality rather than economics or self-interest.

Ecosystem services in practice

For reasons we suggest, valuations, payments and markets in ecosystem services may erode our concern for nature. Market frames undermine concern for animals and other people. They discourage volunteering and environmentally friendly practices.

There may be many situations in which market mechanisms are seen as unavoidable because of other factors: payments to farmers for environmental services, for instance, may be seen to be necessary because current food prices cannot otherwise sustain the industry. This may suggest considering working on these other factors: working with farming communities to campaign for better food prices, for instance.

This is where the roots of the issue may lie, and without tackling this, sustainable solutions may be impossible.

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[xix] Though there was a 'Wildlife Crime' frame with features in common.

It may also be a case whereby different policy models could be suggested: ones that have the potential to bring together whole communities, for instance, like the Sustainable Communities Act.

Finally, since the public demonstrably dislike economic frames where nature is concerned, there may be space for a collaborative, sector-wide campaign against this type of economic valuation as a decision-making tool. The policy's limitations, flaws and injustices could be exposed. Consider calling for intrinsic valuations instead, as CPRE did in their 1988 campaign on countryside protection and, more recently, in their 2010 campaign to influence the National Planning Policy Framework.[87] This could have the potential for a great deal of public involvement, as there are likely many creative ways to highlight where valuation may or may not be appropriate in public life. Members and supporters may be able to suggest some methods that organisations might never even have thought of themselves.

3.14 Engaging with the media

Media coverage plays a large role in extending the reach of conservation messages. The media is instrumental in creating frames in public debate, and reading this coverage may be the only time some audiences think about conservation. This makes it important to think about the language used. The "reach" (uptake by mainstream papers, for instance) is not the only consideration; another will be what frames and values are being promoted, and whether these are helpful to motivating conservation concern and action.

As discussed in the Red Tape Challenge example, organisations may want to think about challenging the most commonly-used frame, or adding another perspective. When opposing the 'Challenge', environmental organisations had a high media presence in getting their concerns heard. However, many organisations repeated the government framing (prioritising business needs over human and environmental needs), and some made their case on the economic benefits of laws that provided environmental protection: two strategies that may engage extrinsic values.

Shaping environmental stories to fit the news agenda may therefore not always be the best tactic: organisations may instead wish to think about how to help shift the debate onto their own, intrinsic terms.

Making a splash

We've discussed the use of "shock tactics" earlier in this guide. Provoking feelings of threat, fear or loss may successfully raise the profile of an issue. However, rather than motivating action, these feelings may leave people feeling helpless and increasingly *demotivated,* or even inclined to actively avoid the issue. In meeting the media's appetite for such stories, organisations may also be unwittingly perpetuating the focus on negative stories.

In these cases, organisations may wish to think about what the intrinsic parts of these stories are and how to highlight positive action to address an issue. This may mean thinking carefully before using media messages that focus on scary or depressing things. If people only hear messages of extinction and the threat of environmental damage, they may only associate conservation with loss. Frames and associations around enhancing our connection with nature and celebration of the things we care about are more likely to motivate action.

Example: Ash dieback in the media

The case of ash dieback in 2012 received considerable press attention. This was doubtless partly because it tapped into some deeply-held public emotions around loss of British species and the countryside, and partly because of the high "shock" factor of the possibility of losing so many trees so quickly. Concern was often framed around intrinsic values: our emotional connection with nature and the failure to protect something so important to people.

Whilst there was little to be done to save the ash trees, there were a number of good interventions in the debate – including calls to make sure more protection was afforded other tree species. Such activities reinforce the perception that there are still actions which can be taken to protect nature, and that we should take this as a learning experience. There was also media attention focused on events held around the country to say 'farewell' to the trees. These stories highlight how important people think nature is, and that people can create a sense of community and affiliation around this shared sense of importance. These initiatives also promote self-direction and agency by highlighting self-organising groups of people.

Celebrity involvement

Celebrities can grab the attention of the public and media, and help reach new audiences; but their involvement can also help reinforce extrinsic values, particularly if they are known for their wealth, status or public image. In the short term, you may reach new audiences – but they are likely to perceive your campaign within an extrinsic frame, and such campaigns are therefore less likely to promote a deeper concern about the natural world. This does not rule out the use of celebrities entirely: some are known for things other than money and status. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall, for instance, known to be passionate about ethical, locally sourced food, is involved in the Fish Fight campaign. The values he embodies make him a good spokesperson.

Recommendations

Advocacy

» Set the agenda. Rather than rely on frames created by others, set the public agenda using new frames of your own.

» Be aware of the frames used in responding to and lobbying decision-makers. These will not always be aligned with conservation values.

Ecosystem services

» Encourage a public debate on where markets are and are not wanted, and you will probably help strengthen people's intrinsic values.

» Where valuation is necessary, deliberative processes are most likely to elicit intrinsic values and deep concern for nature.

» Limit the use of economic frames in your communications.

» Consider devising creative strategies to engage intrinsic values in more money-minded audiences: try speaking to them in a 'personal' context or natural setting, for instance.

» Wherever possible, emphasise social benefits such as wellbeing, tranquility and sociability; or use intrinsic frames such as *rights* and *justice*.

» Continue to question where market solutions are appropriate in environmental management.

Media

Think through the effect your media stories and spokespeople are likely to have on people's values.

» **Try asking:** What values does the story embody? What three things first come to mind when you mention your celebrity spokesperson to someone? Do you associate these things with intrinsic or extrinsic values?

» **Try to:** Think about the emotional responses stories might generate, and how to highlight that issues are being addressed.

» **Focus on** aspects of a story that highlight intrinsic values: community, concern for children and future generations, and the natural places that people care about.

» **Avoid economic framing** and over-reliance on threat and fear.

» **Avoid** picking a celebrity spokesperson based only on their perceived popularity.

3.2 Campaigning

The conservation sector campaigns on numerous issues: from water policy and renewable energy to habitat protection and planning. Some important objectives will be more or less invisible to the public, with little impact on their values. A change in the law might require pollution levels to be reported more often, for instance. Others will be relatively consequential: pushing for a parliamentary debate on planning laws might nudge public perceptions, or help re-frame the topic. In so doing, it will reinforce certain values. Locally, campaigns to create green spaces could change the daily experience of an area's residents, reinforcing particular values.

In campaigning on these individual issues, the sector carefully weighs up the immediate material and environmental benefits. However, as we have seen throughout this report, the values engaged by a campaign might easily act to undermine the wider goals of conservation. In designing a campaign, then, it is important to consider:

- the immediate, material focus of the campaign and its potential environmental impact;
- the impact on values, and the likely environmental impacts of the associated behaviours and attitudes.

Campaigning for habitat protection, then, might have an obvious and immediate benefit for the protection of particular species. The urgency of the species' protection may be of higher immediate importance than public engagement with the issue. However, if it does not also engage the public with nature, it misses the opportunity to strengthen intrinsic values and create lasting, future support for continued conservation efforts. Sometimes such campaigns may even create distance between people and nature, or (as with payments for ecosystem services) focus heavily on economic gains, and might increase extrinsic values (and anti-environmental sentiment).

In short: the focus on narrow conservation goals may perpetuate the lack of public engagement on these issues. In the longer-term, this means organisations may be creating an uphill struggle for themselves. NGOs are not unaware of this irony: public engagement with nature has climbed the conservation agenda in recent years.

However, the sector is also not operating in a vacuum. Values are engaged, and will influence our thinking, throughout our daily lives. What are people seeing in the media every day? What are children learning at school? These factors can doubtless contribute to strengthening values over time, and will impact how people view the environment and their place within it.

The conservation sector, in working on some of these seemingly distant issues, could find that they have direct and lasting benefits for conservation. In strengthening intrinsic values in society, and challenging extrinsic values, NGOs should find public concern about the environment is strengthened, and lasting.

We will explore each of these issues in the following sections:

-   Designing and evaluating conservation campaigns;
-   Campaigning for lasting support for conservation;
-   Campaigning with a Common Cause.

3.2.1 Designing and evaluating conservation campaigns

NGOs may be making significant oversights when measuring success. Numbers of emails opened, social network followers, number of visitors and so on may not provide the full picture.

In ignoring values, organisations miss the knock-on effects of their messages and actions on wider conservation goals such as consumption habits and environmental actions. They may even undermine the very behaviours promoted.[88]

Campaigning against housing developments, for instance, may have local support because of the environmental and visual impacts. There are intrinsic motivations behind this, and the potential to strengthen these values. However, the campaign may equally perpetuate a situation whereby families cannot access affordable homes and financial insecurity. In doing so, it may increase individuals' focus on their own needs and extrinsic motivations, simultaneously decreasing environmental concern and future support for conservation.

Conversely, campaigns to plant trees in a local area may have minimal immediate environmental benefit, but the increased exposure to nature will engage people's intrinsic values on a daily basis. Doing so will increase support for conservation, and both individual and group actions to protect and access nature.

Immediate campaign goals will sometimes take priority over the effects on values. These 'trade-offs' should be managed as they occur; but whatever the decision, it is worth accounting for impacts on values in planning (see below for an example).

Evaluating impacts: a practical example

What's the campaign?

An NGO is considering a campaign encouraging people to insulate their lofts, emphasising the money people could save by making this one-off choice.

Potential Impacts of the Campaign	How could we measure this?
Increased uptake of loft insulation, the intended aim of the campaign.	Number of households participating.
Effect on carbon footprints. a) Domestic energy demand may decline, or b) There may be rebound effects – participants simply enjoying warmer houses and consuming the same amount of energy.	Energy use before and after insulation.
Impacts on other pro-environmental behaviour: a) 'Foot-in-the-door' effects: participants may be encouraged to help to address environmental problems in other ways (e.g. recycling, or civic activism); b) People may conclude that they have 'done their bit', reducing their motivation to engage in other pro-environmental behaviours; c) Strengthen the idea that people should only carry out environmental behaviours when they benefit too, or d) To consider the campaign a money-saving exercise unconnected to the environment.	Studies of participants' overall environmental footprint.
Effects on a participant's willingness to take up other pro-social or pro-environmental behaviours. If the campaign is extrinsically-focused, this is likely to be negative.	Observation of key behaviours; surveys.
Impacts on wider, non-participating audience. Many thousands of people are likely to see the campaign material and not act on it. Extrinsic values will also impact them.	Measuring this impact is difficult, but should be taken into account.

Making the trade-off

Since loft insulation can have a significant impact in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, this objective may take priority. But there is little evidence that extrinsic appeals persuade people most effectively; the tyre pressure study discussed earlier suggests the opposite.[89]

Other impacts – difficult to measure, but worth taking into account – may even outweigh these benefits. Perhaps reframe the campaign in terms of intrinsic values, then, or consider a different intervention altogether.

3.2.2 Campaigning for lasting support for conservation: reconnecting people with nature

Public concern about the environment is in constant flux. This creates an uncertain climate for organisations campaigning on its behalf, and limits the political space for large-scale policy changes. NGOs find themselves in a constant struggle to prove the worth of the natural world and push for (often small) changes.

> *'I realised no matter how good an ecologist you are, if you don't manage to bring people with you then the whole lot is pointless. Because ultimately nature conservation is a human problem, and the solutions are human and political solutions; and they are based on people's understanding and therefore raising people's understanding of the natural world and raising people's connection with the natural world and belief in the natural world is the most important thing from my point of view'.*
> **– Interviewee, Roberts, 2011**

This seems unsurprising when we consider the scale of public disengagement from the natural world: time spent outdoors has been in steady decline, and knowledge about nature is increasingly limited. As David Attenborough has stated, 'no one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced'. Is it any surprise that the decline of species holds so little meaning to so many, if their experienced world contains no species at all? And even if people believe in climate change, why should they act to minimise greenhouse gases in their own lives if they haven't seen how small, local changes can destroy fragile ecosystems?

