Eviction for Conservation: A Global Overview

Daniel Brockington and James Igoe

Abstract: Displacement resulting from the establishment and enforcement of protected areas has troubled relationships between conservationists and rural groups in many parts of the world. This paper examines one aspect of displacement: eviction from protected areas. We examine divergent opinions about the quality of information available in the literature. We then examine the literature itself, discussing the patterns visible in nearly 250 reports we compiled over the last two years. We argue that the quality of the literature is not great, but that there are signs that this problem is primarily concentrated in a few regions of the world. We show that there has been a remarkable surge of publications about relocation after 1990, yet most protected areas reported in these publications were established before 1980. This reflects two processes, first a move within research circles to recover and rediscover protected areas' murky past, and second stronger enforcement of existing legislation. We review the better analyses of the consequences of relocation from protected areas which are available and highlight areas of future research.

Keywords: eviction, conservation, protected areas, NGOs

INTRODUCTION

PROTEST AGAINST THE EXPERIENCE of displacement and marginalisation by protected areas, has become one of the defining features of the politics...
of protected areas in the last two decades. The World Parks Congress in Dur-
ban in 2003 was marked by strong and diverse protest against the disruptions
of conservation to society and livelihoods (Brosius 2004). The voices were
coolly received by a faction of ‘conservation scientists’, who felt the meeting
was being hijacked by unwelcome influences.1 Terborgh noted:

‘Countless workshops, lectures, and discussions delved into topics such as
poverty alleviation, social injustice, indigenous peoples’ rights, community
management of protected areas, and gender equity in conservation. All these
issues have their place in a global agenda but for me they dominated and
drowned out the discussion of themes more directly related to conserving
nonhuman life on this planet’ (2004: 619).

The unpopularity of protected areas has come as an unwelcome shock for
many conservationists. For years conservation has enjoyed the moral high
ground. It was saving the planet, rescuing species from extinction, and taking
a stand against the rapacious consumption of resources by one virulent spe-
cies. This image of ‘global good guys’ is not only an important part of con-
servationists’ own self-perceptions, it is also essential to the image of large
conservation organizations in their fund-raising appeals. Now these same or-
ganisations find themselves engaged in publicity battles, the negative conse-
quences of which could be particularly damaging to their institutional well-
being. This situation has provoked a great deal of anguish. ‘Conservation sci-
entists’ are anguished over the perceived ‘hijacking’ of their agendas. Those
who would hijack those agendas are anguished by conservation displace-
ments. In order better to address both concerns, it will be necessary to arrive
at a better understanding of these displacements and how best to address
them.

Conservation displacement, like other forms of displacement, compromise
two processes (Cernea 2005b) (i) the forced removal of people from their
homes; and (ii) economic displacement, the exclusion of people from particu-
lar areas in their pursuit of a livelihood (e.g. Horowitz 1998). People dwelling
on the edge of a park but unable to gather firewood or wild foods, to hunt, or
fish, or unable to walk to their farms on the other side of the park, would be
unable to live as they were before. Exclusion of economic activity, which
does not lead to moving home, still displaces that activity elsewhere.

Beyond material loss to livelihoods or dwellings, protesters fight their sym-
bolic obliteration from the landscape – their removal from its history, memory
and representation (Schama 1996). Other groups protest their loss of power
and control over their environments, the interference of the conservation regu-
lations into their lives in ways over which they had little control
(Theodossopoulos 2002; Novellino 2003). Else they protest the interference of
different value systems into local economies, the commodification of wildlife
and nature into things which tourists can purchase, but which locals can then
no longer afford (MacDonald 2004, 2005).
These negative consequences of protected areas are part of a whole variety of social, economic and political consequences many of which are more positive. Protected areas provide employment and income nationally and locally, they safeguard ecosystem services sustaining agriculture, they provide the symbols to unite and forge nations. Indeed their effects are too diverse merely to be categorised as ‘good’ or ‘bad’ (West et al. 2006).

If conservation provoked no protest then it would be unlikely to be doing its job properly. Providing more space for nature often requires constraining the people’s lives and activities. Few surrender willingly to such controls. Protest is likely to be loud when those affected are wealthy and powerful and are less able to become richer and more powerful as a result of the restrictions of conservation. More immediately, from the perspective of this paper, it is likely to be loud where people are highly dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and risk facing impoverishment because of those regulations.