This is a big issue. If addressed, it has the potential to create a sea change for conservation.

The problem of disengagement

> *'For a new generation, nature is more abstraction than reality. Increasingly, nature is something to watch, to consume, to wear – to ignore.'* **– Louv, 2006**

Children's disconnection from nature – a widespread concern expressed in the National Trust's recent *Natural Childhood* report – worried many of those we spoke to.[90] So did the disengagement of the wider public; the problem is not limited to children.

The report notes many troubling findings. Among them:

- The area around their homes in which children are allowed to play, walk and explore has declined by 90% in 40 years.

- Fewer than one in ten children play in nature compared to more than half a generation ago.

- Children are better at identifying Daleks (fictional TV characters) than common British wildlife.[91]

This is something that is apparent even at household level: a large-scale study by London Wildlife Trust showed a 25% increase in hard surfacing in London's gardens between 1996-8 and 2006-8.[92] People are therefore experiencing less nature even in their own backyards.

This is no minor concern: among other things, spending time in nature improves our mental and physical wellbeing. For instance:

- Spending time in nature fosters social skills, confidence and self-esteem in children.[93]

- Access to nature makes children and young people calmer and less aggressive.

- Environmental education enhances children's 'attachment to place, civic engagement and environmental stewardship'.[94]

- Green spaces improve community cohesion and can reduce crime and domestic violence.[95]

- Access to the outdoors reduces stress, and alleviates some mental illnesses.

- Time spent outdoors is closely linked to the amount of physical activity children get; and childhood attitudes to exercise strongly predict levels of physical activity in adults.[96]

Mental illness and obesity are on the rise among both children and adults. Other effects, though less obvious, are just as real. Intrinsic values – such as *unity with nature* – make us kinder, less prejudiced, more creative and more helpful. They also make us value other pro-social values, such as *broadmindedness* and *equality*. Contact with nature, studies find, fosters precisely such intrinsic motivations.[97]

> *'I would love our organisation to invest more resources into unblocking the problems that stop children from playing outdoors. It is terrifying to think what impact this will have on future generations - to my mind it is right up there with climate change and habitat loss as a future driver for biodiversity loss. How can we possibly persuade government to establish laws or pump resources into nature conservation if virtually none of the voting public give a damn? It is hard enough now!'* **– Survey respondent**

When people connect with nature, they become more concerned about conservation; and the value they place on nature will determine whether (and how) they choose to protect it. Studies of people in environmental careers find that some formative experience of nature, and a sense of being comfortable within it, predict sustained environmental concern.[98] A dearth of such experiences – or fear of nature – predict the opposite.[99] Since today's children will become tomorrow's environmentalists, NGO members, decision-makers and citizens, their disconnection from nature matters hugely.

The sector undoubtedly helps connect people with nature: those we spoke to were able to cite countless examples. 'Natural play schemes', devised by groups like The Wildlife Trusts, provide a space in which children can explore, create and play. Conservation NGOs and government have pioneered projects such as Sustainable Development Education; Every Child Outdoors; and Outdoor Nation. And reconnection with nature is a central, indispensible priority for groups like The Conservation Volunteers, city farms, Forest Schools, and the John Muir Award.

Yet, as many of our respondents pointed out, major obstacles remain. Access is one: 80% of the UK population live in cities; poverty is rising; and we work the longest hours in Europe. Constantly raised in discussion were the sector's cursory – or absent – efforts on inclusion and diversity. This is a serious oversight that requires urgent attention. Perceptions about safety also present a barrier. With these issues in mind, we briefly explore some current and potential avenues for organisations to campaign to engage people with nature.

Campaigning for more green spaces

This seems like an obvious first step. Devise imaginative ways to bring nature into urban areas: challenge the fashion for paved gardens; include communities in planning; invest, as Buglife have, in green roofs; reclaim derelict land; run urban foraging walks for schools; and forge alliances with other community groups.

Stalled Spaces, a city-wide project in Glasgow, uses innovative strategies to regenerate a degraded urban environment recently worsened by the economic downturn. It creates urban growing spaces, community gardens, wildflower meadows, mountain bike trails and art sculpture parks on vacant or under-used land, promoting physical renewal and community engagement.

Approaching this from a values perspective may also provide new ways of thinking about 'success' in this area. Campaign to allow communities to reclaim unused land and you may not succeed, for instance, but you might raise awareness about land ownership; link local groups; and inspire other growing schemes. Even if successful, you may not protect any

good-quality land or visibly advance any other conservation goal; but you might create community spaces and foster intrinsic concern for the environment.

Removing barriers to access

'We should make the outdoors a normal place to be.' **- Interviewee**

Making sure people have access to green spaces nearby them is vital, but might not mean people spend any more time in them if, for instance, transport links are not good enough, or parents fear for their children's safety. With more cars on the road today than 30 years ago, there are good reasons for parents to be cautious (though many accidents also take place domestically). Sustrans's Free Range Kids campaign aims to reduce speed limits in towns to 20mph, making local streets visibly less dangerous and encouraging kids to play outdoors.[100] Public transport is also a potential campaign avenue.

Campaigns promoting outdoor activity

The values research would also suggest that promoting self-direction values in the outdoors would also reinforce intrinsic motivation. A number of people mentioned campaigns like Bristol's *Play Streets*, the National Trust's *50 Things to do Before You're 11¾*, and *Mission:Explore*. These are all good examples of projects that get children outdoors, likely to reinforce self-direction and (where relevant) universalism values associated with nature. Similarly, organisations such as the Ramblers and The Conservation Volunteers carry out this work daily with older groups.

3.2.3 Campaigning with a Common Cause

There is a clear connection between values, connection with nature, and public support for conservation issues. This observation opens up a whole new arena for conservation organisations to consider intervening in. Some of these may involve removing barriers to public access to nature, as discussed above.

These barriers, importantly, include motivational barriers. It is a common complaint that the public don't *care* enough about creating or maintaining green and natural spaces. The research would suggest that the values behind such motivation – intrinsic values – are embedded within all of us. Why, then, are they not expressed more? The answer likely lies in other social, economic, and political factors. Where extrinsic values are promoted, concern for the environment and connection to nature are suppressed.

It is also clear that the same values underpin support for environmental policies, making environmentally-friendly purchases, reducing consumption, accessing and acting to protect green spaces, and so on. These same values are encouraged not only by environmental messages or experience of nature but also by a host of other social institutions and behaviours.

With these insights the boundaries of single issues become more nebulous, and the case for third sector organisations to support the efforts of others with intrinsic values at the core becomes more pronounced.

Working on issues that will have a significant impact to either strengthen intrinsic values, or weaken extrinsic values, therefore have the potential to create long-lasting, deep, public engagement and concern about conservation. It also provides an opportunity for conservation, through connecting to and supporting others in the third sector, to place itself at the heart of civil society.

With this in mind, we present a number of interventions that would benefit many corners of civil society and simultaneously increasing both environmental and social concern.

Education

A number of people we spoke to in the research stage of this report mentioned education as a key point of intervention. Children learn many of their values through their education. It is also an area in which the environmental sector has had prior success. WWF-Scotland has been active in embedding values into Scottish education policy, for example. Registration with the General Teaching Council of Scotland now includes a number of values-based principles: teachers must show commitment to their values in day-to-day practice and to the community in which they work.[101]

There are also already the foundations of sustainable education in schools, and in-roads have been made with outdoor learning. The Real World Learning partnership in Scotland is a good example of conservation groups coming together to link up with communities and educators to integrate nature and the outdoors into schooling.[102]

Another pertinent example, which would benefit greatly from the input of the conservation and outdoor sector, is the Leading Through Values alliance.[103] In 2012-2013, inspired by *Common Cause,* they carried out a pilot project of taking values education into nine primary schools in England. Integrated into existing teaching plans, this aimed to promote critical, values-led thinking in children and teachers alike, whilst building links with the community. Children discussed local and global environmental and humanitarian issues and thought about the values at play, but also applied this thinking to their everyday learning. This has real potential to both strengthen the intrinsic values held by the children and connect the community. It could be connected well to learning about and engaging with the natural world.

These types of initiatives have the potential to create lasting concern for conservation and a generation well-equipped to face the environmental challenges ahead.

Alternatives to Gross Domestic Product

A cross-sector campaign calling for the replacement of GDP with an alternative measure of national success could have a huge impact. GDP has long outlived its usefulness as a proxy for social and environmental wellbeing, and places the extrinsic value of wealth at the heart of the political agenda. Backing intrinsic alternatives – as the New Economics Foundation's wellbeing programme is doing – would be a big step in the right direction.[104]

Curb commercial advertising

As the recent report *Think of me as evil* concluded,[105] commercial advertising and marketing are likely to reinforce extrinsic values, by promoting status, wealth and high-consumption lifestyles. Studies have linked commercial advertising with extrinsic values, materialism and consumption.

As the report suggests, this could be addressed by (among many other things) calling for bans on advertising to children and outdoors. The strength of these ideas lies in their popularity: there is widespread public appetite for curbs on the power of commercial advertisers. CPRE, for one, has a long track record of campaigning against intrusive outdoor advertising, such as illegal roadside adverts, largely on amenity grounds.[106] They believe there is a case for widening such campaigns to address the values agenda.

Case study: Leave Our Kids Alone

Launched in April 2013, Leave Our Kids Alone is a campaign to ban advertising to children aged 11 and under, following the example of Quebec, Norway, Sweden and Greece. While many other regulations protect children's physical and mental wellbeing, the campaign points out, no such restrictions impinge on advertising – even where it is consciously designed to exploit and manipulate.

Leave Our Kids Alone would benefit from the support of organisations across the third sector, and will help address one major source of extrinsic values.

Create a more balanced media

Media coverage of conservation issues is minimal and, when it does hit the headlines, often promotes questionable values and frames – focusing on threat and decline, or pitting nature and environment against economic development.

Economic coverage fills an increasingly large amount of space, and other issues are described in terms of their impact on the economy. This is likely to reinforce extrinsic values both directly, and by promoting feelings of insecurity.

We might not expect to change privately-owned, commercially dependent media; but concerted pressure can be surprisingly effective. The BBC's impartiality remit, moreover, makes it especially sensitive to accusations of unbalanced coverage. Many such accusations are unfounded, effectively power-plays by vested interests; but this fact alone should not deter us from making criticisms when they are well-founded and help rebalance coverage. Demand, through a joint campaign, that economic growth not be accorded a privileged position, either explicitly or implicitly; and that alternative views are given prominence. Ask why, for instance, the level of carbon in the atmosphere does not receive the same degree of attention as the FTSE 100. Celebrate successes, but do not accept marginal, tokenistic efforts to appease your concerns.

Time and income poverty

People in the UK are overworked, with limited leisure time. With poverty on the rise, the desire for economic security will cause many people to focus on extrinsic values; while a lack of time and money will prevent them from visiting green spaces.