There is a growing sense that much protest is due to poor, clumsy or callous practice on the part of conservationists. Strident criticisms have been published in popular presses (Chapin 2004; Dowie 2005). There are strong calls for better forms of governance, which would facilitate people’s participation in, and ownership of, conservation (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2002, 2004).

It is most important to take most seriously the anger and protest against the conservation movement and examine its material and political basis. What has happened to whom? Where has it happened, and as a result of whose actions? Who has borne the costs of conservation and who has realised its benefits in specific contexts? Of which groups and which parts of the world is the anger representative? Is the protest the result of deep seated objections, which have long simmered but which are only now becoming visible? Has resistance long been occurring but only recently become visible? Or has there been some sort of recent change in conservation practice or rural politics? To what extent is the dissatisfaction the result of conservation alone, and to what extent the conjunction of several forces?

Answering these types of questions will require quite specific assessments of the trends, and marshalling of the evidence, of the different patterns of marginalisation, impoverishment and displacement due to protected areas. This paper looks specifically at global trends in relocation and eviction. It is essential to underline that this is therefore not a paper about displacement more generally (by definition), nor about the diverse forms of marginalisation and disenfranchisement which conservation can cause. Furthermore our survey is a work in progress. Our conclusions are therefore speculative, suggesting hypotheses to refute rather than delineating patterns. We list these hypotheses at the end of this paper (Table 9).

We proceed by first discussing our method. Then we examine the state of knowledge about relocation from protected areas. We move through a series of questions which consider how other authors have evaluated this literature, what the literature actually consists of, and what patterns are visible in it, both
geographically and historically. Finally we consider what the better studies about relocation from protected area have actually reported. In the concluding section, we examine the case for further research.

**METHODOLOGY**

We began our survey of conservation-induced relocation in 2004. In so doing we sought to collect every case that we could in the published and grey literature and from student theses. We began by searching the bibliographies of existing compendiums. We started with Fortwangler’s list in *Contested Nature* (2003) and also worked with the publications by Colchester (2003), Stevens (1997), West and Brechin (1991) and Ghimire and Pimbert (1997). To these we have added our readings, case material and bibliographic searches. The resulting list was subject to peer review as part of a publication, which resulted in suggestions of more cases. We also circulated it to colleagues, which resulted in none.

Currently we have just under 250 reports on relocations from over 180 protected areas. We have naturally favoured the parts of the world (Southern and Eastern Africa) with which we are most familiar. This region provides over 60 reports. We have also worked exclusively with anglophone literature. We hope that, in publishing what is clearly an incomplete literature, a better survey will result from the additions suggested.

We have evaluated the quality of this literature on its own term, evaluating its methods and findings. We have also compared the extent of its coverage of the existing protected area network by comparing it to the 2005 edition of the World Database of Protected Areas (hereafter WDPA: http://sea.unep-wcmc.org/wdbpa; accessed September 23rd 2005).

**THE STATE OF THE LITERATURE**

*What Opinions Exist about the State of Knowledge Concerning Eviction from Protected Areas?*

While we have been conducting the survey, two quite divergent opinions of the quality of knowledge about relocation have been published. Borgerhoff-Mulder and Coppolillo recently published an important work, called simply *Conservation* (2005), which provided a strong overview of changing conservation practice and a detailed analysis of different means of strengthening the work of protected areas (for a review see Brockington 2005a). The book was devoted to making conservation practice more just and effective. It was frank about conservation’s problems, stating that the literature on evictions from protected areas offers ‘a massive cataloguing of past, recent and ongoing abuses’ (2005: 36).

Wilkie and his colleagues offer quite a different assessment. They have recently begun an investigation into the consequences of new protected areas in
Gabon, which will include quantitative surveys of the livelihoods and economic activity before and after their establishment. They asserted, contra Borgerhoff-Mulder and Coppolillo, that ‘to date little empirical evidence exists to substantiate the contention that parks are bad for local people’ (Wilkie et al. 2006: 247). This is a bold, indeed, remarkable claim, covering all forms of displacement, not merely the aspects of relocation we cover here.