Housing

Housing is a regular and controversial fixture of the UK's political agenda. As a number of others have argued, it is something that environmentalists and conservationists should play an active role in: creating a fair deal both for the natural world, and the citizenship on which they rely for support on any number of other issues. It is again something that can create insecurity and divisions between different groups of people, yet there are countless opportunities for sustainable solutions such as freeing up existing housing stock. Ruth Davis of Greenpeace made the case for this most recently in an RSPB blog, saying:

'We could support fair rents and the release of empty properties. But we could also demand that the country's biggest landowners – Government, universities, churches, the Crown, for example - put a proportion of their land into community land trusts, to build houses in places that will not damage nature. By supporting housing schemes in the right places, as well as opposing those in the wrong, we will demonstrate our commitment to the common good.'[107]

CPRE's new Charter to 'save our countryside'[108] is one sector response to this; looking at how concern for the natural environment can be addressed alongside the need for new housing. Outside of the sector, Shelter (the homelessness charity) have recently launched a campaign for Stable Rental Contracts, which would provide more security for renters, allow them to remain in the area in which they live and therefore feel more connection to their communities, and reduce the need for more housing developments.[109]

These are just a few of the potential *Common Causes* on which the third sector could collaborate. As far outside the remit of conservation NGOs as they may seem, their impact on our values means that they must be on our radar. We cannot afford to ignore them.

Recommendations

» Act to increase public engagement with nature. Disconnection from nature harms our health, our communities, and concern about other people and the environment.

» Foster intrinsic values – connection with nature, self-directed activity, creativity, community and affiliation.

» Avoid values that clash with this objective, transactional frames and extrinsic incentives.

» Ensure green, wild spaces are made accessible for disadvantaged and urban communities.

» Policies and institutions shape our values. By campaigning with this in mind, we can strengthen intrinsic values, and promote the long-term success of organisations across the third sector.

» Consider not only the immediate material impact of your campaigns, but also the values they and their outcomes will reinforce.

» Strengthen intrinsic or weaken extrinsic values, and you can help achieve important goals indirectly.

» Consider promoting intrinsic values in education, and weakening extrinsic values by backing curbs on commercial advertising or alternatives to GDP.

» Collaborate across the third sector: leverage your collective power to secure big wins that will benefit all of you.

» Even if you fail to achieve your immediate material goals, you can succeed by creating strong intrinsic frames that shape the public debate and on which you can build.

"Places matter. Their rules, their scale, their design include or exclude civil society, pedestrianism, equality, diversity (economic and otherwise), understanding of where water comes from and garbage goes, consumption or conservation. They map our lives."

Rebecca Solnit

Values in working methods: engaging with others and internal practices

Values are engaged and strengthened by both communications and experiences, as we have explored in the previous sections. A campaign will therefore interact with its audiences' values through both the communications they are exposed to, and any changes to their life experience through the outcomes of the campaign.

In this section, we examine the 'behind-the-scenes' mechanisms through which values are engaged. In other words, the working styles and methods used by conservation organisations to achieve their goals will also engage values: the methods of engagement with the public and supporters; how conservation science is carried out and land is managed; how organisations work with each other and others; and the internal practices of organisations.

4.1 Public engagement with nature

With an understanding of the relationships between values, it becomes clear that in working to engage people in nature, some methods may engage with values compatible with appreciation of the natural world, whilst others may engage with conflicting values. This means that some methods of engagement will reinforce the power of the intrinsic experience of nature, while others will undermine it.

4.1.1 Making nature 'threatening'

Chris Packham, at the Natural Childhood Summit,[110] took issue with the tendency of some groups working with children to *implicitly* frame nature as frightening or dangerous – wearing high-visibility jackets in parks or rubber gloves when doing pond exploration, or forbidding the climbing of trees. We have discussed threat earlier in the report, and this type of association may also evoke security values (which suppress self-direction values). Research has shown that making people think about unwanted dirt, for instance, engages security values (of which *clean* is one). In the study, this interaction appeared to spill-over into power values, as it subsequently raised levels of prejudice and discrimination.[111] Similarly, research from Sweden suggests that when people view nature as threatening (particularly certain species such as wolves), they are less supportive of conservation efforts.[112] This strongly suggests that the associations created with nature – the *frame* – should be of dirt (and nature) being 'natural', or a part of fun, adventure, and exploration rather than 'bad', dangerous, or frightening. Learning about and working with soil would be a good example of how to instil this association.

'*Of course being outdoors can also confront children with less enjoyable experiences: being frightened, getting cold and wet, and even sometimes being hurt. But consider the alternative: that our children grow up without ever encountering these 'difficult' things, and enter the adult world unprepared for the challenges it might bring.*'
- Stephen Moss

4.1.2 Creating transactional experiences in nature

Similarly, associations created between nature and extrinsic values may well undermine the intrinsic benefits of experiencing nature. *Transactional* and *Consumer* frames may be reflected in some experiences that would otherwise be highly intrinsic experiences – gift shops at reserves and visitors centres; payment to view natural 'exhibits'. Whilst these may be considered a small part of the work of the organisation, there is a substantial risk that this is the dominant frame in the experience, if a person purchases an experience, are a spectator of nature, and end in a shop. The extrinsic motivations engaged in this experience could serve to suppress intrinsic concern. In addition, extrinsic incentives for outdoor activity (money, status or social recognition) may well undermine the intrinsic benefits of experiencing nature.

4.1.3 Creating intrinsic experiences in nature

As discussed in Section 2.2, frames around connecting with nature should emphasise factors such as appreciation for nature, social wellbeing, self-directed activity, community, and connection with other people if they are to engage with intrinsic values. In terms of experience, then, this might include social activities, exploration and adventure activities, peer group learning and interaction with nature. Building associations between friendship, community and nature will be self-reinforcing as these all relate to intrinsic motivations. If this is through games or the incentive of spending time with friends, this is still likely to be beneficial. Similarly, fostering the pursuit of self-direction values (creativity, independence, exploration) in the natural world can build a sense of *agency* or autonomy, and, as discussed in the previous section, is more likely to lead to other intrinsically motivated, self-directed action.

These observations are true for both adults and children – although the exact methods themselves may be different. For example, CPRE's publication *Recharging the Power of Place* describes a community project that requires exploration, collaboration, and connection to local green space. Parish mapping is a technique developed by the organisation Common Ground. It involves a local community working together to create a map of its parish or neighbourhood. In the words of the organisers, the maps 'aim to encourage communities to chart the familiar things which they value in their own surroundings, and give active

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expression to their affection for the everyday and commonplace, whether in town or country'. It is a big community project and one that has brought about a range of unexpected benefits. Many people have found it a deeply enjoyable and convivial process. As one participant reported, 'It changed my life in this village. I am sorry the map is finished, but we are going to do more projects in the future.'[113]

Local environmental, conservation, or walking groups that are supported by an organisation are also likely to have similar effects. Projects like these are likely to reinforce intrinsic values, and contribute to a feedback loop in increasing concern about the local environment and community.

Case Study: Wild Place, Your Space

The project, a collaboration between Lee Valley Regional Park and the RSPB has reached out to around 30,000 people from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, giving them a chance to sample nature, enjoy the Park's open spaces and get a taste of the great outdoors.

Residents from all of London's 33 boroughs have taken part in a variety of activities. Working in partnership with the RSPB, the programme is aimed at ethnic minority communities, people with disabilities, families from lower incomes and other deprived groups living across London and the South East. One recent initiative involved giving refugee women from across the capital the chance to explore the Park's waterways and take part in activities.

4.1.4 Conservation volunteer experiences

Promoting volunteering in hands-on nature conservation is an obvious route to engaging people with nature. The impact of the experience on strengthening intrinsic values may well outweigh the methods used to persuade people to volunteer. However, these methods are worth considering, as they may colour the experience they subsequently have.

There are many intrinsic motivations for volunteering, and these should be explored both in the methods used to attract volunteers and in designing the volunteer experience. Research generally suggests that people volunteer for social reasons and for personal challenges, for instance. These ideas reflect intrinsic concerns and could be built on within the experience.

Recommendations

» Avoid framing experiences in nature as 'threatening' or dangerous.

» Wherever possible, allow freedom in exploration: frame experiences in nature as fun, free, and sociable.

» Resist creating associations between nature and transactional experiences.

» Build connections with community.

» Make volunteer experiences reflect a range of intrinsic values and frames: self-direction, joint action, benevolence, and challenges.

4.2 Creating active members

4.2.1 'Protest businesses' and the erosion of active membership

There are competing visions of what supporting an organisation means. One is instrumentalist: members provide organisations with income and lobbying power. Another is participatory: members are part of, or even the driving force within, an organisation.

> '[The role of members] is two-fold: campaigning power to open doors and question leaders and as leverage to raise the funds we need' *- Interviewee*

Both views (and others) have some merit. But the growing professionalisation of the third sector has allowed the instrumentalist view to take precedence, impeding the development of an active support base.

In their book *The Protest Business*, which examines the work of several environmental NGOs, including Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace, Grant Jordon and William Maloney[114] describe NGOs' movement away from a more involved, grassroots model of engagement, and towards 'cheque-book membership'.

In 'protest businesses', professional staff rather than members take political action; supporters are kept at arm's length; and members seen as sources of income. As we have seen (Section 2), many conservation communications frame members as largely passive helpers, assisting heroic organisations through donation, and neglect to provide information (as Jordan and Maloney themselves point out).

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The authors call this 'cheap participation': barriers to entry are low, but so, unfortunately, are barriers to exit, and a shallow level of engagement prevails. 'Churn' is therefore a classic attribute of protest businesses; NGOs fight hard to attract new members, because old ones are continually dropping out. Jordan and Maloney call this the 'revolving door model'.

Data on conservation groups are difficult to obtain, since they are often stored internally (if at all), but those available show a lot of time and money spent on fundraising from members and the public, and substantial levels of 'churn'. Many of those we spoke to echoed this analysis. So did many communications we analysed, which present low barriers to entry ('just £3 a month') and omit adequate explanations.

We examined our 13 partner organisations' websites, to find out how they asked people to 'get involved', and what kinds of actions they requested of supporters. We present a rough summary of our findings below.

Table 3: Getting involved in UK conservation

How can I get involved?		Frequency
Monetary	Shop	26
	Join	22
	Donate / legacy	22
	Adopt	12
	Corporate	7
	Fundraise	9
Active		
	Volunteer	13
	Groups and events	9
	Lifestyle change	5
	Surveys and citizen science	6
	Gardening	4
Passive	Learning and training	9
	Competitions	6
	Campaigns and petitions	6

As well as becoming members, people could buy breakdown cover, shop, and 'adopt'. Donation is given pride of place, usually appearing at the top of the list, while volunteering appears at the bottom. NGOs have developed all manner of innovative ways to solicit donations – but not, apparently, to involve or recruit volunteers. Their increasingly financial appeals leave little room for other forms of participation.

Protest businesses may facilitate top-down change, but can actively suppress bottom-up change. Providing limited information or scope for autonomous action, they are unlikely to inspire anything but the donations they so relentlessly solicit. Worse, those aiming constantly to increase incomes can rely on increasingly marketing-style appeals to extrinsic values, undermining environmental concern. Many survey respondents wanted to see more autonomous public action at individual and group level; NGOs certainly appear to provide limited scope for it at present.

Charities are traditionally seen as part of civil society, the sector that engages in civic action. Yet they appear to be failing to encourage active participation, and may actually cause people to disengage from civic issue.

4.2.2 Creating an active membership and an engaged public

'[I'd like to see] many more people caring passionately about the natural world and willing to take action for it and the knock on political attention that nature would thereby warrant.' **– Survey respondent**

Collectively, conservation organisations have vast memberships. Around 4 million people in the UK are members of a conservation organisation (many more if we count members of other environmental groups). This is 6 times the number who are members of political parties. Only around 7% of people abstain from all charitable or civic activity, and people in the UK prioritise intrinsic values. This is fertile ground in which to cultivate active participation. Campaigns like UK Uncut and 38 Degrees have succeeded not through staff size, financial resources or marketing budgets, but by mobilising people, facilitating collective action and giving citizens a voice.

Many organisation use Sherry Arnstein's 1969 model *A Ladder of Citizen Participation.*[115] Originally a description of the US planning process, it outlines several progressively increasing degrees of participation. The basic 'ladder' is as below.

Degrees of participation	Rungs	Characteristics
Citizen participation	Citizen control	Public (or members) have decision-making powers ranging from limited to full
	Delegated power	
	Partnership	
Tokenism	Placation	Primarily focused on imparting information; incorporates some public involvement, but power lies with the organisation
	Consultation	
	Informing	
Non-participation	Therapy	Aims to educate people; public participation is limited to support for existing plans
	Manipulation	

The higher rungs encourage autonomy and self-direction. They predict trust in organisations, and inspire their supporters to take action.[116] Lower-rung models assign members and the public a more passive role. Organisations market themselves through 'manipulation': partial information and limited input from others. They are therefore associated with feelings of disempowerment, lack of trust in the organisation, and make people less likely to participate.

NGOs appear to rely heavily on lower-rung models, soliciting financial support but little wider involvement. Although volunteer schemes can reach the higher rungs, signing petitions is often tokenistic. The lowest level at which genuine participation occurs is *partnership*, which requires citizens (or members) to be accorded a degree of control over decision-making.

What can conservation organisations do, then, to create 'active' members and active citizens?

Building on existing approaches

Many organisations encourage active engagement in various ways: volunteering, gardening, campaigning. WWF's website offers advice on ways to 'Change how you live', and CPRE publish short 'How to' guides on ways of engaging with the planning process. RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch and BCT's bat surveys encourage autonomous engagement with nature. Too many, however, recommend only individual action.

Encouragingly, there are many opportunities to volunteer, and many do – though the majority are over 60, white and middle-class. Organisations should try to include more diverse participants, then, including young people (a goal The Conservation Volunteers Scotland are currently pursuing). This can be aided by talking and collaborating with people from the communities that organisations want to reach, or who have relevant knowledge and expertise.

> 'We've run consultations with BME and youth organisations. An agency tried out sustainability resources at a youth club and found that the young people were not at all impressed. We are learning not to be afraid of going to alien organisations to ask for advice. We've consulted the West Scotland racial equality council on how to outreach BME communities, and Enable Scotland regarding people with disabilities, and a program to help people discover nature.' **- Interviewee**

Creating a new generation of active conservationists

'The youth section of Norway's largest environmental group has its own independent direction and agenda. Many of Norway's leading environmental figures have graduated from this organisation, and its reputation for bold action makes it an attractive channel for young people's concern and energy' – Chawla, 1999.

> 'People can be cynical about 'what will work', jaded rather than up for trying new things. But young volunteers still have that 'zest'.' **– Survey respondent**

The new generation of green NGO members are committed, energetic, and want to go beyond financial involvement.[117] They are willing to campaign and volunteer with very little support from an organisation; but this does not mean they should not be provided with such support; more could also be encouraged, catalysed and created.

Many NGOs – often founded on democratic, participatory principles – have strong, independent young memberships. Woodcraft Folk, for instance, involves children in decision-making from a young age. Such organisations have loyal, connected, and active memberships, committed to these values in their wider lives.

Developing new models of participation

Consider innovative ways to encourage participation. The conservation sector has a broad membership and manages many physical sites; these are excellent starting points. Countless other groups would be keen to partner with NGOs to create innovative projects and reach diverse audiences: urban reserves, city farms, community green spaces. One suggestion we heard was a 'creative or political space' at all reserves, perhaps with a library or creative materials; people could meet, organise and design projects or campaigns themselves. Another was for NGO websites to each facilitate a regular 'people's campaign' – chosen, designed and run by members of the public.

Case Study: Greenpeace Compass

Pilot project Greenpeace Compass has signed up 1,200 people from 116 countries to play a more active role in the organisation. Its online tools have been used to facilitate brainstorming sessions, debates and web-based workshops, as well as to create campaigns, posters, and scripts for adverts. Members of the public have provided advice on Greenpeace's strategy. In the words of Martin Lloyd, who worked on the project, 'You start to get idea that there is a lot of untapped potential there.' The project discovered an appetite for unusual forms of engagement, and for more political advocacy in Asia.

A permanent project of this kind would take time and money, and might not easily fit the remit of many NGOs. But it demonstrates the potential to harness the public's skill, knowledge and enthusiasm – and to engage and strengthen intrinsic values.

Many existing models, old and new, connect 'communities of interest'[xx] and facilitate action via physical spaces and online platforms.[118] When people feel connected, supported, and free to contribute creatively, you can expect deeper, more committed engagement.

Minimising low-participation actions

Organisations should avoid consumer frames that discourage participation,[119] though they cannot and should not stop asking people to donate or sign petitions. Quite apart from the impact both can have, they are the only way many people can participate. Do not abandon them, then, but be aware of their limits, and consider other ways to engage people – even at the risk of raising the bar.

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[xx] A group of people who constitute a community because of a shared interest.

Recommendations

» Solicit active involvement first, monetary contributions last.

» Create spaces and offer support to allow people to undertake autonomous action.

» Don't expect different audiences – such as the young – to want to engage in traditional ways.

» Try out innovative tools and methods that facilitate independent, creative action.

» Support and empower local and youth groups.

» Combine environmental concern with other intrinsic values such as self-direction and community in the experiences you facilitate.

4.3 Sites, reserves and conservation science

'Science does not know its debt to imagination.' **- Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Some partner organisations conduct research and fieldwork, or manage sites. Here we examine how they can incorporate values in these areas.

4.3.1 Involving others in research

Getting out in the field can be an important source of intrinsic values – extend the opportunity to others.

Some fieldwork requires specialist skills, or needs to be repeated by the same trained individuals to reduce error. In these cases, it will be harder to involve volunteers. Wherever possible, though, try to involve them in data collection alongside local communities. You will encourage participation and enhance feelings of connection with place and nature.

4.3.2 Citizen Science

Mass citizen science projects like the Big Garden Birdwatch are a great way to connect people with nature. Encourage community participation within these national programmes by helping local groups meet, talk and share information.

The Natural History Museum and Biological Records Centre recently produced a guide on creating and managing citizen science projects.[120] Many of its recommendations could help foster intrinsic values – for instance:

- Understand the social motivations behind volunteering;

- Communicate effectively with participants;

- Ensure members of the project are well-trained in public engagement as well as data collection.

4.3.3 Sites, places, and reserves

'We ask people how they played when they were young and 90% of people said they played outdoors in fields. This helps people think that play areas don't have to be what you immediately think of, with fences and equipment' **– Interviewee**

Many NGOs already emphasise the local (through Parish mapping, for instance), and accord sites or reserves particular importance. For the public, however, they are often distant 'places to travel to'[121], and they may come to think of nature in much the same way. We must treasure and promote local, urban sites, then. Activities like wildlife gardening are already popular on an individual level; organisations could also offer opportunities for group or community participation.

Case Study: The PTES and Hedgehog Preservation Society 'Hedgehog Street' Initiative

The Hedgehog Street project encourages people to become Hedgehog Champions and get support from their neighbours and work together to create ideal hedgehog habitat throughout their street, estate or communal grounds.

When prospective champions sign up they will receive a pack that contains hedgehog factsheets that can be handed out to neighbours, posters to help advertise the project, tips and hints on how to get neighbours involved and how to keep them interested and a pack of action cards that explain what people can do in their gardens.

This encourages the more social intrinsic values as well as the environmental ones.

Perhaps involve local groups in land management; link up with schools and other groups, including those that already help manage their local areas.

Some communities could take full ownership of sites and reserves, possibly even from the outset. The RSPB, for instance, recently handed over an osprey project in Glaslyn, North Wales, to a local conservation group.[122] Facilitating independent collaborative work can strengthen the *joint action* frame, along with self-direction and benevolence values.

4.3.4 Science communication

Conservation organisations collect large amounts of data, much of which is never publicised. Even if an organisation can't involve local people in data collection, the information could still be shared with them, possibly in a popularised format.

Local people have local knowledge. Consider using locally observable (and observed) changes as a 'hook' when discussing environmental problems and solutions – this may resonate with people's established understanding. Where constructive solutions can be pursued locally, mention them too.

4.3.5 International work

Acknowledging cultural differences is an important part of working effectively in other countries. Avoid imposing your way of working on others and try to increase the ownership and decision-making power of local communities. This will help foster intrinsic values.

Recommendations

» Try to involve volunteers in the collection of scientific data.

» Include tick boxes on national citizen science project forms, to put people in contact with others locally (perhaps through web forums.

» Focus more on sites that, while less valuable in terms of biodiversity, can foster a sense of place and engagement with the outdoors.

» Try to create a sense of community on your reserves, sites and other places.

» Where possible, involve others in science communication.

4.4 Working together for a strong sector

Many of our recommendations – rethinking membership structures and reforming communications, for instance – can be adopted by NGOs individually. But no organisation can take on 'markets for ecosystem services' on its own. Challenging dominant and harmful frames, policies and institutions will require much wider co-ordination.

4.4.1 Promoting intrinsic values to support the third sector

Intrinsic values and frames can help the conservation sector achieve both short- and long-term goals, by motivating environmental concern and action.[123] Trade-offs will sometimes be necessary, of course; but under normal circumstances, strengthening intrinsic values will be the order of the day.

This isn't to argue that there will be no instances when tensions do arise between short-term goals and longer-term considerations. Where they do, it is important than an organisation is not alone in adopting communication strategies rooted in intrinsic values: a single organisation can undermine or be swamped by the efforts of the others.

But even where, as will normally be the case, such tensions do not arise, the longer term-goal of strengthening intrinsic values will require concerted effort from many organisations – within the conservation movement and, of course, far beyond.

This points to the need to work for greater coherence across the conservation sector (and third sector beyond) in how organisations campaign, communicate and fundraise. Working towards a more coherent sector need not, of course, entail the erosion of those differences that characterise and define different conservation organisations.

But it would require several conservation organisations to accept the principle that they have a responsibility to work in ways that will serve to strengthen intrinsic values. Having accepted this principle, it would also entail that these organisations discuss with others the steps that they have taken (and challenges that they encounter) in the course of implementing this principle.

Unfortunately, this isn't happening at present: different organisations appeal to very different values in their communications.

Many of the NGO staff we spoke to thought an independent advisor and facilitator working between organisations would be useful, helping facilitate discussions, share experiences, highlight examples of best practice, and generally integrate values and frames into conservation work. It could also convene meetings on how to respond to the latest Government initiatives. Wildlife and Countryside Link (and its regional variants) are well-placed to host this role.

4.4.2 Partnerships and collaborations on common values

People across the third sector hold strong intrinsic values; when such values are strengthened, the whole sector benefits. In a sense, there are no 'single-issue' groups: each organisation affects many others. This may sound daunting, but also presents opportunities for collaboration, making seemingly unlikely alliances possible. The Wild Network[xxi] may be a useful model: it includes NGOs working on health, child wellbeing, conservation, and others. The sector has a great deal of experience of working together through collaborations such as the *State of Nature* (2013) report, coalitions like Stop Climate Chaos, or the collective voice of Wildlife and Countryside Link, which may provide useful starting points. Organisations could also consider using new collaborative styles, such as the Stanford Social Innovation Review's 'Collective Impact' model (discussed below).