Which of these contrasting assessments is correct? We believe that neither is. Wilkie and colleagues are ignoring, or worse, dismissing numerous cases, which indicate considerable cause for concern. There is substantial evidence of the harm done by eviction and much more about the more general problems of displacement. On the other hand, Borgerhoff Mulder and Coppolillo are exaggerating the quality, extent and order of knowledge. Our grasp of the subject is simply not as good as they claim.

What is Written about Relocation from Protected Areas?

The findings of our literature survey are shown in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 summarises the distribution of reports and Table 2 lists the studies we consulted by country. We have divided Table 1 in three ways. First we separated studies on indigenous peoples from those not specifically with indigenous groups. Of 246 cases, 102 specifically concerned indigenous people, 144 any group. Second, we sorted the literature according to its focus: 26 reports provide general overviews globally or of particular regions, 220 are specific studies of particular protected areas. The latter we sorted according to their quality. Many reports mention merely the fact of removal (105), others are de-

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<td>Detailed examination of livelihood changes</td>
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Table 2

Schedule of literature on eviction and relocation from protected areas

A. Works on any group

**General overviews:**

**World** West and Brechin 1991; Ghimire and Pimbert 1997; Fortwangler 2003; Geisler 2003a; Molnar et al. 2004; **India**: Gadgil and Guha 1993; Guha 2003; Rangarajan 2003; Saberwal 2003; Saberwal and Rangarajan 2003; **Africa**: Geisler and de Sousa 2001; Cernea 2005a; **Central America**: Utting 1994.

**Brief reports on specific protected areas:**


**Some details on specific protected areas**

**Cameroon**: Schmidt-Soltau 2003, 2005a; **Canada**: Overton 1979; Fortin and Gagnon 1999; **CAR**: Schmidt-Soltau 2003, 2005a; **China**: Ghimire 1997; **Dominican Republic**: Geisler 2003b; **DRC**: Schmidt-Soltau 2003, 2005a; **Equatorial Guinea**: Schmidt-Soltau 2003, Schmidt-
Table 2  (Contd…)


B. Works on Indigenous Peoples

General overviews:


Brief Reports on specific protected areas:


Some details on specific protected areas


(Contd….)
Detailed information on specific protected areas

**Botswana:** Ikeya 2001; Suzman 2002/3; **Ethiopia:** Turton 2002; **Nepal** Ghimire 1999; **Tanzania:** Arhem 1986; Homewood et al. 1987; Homewood and Rodgers 1991; McCabe et al. 1992; Igoe 2002; McCabe 2002; Igoe 2004; **USA:** Catton 1997; Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000; Igoe 2004; Nabokov and Lawrence 2004; **Zimbabwe:** Hasler 1996.

**Note:** The category of works which focus on indigenous people is mainly comprised of writers who are specifically concerned about the problems of a community in part because it is indigenous, or because the writers are themselves indigenous. The importance of being indigenous frames these analyses. However there are some works in this category which do not follow this pattern, notably Kuper (2003) who writes about the evictions of the San in Botswana in an article exposing the flaws and ironies of a concern about indigenous people, also Western and Homewood have both focussed on the Maasai, but not because they are indigenous, rather because of their pastoral livelihood.

‘Brief reports’ can refer to long and complex analyses; the brevity refers only to their treatment of eviction per se.

tailed and careful assessments (55), the rest (60) fall in between, mentioning (often not much) more than the fact of removal, but falling short of a detailed assessment.

The tables provide the three reasons why we disagree with Borgerhoff-Mulder and Coppolillo’s assessment of the literature to be a ‘massive cataloguing’. In the first place, it is not massive. This is not a large body of scholarship. Compared to the number and size of protected areas in existence, the scope of this literature is actually derisory. The reports we collected cover only 184 protected areas out of the more than 100,000 in existence. Of these, 5,000 are strictly protected areas (IUCN categories 1–4) larger than 100 km2 in size which are likely to have had a significant impact on natural resource use by rural peoples.

There could be two possible reasons for the paucity of cases. Either few cases have been reported because few have happened, or eviction has been ignored. The appropriate answer may well vary according to country and region. We will argue below that in some regions there is good evidence that eviction from protected areas has been substantially overlooked.

Second, in many cases the quality of the information is poor. A significant proportion of reports and case material (nearly half) merely stated that people had been moved. There was no further discussion of these moves, let alone good investigation of their consequences. This sort of report might be found in conservation literature in which the movement of people was mentioned in connection with the establishment of a new protected area. But it also characterised a significant proportion of the literature about indigenous peoples. Much of this was protest literature, whose purpose was to alert the world to the losses of indigenous groups. The significance of such events for liveli-
hoods and cultures is often not explored (and for good reason, the main
impacts will be obvious) nor are methods made clear (again for good reason,
these are not academic publications).

Third, and most importantly, this literature is not (yet) a catalogue. These
works are diffused and often hard to locate. It has taken many months of bur-
rowing through libraries, reading through back issues of journals and trawling
through bibliographic databases to produce this list. Just as the literature is not
well ordered, the activities of researchers examining relocation from protected
areas have also not been systematic. Only recently, Schmidt-Soltai’s work
(2005a), has there been an attempt to build up a retrospective assessment of
the patterns of eviction, and this is only for one region, and, as we shall see,
from an unusually complete coverage of protected areas in existence.

Fortunately there are now increasingly prominent attempts, of which this
special journal section is part, to produce the catalogue Borgerhoff-Mulder
and Coppolillo claimed to exist (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltai 2004;
Brockington et al. 2006;). Research in India takes the lead here, as Rangarajan
and Shahabuddin report in this issue. While this research has yet to cover the
proportion of the protected area estate that Schmidt-Soltai has achieved in
Central Africa (see below), it has a depth and a vigour unmatched elsewhere
in the world (Shahabuddin and Shah 2003).

It is worth noting at this stage that the apparent inadequacies in our knowl-
edge of eviction are mirrored by surprising silences in our understanding of
human use and residence of protected areas. The WDPA does not provide
such information. Many protected areas, of all types, still contain people.
Work in India in the late 1980s found that 56% of national parks and 72% of
sanctuaries had resident peoples (Kothari et al. 1989). A survey of 70% of
national parks in South America in 1991 found that 85% had people living in-
side them (Amend and Amend 1995). More recent studies also suggest that
protected areas are characterised by high rates of occupancy. A study of 91
protected areas in well populated tropical areas found that 70% were occupied
by people (Bruner et al. 2001). Individual studies in Mongolia, East Kaliman-
tan, Myanmar and the Central African Sub-region indicate use rates of 70–
100% (Jepson et al. 2002; Rao et al. 2002; Bedunah and Schmidt 2004; Cer-
nea and Schmidt-Soltai 2006). Note that all this occupancy of protected areas
does not indicate that evictions have not occurred, for there are many cases of
evictions being reversed, either legally, or by rural people reinvading the
lands they lost.

Analyses of satellite data of agricultural activity provide little extra guid-
ance. The only global survey concluded that it is practiced in 29% of the
known area of protected areas (McNeely and Scherr 2003; Molnar et al.
2004). Unfortunately this research used an old version of the World Database
of Protected Areas in which only 44,000 protected areas with adequate Geo-
ographical Information Systems (GIS) data were available (Sebastian, pers.
comm. 2005). Polygons or centre points are now available for more than
75,000 sites (Chape et al. 2005). However, there are also problems with the quality of the data. In the first instance, it is unable to detect agroforestry, such as shade-grown coffee. It could also not distinguish between fallowed land growing trees, and unused land. Moreover since agricultural activity was defined as areas with at least 30% of land under crops it thus omits less intensive cultivation. It gives no indication of pastoral use of rangelands (present in 100% of Mongolia’s protected areas). Finally the global 29% is a bald statistic. We do not have a break down of the extent of agricultural activity by geographic region, category of protected area or ecological potential. It is difficult to say, therefore, how many protected areas are not cultivated because they are cold and inhospitable, or how much of the cultivation is an integral part of the conserved landscape (as in many British protected areas).

Where have Evictions Taken Place, and from What Sort of Protected Areas?

Accepting that this knowledge base is thin, what patterns are visible in the relocation literature? Here we examine historical and geographical trends on cases and reporting of evictions. We will also examine the findings of some of the better studies. Of the 184 protected areas mentioned in the literature, 162 are found in the WDPA. Most data about size and establishment dates are available for these.