Case study: Collective Impact – Ways of working well together

The 'Collective Impact' model, outlined by the Stanford Social Innovation Review, advocates the following.

Common Agenda: All partners should have a common understanding of the problem and a shared vision of the solution.

Shared Measurement Systems are essential if you want to make an impact.

Mutually Reinforcing Activities*:* collaborative projects involve a variety of roles: they do not require everyone to do the same thing.

Continuous Communication*:* regular meetings and feedback are essential.

Backbone Support Organizations A separate organisation with specific skills should act as manager and backbone for the entire coalition.

These principles enable staff to learn as they go, reacting to problems and opportunities as they emerge – in a manner consistent with the common agenda and a process facilitated by the backbone organisation.

Once set in motion, this process helps coalitions act effectively under constantly changing circumstances.

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[xxi] The partnership formed after *Natural Childhood* was published.

4.4.3 Connecting public and membership bases

Like NGOs, the public and members are connected by shared values. We don't live or act in silos: NGOs both within the conservation sector and beyond share many of the same members.[124] If people care about conservation, many will also care about poverty, racial equality, and the arms trade.

Ignoring this fact – particularly when times are tight – is a missed opportunity. NGOs may end up competing over a potentially shrinking supporter base, rather than fostering broader, more active support.

Research on young or student members and activists finds small groups already work together regularly. More than 40% say they work with other organisations or campaigns. Tellingly,

'In contrast to focus group interviews with... staff members who would sometimes refer to other groups as 'the competition', the language of collaboration was more apparent in interviews with activists, who would regularly employ such phrases as: 'we took part in ... we worked with ... we have collaborated with ... we have [also] taken part in ... we teamed up with ... '.'[125]

Far from spreading their resources too thinly, collaboration increased the time and energy they devoted – precisely what an understanding of values would lead us to expect.

Almost a fifth of student members said they had used other groups' websites to advance their own campaigns. This is something NGOs could actively encourage; establishing and promoting more such shared, non-partisan spaces for participation.

This is not something that need be limited to campaigns or activism, either. Resources and spaces could be shared more across many other domains such as volunteering, and reserves and sites. A recent example of the principle of sharing spaces in practice is explored in the case study below.[126]

Case Study: Mission:Explore's Summer Camp.

A virtual *Summer Camp*, focused on outdoor activity, offers '100 days of warped adventures, wild activities and daring challenges', appealing to self-direction and stimulation values. With no prescribed age range, and with a gender-neutral stamp from PinkStinks, it upholds the intrinsic value of *equality*.

It has an unimposing collaborative approach. Organisations such as the RSPB, the John Muir Award, utility companies, and National Geographic can create their own space on the virtual camp where 'campers' can go and find 'missions'. Each organisation creates their own missions for campers to complete, which can be place-based (at specific reserves, for instance) or non-place specific. Collaboration is incredibly light-touch and provides children with a single online space to interact with a great huge range of organisations and resources.

This kind of project could be extended and built on more permanently, and provide space for non-environmental organisations.

Recommendations

- » Explore new ways of working together.
- » Try not to undermine others by appealing to extrinsic values, or using other frames that impede concern and action about conservation.
- » Strengthen links between organisations.
- » Create shared spaces and resources for members and the public.

4.5 Engaging with the private sector

NGOs work with the private sector in many ways – event sponsorships, product tie-ins, 'stewardships', and so on. Conservation groups carefully weigh the environmental and financial costs and benefits of these relationships – but should also consider the values they promote.

The tight funding environment of recent years has increasingly drawn NGOs towards corporate partnerships, and diluted their criteria for selection. In 2011, *Fundraising Magazine* reported, 60% of NGOs claimed to have rejected a corporate partnership because of incompatible values. By 2012, this number had roughly halved, to 32%.[127]

Many businesses have a positive or neutral effect on society and the environment; some may have values much like those of the conservation sector. Others will have conflicting values, damaging the environment directly, or promoting values (such as *power* and *achievement*) that impede environmental progress.

This may bring financial rewards, but some businesses will could either evoke frames that are damaging to conservation or act in ways that have immediate negative impacts on the natural world or society. This is especially likely if they are associated with excessive profiteering, tax avoidance, consumerism, or disregard for human life and welfare.

Perhaps organisations can influence some companies positively; but think carefully about potential partnerships. Do the short-term material impacts outweigh the long-term impacts on values and frames? Are the business's values aligned with your own? And in allowing the business to benefit from the environmental values of your organisation, is it able to legitimise other, damaging behaviours?

If an environmental organisation's logo becomes associated with a consumer experience or brand, it may reinforce the *consumer* frame and the extrinsic values it embodies. Product buy-ins and media attention will do the same, weakening intrinsic values and environmental concern.

Case study: Give as you Live

'Give as you Live' is a project that lets people donate to a charity of their choice when shopping online. It can be used at selected retailers, and a donation is made every time something is purchased. This helps raise money, but is likely to influence people's values, for the following reasons:

- **It endorses consumerism indiscriminately**. Many goods – such as patio heaters or flights – help destroy wildlife and disconnect us from the environment.

- **It allows users to feel they have 'done their bit' and need not do anything more**. As the Give as you Live website puts it: 'Just by shopping online, you can raise over £50 for your favourite charity - without putting your hand deeper into your pocket'.

- **It equates 'living' with shopping**. The two are not identical, however, and materialism is an extrinsic value.

- **Its framing strongly associates environmental groups with consumer products**. The website displays a live feed showing what has been bought and how much donated, with the company's logo presented alongside the charity's. This could cause problems in the longer term, as environmental organisations may become associated with extrinsic values.

Recommendations

» Carefully consider the values implications of any partnership with private sector actors. Are the stated values of the company in line with your organisational values? Are their actions in line with your organisational values?

4.6 Values within organisations

NGOs do not just influence the external world, but develop *internal* cultures. Staff experiences will shape their values, affecting both their jobs and their wider lives. Internal structures; work incentives; recruitment and career advancement processes; leadership; job security; holidays; decision-making processes; how time is allocated – all will make a difference.

> *'If this is the case, values matter for all important choices in life, and all such choices lead either to the strengthening of previously held convictions or to their adjustment'* — **Lesthaege and Moors, 2002.**

Studies have identified a feedback loop between career choices and values: we choose careers based on the values we hold dear, and our careers often strengthen the same values that led us into them.[128]

But this will not always be the case: some jobs can weaken these values. Universalism might lead us into social work, but internal hierarchies and incentives might shift us towards power values. As one paper noted:

> 'rewards in a new culture may emphasise individual rather than collective outcomes (emphasising, for example, achievement values), thereby rendering individualistic values more adaptive'.[129]

Employees required to work autonomously, for instance, came to value self-direction more highly.[130]

Internships

Whilst unpaid internships do provide invaluable experiences for those who get them, and often lead to other, paid, work opportunities, they are only accessible to sections of the population who can afford to spend this time unpaid. There is also a potentially exploitative power relationship in the lack of real choice interns have. Debate around this has been highly values-laden: talking about fairness, accessibility, and power.

Much of the research on the impacts of workplaces on wellbeing finds they influence people in many areas of life: how they act towards others; what they buy; how environmentally conscious they are.[131] One study found that, after engaging with a company's sustainability programme, 73% of its staff said they were more likely to act sustainably at home and work;

80% encouraged others to act sustainably.[132] The results may be as strong, if not stronger, for NGO staff, who already cherish, understand, and actively pursue sustainability.

There is another reason to consider organisational values: recent controversies over unpaid interns in charities (some of them campaigning for workers' rights overseas) demonstrate how much resentment and dismay NGOs can generate by appearing hypocritical or inconsistent.[133] Organisations should *exemplify* good practice. Encouraging sustainable practices at work, such as public transport use and minimal waste demonstrates consistency in organisational values. Leading by doing demonstrates integrity, foster trust, generate discussion, and inspire others to follow.

In the following pages, we discuss how organisations can take values into account in the following areas of working life:

- Leadership
- Decision-making
- Communications
- Working culture
- Diversity and inclusiveness
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Transparency

4.6.1 Leadership

Leadership styles help shape an organisation's culture and values, and influence leaders themselves at all levels (and most people will assume some form of 'leadership' at some point).

Positions of power naturally require big-picture, strategic thinking, and influence over others. Time and monetary constraints add further pressures. Power, studies find, can therefore make us less attentive to others' needs and feelings and objectify others, viewing them as tools to achieve our own goals.[134] Such positions appear, then, to encourage power values over benevolence.

Competitive, hierarchical organisations encourage leaders to prioritise money and efficiency over other concerns.[135] They also breed 'internal politics', conflict, resentment and discontent among staff. These traits are all related to security and power values,[136] and threaten to undermine an NGO's long-term mission. Providing opportunities and spaces that mitigate feelings of competition, hierarchy and 'politics' could encourage more intrinsic leadership (and working in general). This could be done through encouraging more intrinsic leadership styles: promoting equality, collaboration, free expression of views, transparency and accountability.

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Leaders who often express their own values, studies find, encourage values-led thinking in others.[137] Offering explicit reminders, then – or inquiring – about the values that inform organisational decisions ('How does this connect people with nature?'; 'Is this fair?') will shape organisational norms and expectations.

Accountability is vital. Knowing that their actions must be reported and justified makes leaders consider their broader impacts and make ethical decisions.[138] (People in a 'high power' position, one study found, were three times less likely to act selfishly when required to justify their decisions.)[139]

4.6.2 Decision-making

'It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are.' **– Roy Disney**

Roy Disney, one of the co-founders of Disney, reportedly said 'It's not hard to make decisions when you know what your values are'.[140] This might not always be the case in reality: there are times when values held may relate to conflicting goals. However, working from values can help organisations and people make decisions by focusing attention on what's important.

This can also prevent 'mission drift', or confusion about why, looking back after five years, a particular choice was made.

Think about intrinsic values more often, and they will influence your thinking more often. Encouraging staff to consider them will inspire actions, campaigns and communications that cultivate intrinsic values in others. This is effective leadership: intrinsically motivated people prioritise an organisation's long-term goals over their own short-term gains.[141]

A number of people in our workshops pointed out internal structures that either help or prevent them from considering values and pursuing long-term goals. Studies of the conservation sector make similar observations. One found staff felt unable to express their environmental values, warning:

'If staff working in nature conservation feel restricted to discuss nature only in scientific or anthropocentric terms through their work, ecocentric values and personal relationships towards nature appear unlikely to be incorporated into conservation management practices, and encouragement of these values in wider society becomes increasingly problematic'.[142]

The values your staff feel able to express internally, in other words, are those you will promote externally.

In Gabrielle Horup's 2010 VINE study, respondents were asked to list factors that would improve their experience of working for nature conservation organisations. She reports: 'the main themes were training and development; more time and encouragement to develop skills; greater involvement in decision-making and better communication within the organisation; more staff and resources; less reporting and targets; better pay; less bureaucracy; more time in the field and less time in the office.'