Table 3 shows the global distribution of protected areas from which evictions have been reported and their IUCN category. It should be clear that most evictions occur in categories 1–4 (and the vast majority of that in category 2) but a significant minority are found in protected areas which have not yet received an IUCN categorisation (labelled ‘U’ in the table). Accepting our regional biases, it appears that most have been concentrated in Africa, South and South East Asia and North America. Relatively few evictions are reported in this literature from South and Central America, Australia, Europe, the former Soviet Union and most of the Caribbean and Pacific are conspicuous by their absence.

What proportion of protected areas have had evictions reported? In general it is small, in almost all countries less than half. Some of the higher proportions found in the table are less a result of research effort, and more a product of the paucity of protected areas in these countries. One or two reports cover a large part of the protected area network in Swaziland, Gabon, Rwanda and Benin. Only in Cameroon, and to a lesser extent Botswana, are we approaching good coverage.

But in terms of proportion of protected area estate covered by eviction reports the picture is a better one. Indeed, for strictly protected areas it is surprisingly high. In many parts of Africa, the majority, by area, of strictly protected areas have evictions reported. Many other countries have evictions reported for a sizeable proportion of the protected area estate. Only in South America are the proportions generally negligible. If all protected areas,
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<th>% of PAs with evictions reported</th>
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including categories 5 and 6 and the uncategorised protected areas are included these proportions are generally reduced. Few, however, become negligible and we still have reports from the major part of the protected area estate for some West and Central African countries.

Table 3 suggests that although we generally know of eviction cases for relatively few protected areas, and hardly any in for certain parts of the world, we do know that significant proportions of the protected area estate in some parts of the world have incurred evictions. Regrettably the reports about these evictions have only rarely (and here Schmidt-Soltau’s work is again the exception) reported the number of people removed. Figures which are available vary from five families (Wallace and Naughton-Treves 1998), to tens of thousands of people (Schmidt-Soltau 2005a). We are therefore unable to tell, or predict, how many people might have been moved in total from the regions for which we have reasonable data. Geisler’s estimates for African displacements range from 900,000 to 14.4 million, demonstrate precisely the difficulties of such predictions (Geisler and de Sousa 2001; Geisler 2003a).

When have these Evictions Occurred?

There are three important patterns to note here. The first, shown in Table 4, is that most protected areas from which evictions have been reported were set up before 1980. We must also note that this is not a global trend, but the consequence of the strong patterns in North America and Sub-Saharan Africa which are well represented in the cases we have studied. In some regions (Central America, South and South East Asia) a different trend is apparent, with more protected areas for which evictions are reported established after 1970. Regardless of the trends in establishment, we cannot infer the timing of evictions from the date of establishment. In many cases laws providing for the removal of people from a protected area were not enforced until long after it was set up.

The second point is that while most protected areas in these reports were established before 1980, most of the reports themselves were written after 1990. This is clearly visible in Table 5. Remarkably we have only one report from before 1970, and that in itself confirms the general absence of published work. For that piece is an unusual bound volume of protest sent to His Majesty King George VI by former soldiers of the Uganda Rifles after they were informed that they were to be moved from the Nairobi Commons to make way for the new Nairobi National Park. They appealed to their former Commander-in-Chief (to no avail). Otherwise by far the bulk of published reports and research have been produced after 1990.

This does not mean that evictions were ignored before this time. We know that the establishment of protected areas in British Colonies in Africa occasioned considerable debate within the administration as to the likely socio-economic impacts of eviction and displacement. This was an issue that was
Table 4
The establishment dates of protected areas from which evictions have been reported.

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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

NB. Establishment date and date of eviction are not always the same
investigated, if not in ways which left reports we can include in this investigation. We should also be aware of the bias inherent in our methods. Many bibliographic databases are strongest on more recent publications, and access to many electronic journals does not go back more than about 15 years. Finally we should note that there is a general trend to write and publish more, that there are more research students and consultants than ever before. Especially since West and Brechin’s landmark text there has been a flourishing of interest in the problem of displacement (West and Brechin 1991).

At the same time the absence of material before 1970 is striking. There is no reason to suppose that the bias of the preceding paragraph should affect the fifties or sixties any more than it would the seventies. One would still have expected a dribble of cases appearing. This suggests the hypothesis that relocation from protected areas was not an issue that pre-occupied academics or activists before 1970.