Our values affect *problem construction*, for instance: the factors we consider when approaching a task or exploring an issue.[143] In one experiment, people were asked to consider a controversial partnership deal, then rewrite the scenario in their own words, noting every factor they would consider. For the more extrinsically-inclined, these were: *How can I benefit the most? How will this make money? What can we gain from this now? What impact will this have on my reputation?* The more intrinsically-inclined considered not only money and reputation, but also: *Is this morally right? Is this in line with our principles? What effect will this have on our employees? What are the long-term implications?*[144]

'I think organisations need [staff] asking why are we doing it this way? Because it makes you think and it makes you revise how you work sometimes' **- Taken from Roberts, 2011**

Importantly, our surroundings can encourage (or discourage) more intrinsic (or extrinsic) problem-solving.[145] Ethical training, for instance, makes us behave more ethically.[146] Encourage people to consider how their decisions will affect the environment, society, and organisational values, then – not only short-term goals or money.

Let people make decisions themselves and you will probably strengthen intrinsic self-direction values. So will open discussions that encourage everyone to contribute, which represent a more balanced approach to decision-making.

'I've described the situation to other people who are not working in conservation and they're amazed absolutely amazed when you say people can't really share their real feelings about what they're doing, and they say well why not! It is it just seems so fundamental I don't know why we've got into this situation'

'The love of nature is essential… but I don't know that it is nurtured [by the organisation]'

— Taken from Roberts, 2011

The author notes that conservation staff generally seemed to feel their values are fairly aligned with their organisations, but that they were frustrated with how values were communicated.

These findings have implications for almost every area of work. Organisations might want to create explicit processes for considering the needs of others and of nature when designing a campaign, for instance. Appeals to money and image, where necessary, should not impede an organisation's long-term goals.

A number of organisations provide more intrinsic models for decision-making. They include:

- The Engage Network
- The New Organizing Institute
- The Berkana Institute: The Art of Hosting
- The Rhizome Collective
- Lifeworlds Learning
- Seeds for Change

Methods include ideas such as participatory and inclusive meeting structures.

4.6.3 Communication

Where necessary, reducing barriers to communication, consultation and ideas-sharing within your organisation can foster intrinsic working. This could include mentoring or secondment schemes between different departments or layers of your organisation.

Age UK's Care in Crisis petition collected over 130,000 signatures, half of them collected and submitted by shop volunteers. Head office staff called each shop personally to explain the campaign (previously the two had had no contact), inspiring enthusiastic volunteers to request posters, take petitions to libraries and community groups, visit MPs and gain local media coverage. The new and personal connections between staff and volunteers greatly strengthened the campaign.[147]

Greenpeace International's 'Mobilisation Integration Toolkit' was designed to share learning across the organisation.[148] One example it cites is Greenpeace Spain. By 2010, this organisation had a multiple personality problem: separate departments (fundraising, volunteers, members, 'action staff', 'cyberactivists') with separate databases each presented a different face to the public. By 2012, they had integrated their databases and solved the problem. Another is Greenpeace Argentina, whose entire staff meets twice a year to plan, discuss strategy and share ideas. This exemplifies participation and inspiration within an organisation.

4.6.4 Working culture

'I just see a huge amount of potential being wasted. Individuals who are passionate about their belief. But they are working in an organisation which is a nature conservation organisation, but it's constraining them to a degree that they cannot realise their skills, enthusiasm or commitment. I just want to bang heads about it.'
- Interviewee, Horup, 2010 p.79

Foster trust and community, and share practices that express staff's intrinsic values. This will help reforms of structure, leadership and decision-making take root. Group activities can express an NGO's shared values. Tearfund's staff take time out on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday mornings to pray together, for instance – reconnecting with the organisation's goals and the values that motivate its work.[149] Consider spending time together in nature, sharing your passions and experiences – perhaps during weekly 'afternoon teas' or shared lunches.

Perhaps change your physical environment: views of natural environments and even pot plants cultivate intrinsic motivations and improve wellbeing.[150] So will autonomous working practices and flexible working time.[151]

Short-termism (related to extrinsic thinking) is a leading cause of dissatisfaction among staff,[152] and short-term contracts foster insecurity (also related to extrinsic motivation). Put long-term thinking at the heart of your working practices.

4.6.5 Inclusiveness

Conservation NGOs could be more inclusive, internally as well as externally.[153] Women make up 68% of the third sector, but only 27% of senior NGO staff.[154] (US-based research finds their sector is also very ethnically homogenous.)[155] Inclusiveness not only embodies intrinsic values, but brings with it a diversity of knowledge and experience, and therefore new opportunities. (See below for an example of an exercise that can be used to discuss these personal experiences in organisations).

The New Economics Foundation found that diversity and the sharing of personal experience improved communications. Newsletters became more personal, including pictures of their authors and explaining why these issues mattered to them personally. This had surprising benefits: 20% more emails were opened, and click-through rates doubled. Staff also reported a better 'quality' of engagement from supporters.[156]

The Conservation Volunteers Scotland has also started to engage with this idea – primarily through consulting organisations who represent audiences they had less experience with.

4.6.6 Monitoring and evaluation

The measures used to chart success communicate implicit goals. Financial indicators encourage extrinsic thinking that can undermine your broader objectives. Environmental goals and values must be placed front and centre – not the resources they generate.

Many conservation groups already measure the following (among others):

- Volunteer enjoyment (and hours);

- Members' ecological footprints before and after campaigns;

- Noticeable shifts in government language (from extrinsic frames to intrinsic);

- The number of people accessing green spaces after a campaign or project.

4.6.7 Transparency

'Those people who think transparency is just about funders and beneficiaries, have missed the point… it is about the organisation being honest with itself, in order to really learn and improve. We need to start with being honest to ourselves.' **- Martin Brookes, out-going CEO of New Philanthropy Capital, quoted in Lee, 2010.**

Be open about how and why you work, and you will engage funders, members, the public and even other NGOs more deeply. 'Honesty' is an intrinsic value – and others may learn from your experiences. By sharing failures as well as successes, we can avoid repeating each other's mistakes.

Each year, Canadian group Engineers Without Borders releases a Failure Report. In development, they believe, success is impossible without risk and innovation – and sometimes, therefore, failure. Oxfam are now trying something similar: they aim to publicly celebrate failure, share its lessons, and foster a culture of creativity and risk-taking.[157]

4.6.8 Conclusion: social change through internal change

Internal structures matter. In the post-communist Czech Republic, the need for new values in work environments seems to have caused an upsurge in self-direction values.[158] Conservation NGOs employ the number of people one might find in a respectably sized audience – one particularly receptive to their messages, and that can be reached every day. Budget, size and remit may represent limitations – but by changing internal practices, organisations can help change society.

Recommendations

» Encourage practices at work that are in line with organisational goals, such as sustainability and inclusivity.

» Staff should be encouraged to express their values and motivations for working in the conservation sector: this will encourage intrinsic thinking.

» Promote collaboration, sharing and good communication throughout the organisation.

» Ensure accountability and transparency.

» Get some pot plants in the office!

» Choose monitoring and evaluation techniques that reflect organisational values.

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."

John Muir

Conclusion

Creating and maintaining a sustainable, wildlife-rich world requires active, concerned citizens and a political system capable of rising to the challenge. Governments, businesses and the public will need the space and motivation to make the right choices.

As this report has shown, facts alone will not be enough to do this. For some in conservation an understanding of the ineffectiveness of such a fact-based approach has meant turning to business and marketing for solutions. Indeed, our research suggests that the adoption of these techniques from the corporate sector is likely to have contributed to an increase in transactional relationships with members and the wider public, and increasingly passive roles for those who want to help.

This new approach has been a miscalculation for two distinct reasons. Firstly, conservation is not a product: although products can be sold to support its work, ultimately it is a pursuit that is driven by a strong moral imperative. Secondly, as we have seen throughout this report, research increasingly suggests that messages appealing to self-interest are likely to impede our wider environmental objectives by decreasing people's motivations to act.

The declines in those willingly to stand up for the environment, noted in the introduction, have long been a concern for conservationists. However, it is only with an understanding of values that we can begin to see that the conservation sector may actually have been contributing to this problem. If the sector had grown, to the detriment of something more immediately obvious, such as the reduction of certain species, would it be quicker to question the methods used? The impact of ignoring the impact on values may be harder to see and measure, but may end up being no less serious. Neglecting to foster intrinsic experiences may slowly erode the remaining chances to protect the natural world. However, as we know, dwelling on this threat will not help! We should instead focus on the opportunities this knowledge allows us.
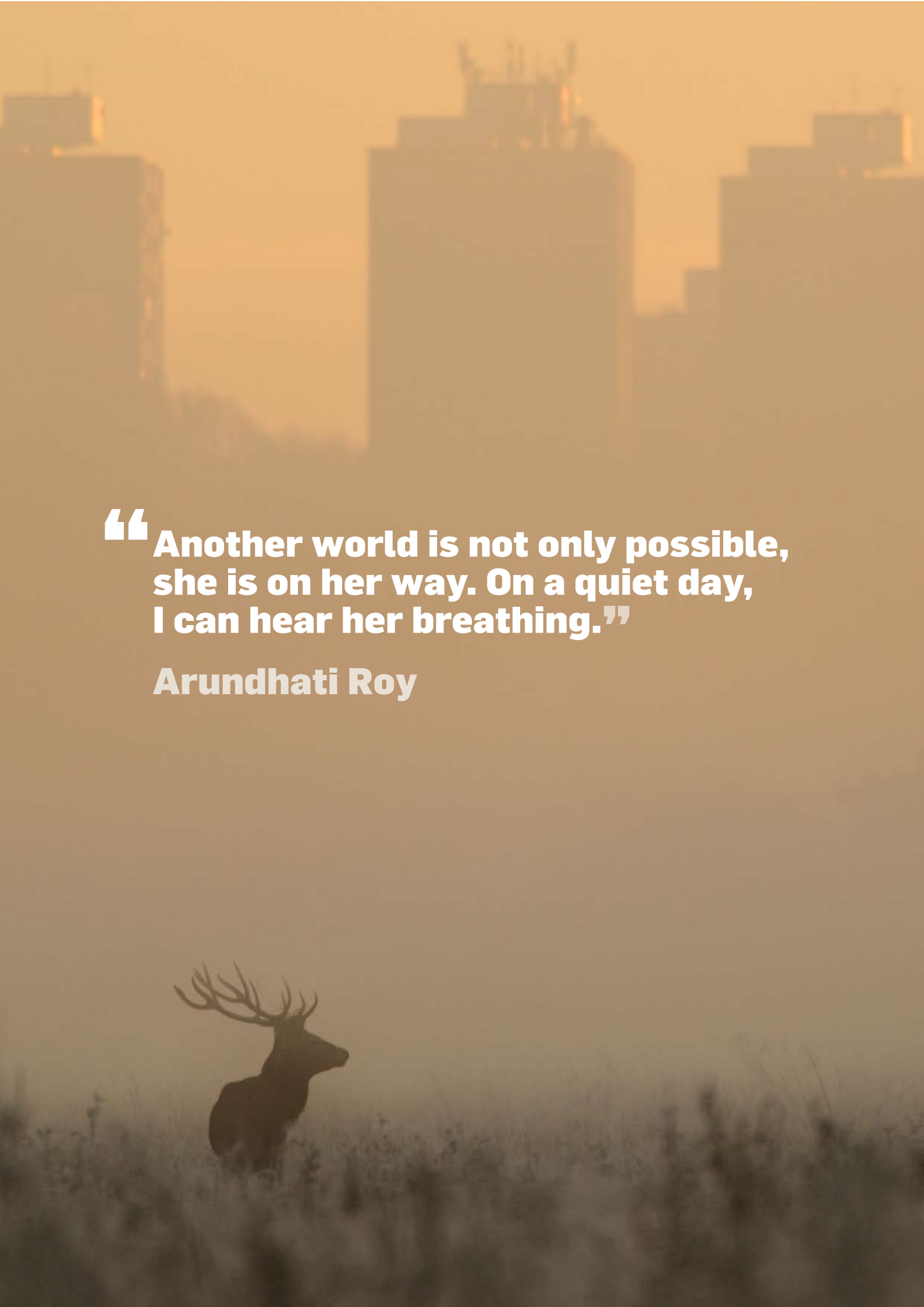
This report and the associated research are pioneering and represent a concerted attempt to examine the values associated with the work of conservation. We have made recommendations based on the best practice, and things to improve on.

However, we accept that there are currently some limits to our understanding and areas that require further work, such as what the correct balance of fear and positive messages to inform and motivate rather than scare.

It is of course our hope many of the recommendations made in this report will be adopted. However, it was never our intention for these recommendations to be exhaustive and it is our hope that this report is a catalyst for a continuing dialogue on values. We have only scratched the surface with regard to some work areas and want to work with the sector to identify other areas that have values implications.

However, we also hope that we have made it clear that many of the messages being propagated in the public sphere are likely to be harming the cause of conservation. We have seen that conservation organisations appeal to universalism and benevolence no more frequently than others in general discourse (see results). If these organisations are not making use of these intrinsic values then who else can we expect to fulfil this role? We need to start by reclaiming the moral imperative behind conservation and talk more about the beauty, wonder and inspiration that the natural world provides. We also need to imagine new ways to foster an active citizenship that will take ownership of our collective problems and the solutions required. However this is just a starting point, if we are truly serious above achieving change then we must then start to consider how we ensure other societal institutions are more representative of intrinsic values.

Fostering values such as self-acceptance, care for others, and concern for the natural world can have real and lasting benefits in conservation. By using this understanding to identify new areas for policies and campaigning, and by working together to cultivate these intrinsic values, we can create a society that is more compassionate, more connected to nature, and more motivated to protect our environment for generations to come.

"Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing."

Arundhati Roy

Recommendations

When communicating about conservation

Try to:

» Show how amazing nature is and share the experience of wildlife;

» Talk about people, society and compassion as well as the natural world;

» Explain where and why things are going wrong;

» Encourage active participation: exploration, enjoyment, and creativity.

Avoid:

» Relying on messages that emphasise threat and loss;

» Appeals to competition or status or money, or frames that imply a transaction between an NGO and its supporters;

» Economic frames;

» Attempts to motivate people with conflicting values;

» Segmenting audiences based on values.

When lobbying decision-makers

» Don't reinforce unhelpful terms and ideas. Avoid repeating language that appeals to values related to self-interest.

» Be proactive and set the agenda: do not simply respond.

» Encourage decision-makers to experience hands on conservation.

When engaging the media

» Be aware of the implicit values in the language you use.

» Think carefully before using celebrities.

When measuring success

» Measure what matters: connection with nature, values promoted, social wellbeing. Don't focus solely on economic measures.

» Consider not only the immediate material impact of your work, but also the values they and their outcomes will reinforce. Extrinsic frames might succeed in raising money or recruiting members, but will simultaneously diminish environmental concern. Devise new measures of success that reflect this.

When engaging people in nature...

» Act to increase public engagement with nature.

» Address barriers to engagement with nature.

» Build connections with community and affiliation.

» Promote self-directed activity in nature.

» Avoid engaging values that clash with this objective in activities in the natural world: transactional frames and extrinsic incentives or making nature feel threatening.
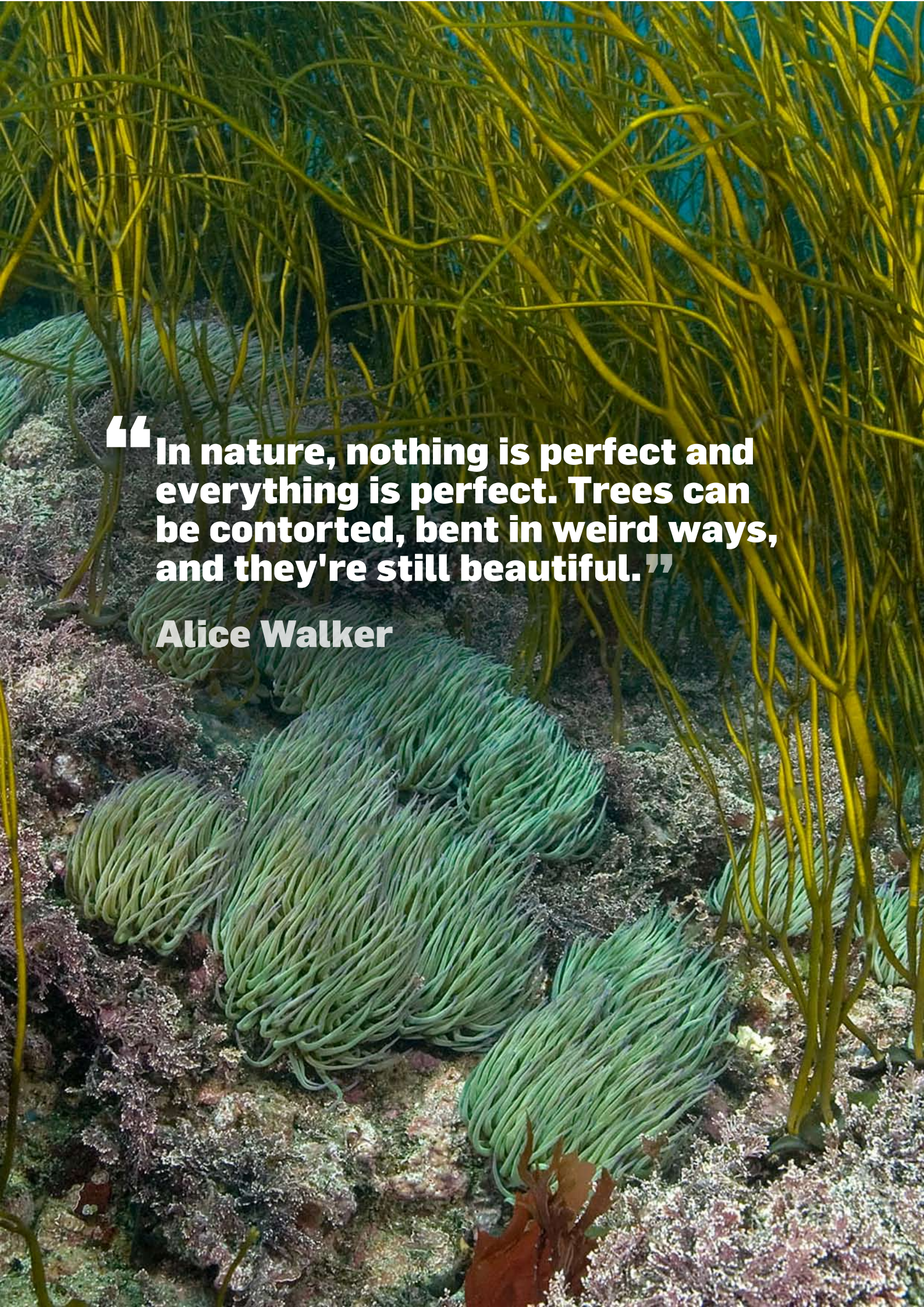
Encourage active participation

» Develop models for more active participation in your organisation for members and volunteers. This could be in existing spaces: at reserves or sites, or online.

» Connect with younger supporters: encourage their active participation in organisational activities.

» Minimise low participation and transactional engagement.

» Encourage community and volunteer involvement with projects, sites and data collection.

Campaign on Common Causes

» Consider new interventions that will strengthen environmental values and help change the culture: promoting intrinsic values in education, and weakening extrinsic values by backing curbs on commercial advertising or alternatives to GDP.

» Collaborate across the third sector. Explore new ways of collaboration based on common values and shared memberships.

In your working practices...

» Encourage practices and discussion at work that are in line with organisational goals, such as sustainability and inclusivity, and expressing organisational values.

» Promote collaboration, sharing and good communication throughout the organisation.

» Ensure accountability and transparency.

» Choose monitoring and evaluation techniques that reflect organisational values.

"In nature, nothing is perfect and everything is perfect. Trees can be contorted, bent in weird ways, and they're still beautiful."

Alice Walker

Methodology

Methodology: Frames and values analyses

The thirteen organisations were each asked to collate all external communications produced over the period 1 July 2011 - 31 December 2011. Documents were saved both in the original layout, as published (as pdfs) and as text-only documents (MS Word). These were coded according to whether the primary audience was the general public (GP) members and supporters (MS) or business or government (BG). See the table below for examples of the types of documents collated.

Table 5: Range of documents collated, classified by audience, with examples.
As provided to participating organisations.

Target audience	To include, but not be limited to
General public (GP) Material produced for unknown/untargeted/partially-targeted audiences.	Material for visitor centres and reserves
	Cold direct marketing material
	Above-the-line advertising (e.g. cinema, magazines, newspapers, inserts, pay per click ads)
	Website pages
	Letters to newspapers
Members and Supporters (MS) Material produced for a known & 'warm' audience	Members magazines
	Volunteers newsletters
	Appeals to members or supporters
	Thank you letters
	Emails to supporters, volunteers or campaigners)
	Administrative communications (e.g. renewal letters)
Business and Government (BG) Documents intended for a professional audience in government or business.	Responses to government consultations
	Policy reports
	Reports targeted at business audiences

Each document was saved with a file name using a code to indicate whether it was text-only or appearing as originally produced for publication, the name of the organisation from which is originated, and a sequential number unique to the document. In total, 3000 documents were collated.

7.1 Automated analysis

7.1.1 Search terms

A list of search terms was then developed and used for automated analysis of this database. This list of search terms was generated by an academic panel: comprising two social psychologists, experts in values literature, and an experienced discourse analyst.[xxii] In compiling this list of search-terms, this panel drew on three sources of input:

- Transcripts of a recorded conversation between staff from each participating organisation. We invited 2 staff from each organisation to join a two-hour facilitated discussion exploring different aspects of conservation. This conversation was recorded and transcribed. The transcript was used as a resource for identifying words and phrases in common use in the conservation sector. We relied upon the expertise of the academic panel to abstract words that were relevant to either the values.

- Examination, by our panel, of a subset of 94 documents, selected at random from the communications material.

Prior to meeting in person, each panel member compiled a list of suggested search terms associated with each of the values. These lists were then interrogated over the course of the meeting, and a single consolidated list of search terms, associated with each value was agreed. Separate lists were compiled for each value.

Of particular importance was identifying search terms that could have multiple meanings. For example, in discussing possible search terms associated with the life-goal 'wealth', some words were considered problematic and removed from the list, and others were used only in compound forms. 'Bank' was changed to 'bank account' to avoid scoring instances where it is used in phrases such as 'river bank'.

It was recognised that the meaning of many words depended upon context. Such words were searched for automatically, their frequency recorded, and a sample examined manually to assess common usage. It was also recognised that some terms could be associated with more than one value. This is to be expected – values are found on a continuum, and some terms are associated with adjacent value.

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[xxii] Dr Anat Bardi, Royal Holloway, University of London, is an expert in the use of the Schwartz Values Survey. Dr. Netta Weinstein, University of Essex, is expert in self-determination theory and the aspirations index, and Professor Paul Chilton is a linguist and discourse analyst who has developed a more recent expertise in values theory.

The full list of search terms are listed in the table below.