But we know that relocations were occurring. The majority of the studies in our survey are historical investigations of movements and displacements in the long duration of conservation (Table 6). This has characterised a number of investigations of protected areas in Southern African (Carruthers 1995; Koch 1997; Ranger 1999; Palmer et al. 2002; Bolaane 2004a, 2004b, 2005; Brooks 2005) and Eastern Africa (Neumann 1998; Brockington 2002). It has been a particularly strong feature of scholarship emerging from North America (Catton 1997; Keller and Turek 1998; Spence 1999; Burnham 2000; Jacoby 2001; Igoe 2004; Nabakov and Lawrence 2004). Altogether, of the flourishing of writings, which took place after 1990, almost a quarter referred to removals prior to 1990. If anything this trend is stronger in the current decade than in the last.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>24</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>104</td>
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Table 6

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<td>Post 1990</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre 1990</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There is thus an element of uncovering past sins in the current literature. The reports of evictions from the oldest 12 protected areas in this collection, all established before 1920, were not published before 1990. Indeed the awkward past of protected areas, and the dislocation and disruption they cause is still something which is not widely appreciated. The author of a major recent tome on the subject in North America could still give his work the sub-title of a ‘hidden history’ (Jacoby 2001), while two other authors had a difficult time having the US National Park Service accept the title of their ethnographic history of Native Americans in *Restoring a Presence: American Indians and Yellowstone National Park* (Nabokov and Lawrence 2004).

The fact that a significant body of this literature is the work of historians, combined with the clear disjuncture between the establishment date of many protected areas and the publication dates of many of the reports, suggests that there has been much more evictions from protected areas than the few reports compiled here indicate. In some countries, such as South Africa and Namibia the forced removal of people, was particularly thorough. Protected areas were cleared in both Apartheid and Nature’s cause before independence (Koch 1994, 1997). And the absence of cases from the former Soviet Union cannot reflect past practice within such a brutal regime. Although some experts on Russian conservation can report very few reported cases (Anderson *pers. comm.*), others insist that ‘throughout the Soviet era, Russians and indigenous people were removed to create protected areas’ (Poirier and Ostergren 2002: 351).

But in some regions the relative lack of historical re-examination, and the general paucity of eviction cases, suggest that relocations have been relatively rare. South America is a case in point. The relative paucity of cases in the literature here might well be a reflection of practice on the ground. It is instructive to compare two similar volumes both produced by the International Working Group on Indigenous Affairs in the late 1990s. They concerned relationships between indigenous peoples and biodiversity conservation in South and South East Asia and Latin America respectively. In the former several cases of eviction were reported, and in the latter, none. There was much dissatisfaction in both regions with other forms of displacement, marginalisation and disempowerment. But the relative lack of eviction in Latin America may reflect either relatively tolerant legislation, or weakly enforced legislation (Colchester, *pers. comm.*, 2006.).

But if part of this eviction literature is a flourishing of enquiry into conservation’s past, a proportion also reflects contemporary practice. This is the third point. The greatest period of protected area growth occurred between 1985 and 1995 (Figure 1). The discontent with which we began this paper may reflect widespread increased interference in peoples’ lives, if not always full eviction. One quarter of protected areas for which evictions were reported in Table 6 were cleared after 1990.
While it is clear that many of the more recent protected areas are weakly protected, it is also clear that this global proliferation of protected areas has been accompanied by a greater enforcement of existing legislation. A significant minority of recent clearances were from protected areas established before 1990. This suggests that although some protected areas have been long established evictions from them are a relatively recent practice. Kothari, for example, suggests that some 4 million people face eviction in India as the result of the tightening of conservation legislation (Kothari 2004).

But what is driving these processes? A popular theme in recent writings is that contemporary eviction reports may be associated with the flourishing of conservation NGOs – and especially the larger ones (Chapin 2004; Dowie 2005). Chapin (2004) associates the largest three conservation NGOs with evictions and other forms of displacement: The Nature Conservancy, the World Wide Fund for Nature and Conservation International. These three organisations have, in the last 15 years, successfully come to dominate many of the funds available for conservation work (Chapin 2004). To this list, Dowie (2006) adds the African Wildlife Foundation and the Wildlife Conservation Society. While not as big, these organisations still control millions of dollars and therefore wield a great deal of influence in specific local contexts. All these organisations are significant in that they proselytise Western ideals of wilderness, people-less landscapes. They are in a strong position to impose their vision of what nature should look like in different parts of the world, as Guha (1997, 2003) has memorably observed.