Table 6: Word list

Category	List
Power	Power*, Status, Prestige, Strength, Force, Control, Dominan*, Authority, Wealth*, Affluen*, Extravegan*, Splendour, Grand, Delux, Lavish, Glour, Exclusive, Elite, Famous, Fame, Celebrity, Superstar, Idol, Eminen*, Esteem, Prominent, High-flying, Renowned, Reputed, Illustrious, Pushy, Profit, Champion, Admiration, Economic benefit, Economic growth, Economic impact, Economic value, Economic performance, Valued supporter
Achievement	Competence: Capable, Competent, Proficient, Abilities, Apprenticeship, Professional development Image: Employa*, Expertise, Influen*, Placement, Ambit*
Hedonism	Delight, Pleasure, Gratification, Indulge, Pamper, Enjoy*, Fun, Joy, Happ*
Stimulation	Daring, Dare, Excitement, Stimulat*, Thrill, Gripping, Wild time, Wild day, Exciting, Adventur*, Expedition, Novelty, Outdoor experience, Try this
Self-direction	Independent, Imagination, Create, Creating, Creativity, Originality, Search, Seek, Freedom, Liberty, Curious*, Choose, Choice, Investigate, Personal development, Unique*, Discover*, Find out, Explor*, Creativity, Learning, Journey, Innovation, Rich experience, Hobby, Quest
Universalism	Tolerance, Broadminded, Wise, Wisdom, Equality, Fairness, Peace, Maturity, Caring about the environment, Loving nature, Nature's recovery, Safeguarding, Saving wildlife, Save our, Value in nature, Caring, Volunteering
Benevolence	Honest, Forgiv*, Kindness, Loyal, Dependable, Responsibility
Tradition	Custom, Tradition*, Past, Religion, Religious, Humble, Devout, Modest*, Heritage, Inheritance
Conformity	Restraint, Polite, Complian*, Conform*, Obedien*, Self-Discipline
Security	Constan*, Stability, Grave concern, Safety
Direct Appeals	*Assist*, Aid*, Giv*, Contribut*, Support**

7.1.2 Analysis

Having established our list of search-terms, the test database was then screened twice, once using LWIC and once using the WMATRIX computer programme. All frequencies recorded were proportional to the total number of words in the text; that is, responses reflected the number of value laden terms relative to the length of the text.

As a control, we also counted the number of times these words appeared in the British National Corpus – a set of millions of documents designed to give a rough approximation of 'general English usage'.

7.1.3 Direct Appeals

The finding that universalism and benevolence were so infrequently expressed was a surprise to the researchers. The researchers therefore searched for another set of words, associated with the 'life goal' of Community (a concept related to the values literature), which involves helping and supporting. These words are also in Table 6 above.

7.2 Manual analysis

The automated analysis had clear limitations. The key issue was that the research team could not have been exhaustive in identifying words associated with particular values. Given that the dataset of text that we were analysing is finite, it is possible that sampling errors will have lead us to under-estimate the frequency of appeal to some values, simply because the specific search-terms that we were using as indicators of these values occurred with low frequency - even though the value itself may have been frequently instantiated using other vocabulary.

The second issue is that although steps were taken to eliminate words that could be used ambiguously (bank, for instance), certain words could still have been used in ways that may not, in context, have engaged the value in question.

For these reasons, a manual, subjective analysis was deemed the most robust way of researching this. The total dataset (some 3000 texts) was too large to permit manual analysis of the whole. For this reason, we selected, semi-randomly, 10% of texts written for general public and members/supporters from each organisation for further analysis. We did not conduct manual analysis on texts written for business and government audiences.

These 300 documents were read by a research assistant trained in conducting manual analyses. He was instructed on the nature of each value construct, but remained naive to the project hypotheses and expectations and did not use the list of search-terms developed for use in automated analysis. The first 10 of these 300 texts were jointly coded by the research assistant and Netta Weinstein to ensure consistency in coding and interpretation of

the text. The experimenter coded each *sentence* subjectively, for the overall salience of each value. These were coded 0 (*value not at all present*), 1 (*value broadly reflected*), 2 (*value directly presumed*), or 3 (*value explicit*). Sentences could also be coded for more than one value, and it was noted where a sentence scored 3 on conflicting values (for instance, power and universalism). From the 300 texts, 2883 value relevant messages were apparent.

There was no statistical test that could be carried out to compare the automated and subjective analyses as they were scored differently. However, the pattern was almost identical. More importantly, the significance levels of difference between values, and to different audiences, were the same. Thus it is possible to say with conviction that, for instance, appeals were made to self-direction significantly more than to any other value.

Therefore, whilst in Section 2.2.2 we refer to the automated results, the patterns seen are corroborated by the subjective analysis.

7.3. Frames analysis

The frames analysis focused on communications to Members and Supporters. A random subset was taken from this sample, and then the longest appropriate[xxiii] text from each organisation was analysed. The analyst was Paul Chilton, a linguistic frames expert from Lancaster University.

The frames analysis consisted of close reading and mark-up for the frames and meaning conveyed by the text. This was done sentence-by-sentence, and focused on frames – including metaphors, what is presupposed in texts, values, and worldview, roles and responsibilities. A *conceptual map* was drawn for each organisation's emergent worldview.

The researcher noted that analyses might tell us not only about the texts analysed, but the *discourse of the organisation as a whole.* There will certainly be some variation related to the targeted audience (as can be seen in the values analysis in the previous section). But organisations usually behave as coherent wholes and seek a degree of consistency and identity over time—this means it is reasonable to think that they will convey broadly the same view of the world in all their texts. This can at least be expected in terms of the organisation's self-presentation – there may be a number of different strategic contexts. There is no automated way of analysing large batches of texts in this way to produce statistical results, unfortunately.

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[xxiii] Excluding texts such as job advertisements that were deemed to be too narrow scope or general applicability.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

One pressing issue for future empirical work is to examine the effects of using a word in different contexts. For example, the attitudinal and behavioural implications of priming individuals to think about money are important. We know that subtly priming concerns about money reduces subsequent motivation to act in pro-social or pro-environmental ways. It is to be predicted that use of the word "wealth", implying monetary wealth (such as in the phrase "wealth management") would have a similar priming effect. But what are the impacts of a phrase such as "natural wealth"? How would the priming effects of this phrase compare to the effects of a phrase such as "natural heritage"? Words and phrases related to money and the economy are frequently used in conservation discourse and our working hypothesis is that these will be unhelpful in motivating pro-environmental concern. More empirical work is needed, however, to confirm that this is the case.

Full frames results

Thirty-three frames were identified in the sample communications. These are detailed in the table below, including the frequency with which they were used.

Table 7: Full list of frames and frequency of occurrence

Frame	Frequency
Defender	8
Benefaction	8
Actor-Helper	11
Joint Action	3
Community Cooperation	2
Friend	1
Inspirational-leader	2
Donation	6
Money Maximisation	1
Making a Will	1
Commercial Transaction	5
Competition and Prizes	2
Entertainment	1
Fundraising event frames	1
Company	4
Marketing	1
Conservation, etc.	11
Wildlife Crime	1
Shared Habitat	1
Wilderness	1
Exploration	1
Rambling	1
Subjective Experience	6
Loss and nostalgia	1
Universe and Universality	1
Seeing and Looking	1

Obligation	2
Government	5
Legislation	1
Education	2
School	1
Science	1
Landscapes	2

We grouped these in three different themes, encompassing much of the 'why' and 'how' of conservation that audiences will have on a regular basis:

1. **Framing nature – how is nature framed?** Why do we value it, or why should we be concerned? Is it as an object of wonder, or of wealth, or of something else?

2. **Theory of Change – how may things be changed?** Through voting, through giving money, through education, through some other means?

3. **Roles and relationships – what inherent relationships are there?** What are the implied roles of the organisation and its audience, and what is the relationship between them?

These are detailed in the following tables, including the values and life-goals these were seen as related to.

Table 8: Valuing nature

Big frame	Little frame	Number of organisations using frame	Values and goals
Connection / unity with nature	Shared habitat	1	Universalism, Benevolence, Community
	Universe and universality	1	Universalism, Community
Rights of nature	Wildlife Crime	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Community
Moral duty / protection	Obligation	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Community
	Adoption	0	Benevolence
	Benefaction		
Beauty in nature	Landscapes	2	Benevolence, Tradition, Security
	Wilderness	1	Universalism, Spirituality
Intrinsic discovery			
	Rambling	1	Self-direction, Growth
	Seeing and looking	1	Self-direction, Universalism, Hedonism
	Exploration	1	Self-direction, Growth, Stimulation
Entertainment	Entertainment	1	Hedonism
	Competition and prizes	3	Power, Achievement, Fame, Wealth
Money and commodity			

Big frame	Mechanism / agent	Number of organisations using frame	Values and goals
We can do it together / action	Joint Action	3	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
	Community Cooperation	1	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
Inspirational leader	Inspirational leader	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Power, Achievement
Education*	Education	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
	School	1	Benevolence, Relatedness, Achievement
Government	Government	5	Power, Tradition, Security
	Legislation	1	Power
Money	Money maximisation	1	Power, Achievement [Universalism, Benevolence], Wealth, Financial Success
	Commercial Transaction	4	Power, Achievement [Universalism, Benevolence], Wealth, Financial Success
	Making a Will	1	Universalism
	Fundraising	1	(Various depending on event); Wealth
	Company	2	Power, Achievement Wealth, Financial Success
	Marketing	1	Power, Achievement [Universalism, Benevolence], Wealth, Financial Success
	Donation	6	Universalism, Benevolence, Power, Wealth
	Benefaction	8	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Power

Table 10: Relationship between organisation and member

Relationship	Frame	Number of organisations using frame	Values and goals
Communal	[Community Cooperation[?]	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
	Friends	1	Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
Transactional	Commercial Transaction	4	Power, Achievement, Wealth [Universalism]
	Actor-Helper	11	Universalism, Benevolence, Community, Wealth
Giver-receiver	Benefaction	8	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community [Power?]

Table 11: Role of organisation

Big frame	Little frame	Number of organisations using frame	Values and goals
Defender	Defender	8	Universalism, Benevolence, Power, Relatedness, Community
Actor	Helper	11	Universalism, Benevolence
Inspirational leader	Inspirational leader	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Power.
Education	Educator	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Self-direction
Company	Company	3	Power, Achievement, Wealth
Marketing		1	Power, Achievement, Wealth

Frame	Role	Number of organisations using frame	Values and goals
Community Cooperation	Community member	2	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
Friend	Friend	1	Benevolence, Relatedness
Actor-Helper	Helper	6	Universalism, Benevolence, Self-direction, Relatedness, Community
Donation		6	Universalism, Benevolence, Community, Wealth
Defender		1	Universalism, Self-direction, Power, Community
Making a Will		1	Benevolence, Relatedness, Wealth
Money Maximisation		1	Power, Achievement, Wealth, Financial Success
	Consumer		
Commercial Transaction		4	Power, Achievement [Universalism, Benevolence], Wealth, Financial Success
Competitions and Prizes		3	Power, Achievement, Fame, Wealth
Entertainment		1	Hedonism
	Spectator		
School	Learner	1	Benevolence, Relatedness, Achievement
Education		2	Universalism, Benevolence, Relatedness, Community
Science		1	Universalism, Achievement, Self-direction
Joint-Action	Empowered agent	3	Universalism, Self-direction, Relatedness, Community, Growth
Explorer		1	Self-direction, Growth

"No one will protect what they don't care about; and no one will care about what they have never experienced."

David Attenborough

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