Critics of this perspective, including representatives of these organisations and conservation officials in developing countries, are quick to point out that NGOs lack the authority to evict people from protected areas. Evictions from protected areas are, by definition, the work of the governments concerned. It is part of the exercise of eminent domain which is exclusively a state prerogative. States may delegate those powers to NGOs and/or private enterprise or may chose to carry out this sort of work using their own police and security forces. But since forced removals are violent and contentious, it is rare for states to undertake these activities without support from national elites, as well as from some faction from the communities in question. In any case, the
justification for evictions is rarely framed as emerging from the agendas of international NGOs. Rather they are framed as the decision of a ‘developmental state,’ undertaken for the greater good of the nation and the natural resources on which its future depends.

Our survey, as well as our own observations, finds elements of truth in both these arguments, but we also find each insufficient effectively to explain evictions from protected areas. We suggest that a more nuanced conceptual framework is required in order to understand the relations at work.

There is clear evidence of locally driven, national prerogatives and priorities at work in protected area evictions. During Tanzania’s socialist period, the removal of people from protected areas was frequently used to resettle them into collective villages. Many of the more recent protected area evictions from older protected areas reflect modernist states’ intolerance of indigenous lifestyles (in Botswana), or conflicts between lowland nationalist farmers seeking to protect their rainfall from the perceived threats of indigenous highland forest dwellers (Thailand). Evictions from newly created protected areas often reflect government drives to expand the tourist trade (Ethiopia, Mozambique and Tanzania).

On the other hand, there is evidence that large conservation NGOs have played an active role in the creation of protected areas that exclude local people (a direct role of large conservation NGOs in evictions and other forms of displacement would be much more difficult to prove). For instance, the Nature Conservancy ran a specific campaign (Parks in Peril) to strengthen protected areas several of which had evicted resident peoples (Cuello et al. 1998; Guerrero and Rose 1998; Lehnhoff and Nunez 1998; Wallace and Naughton-Treves 1998). The Wildlife Conservation Society has facilitated the establishment of a large number of new national parks in Gabon, and are supporting their further development. Conservation International’s Biodiversity Hotspots have strongly shaped the formation of new protected areas in Latin America and beyond. The African Wildlife Foundation provided the funding for the establishment of Tarangire and Manyara National Parks in Tanzania, both of which have also evicted local people (Igoe 2004). Igoe has also recently documented African Wildlife Foundation involvement in the ‘voluntary’ resettlement of people from community-based conservation areas in between these two parks.

Significantly, however, it is often small NGOs that are prominent in the case of evictions and other forms of displacement. The controversy surrounding recent evictions in Ethiopia was fuelled by the role of the African Parks Foundation (http://www.conservationrefugees.org/). The effectiveness of exclusion of pastoralists from Mkomazi in Tanzania was facilitated by the relatively minor George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust and related groups (Brockington 2002). The objections to the downgrading of Kenya’s Amboseli National Park to a game reserve were led by a host of minor NGOs (Table 7). Finally, the Africa River and Rainforest Conservation. has been given ex-
traordinary powers over a large segment of the Central African Republic, where it has been delegated authority by the central government to arrest (and if necessary execute) poachers, and to delineate protected area boundaries (Clynes 2002; Shanahan 2005).

Conservation NGOs still have significant influence in representing protected areas as people-less spaces, conserved free from the influence and de-spoiling activities of people. This is important because part of the disempowerment of dispossession and eviction is the obliteration of former residents from their landscapes, from their homes and past. Celebrating and proclaiming former homelands as wilderness denies people’s place in these landscape. It thereby reduces the political space available to them as they attempt to reclaim lost lands. Thus the George Adamson Wildlife Preservation Trust and its supporters proclaimed the Mkomazi Game Reserve a restored wilderness after the inhabitants had been removed in the late 1980s (Mangubuli 1991; Watson 1991; Malcolm 1992). The Wildlife Conservation Society is promoting the new national parks as ‘wilderness’ in Gabon, although Schmidt-Soltau’s work suggests they are home to thousands of people (Table 8).

Finally, even when large conservation organisations do not formally support protected area evictions, influential actors within them often do. Because of the size of these organisations, and the distance – both geographic and in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NGOs who signed the initial open letter of protest against the delisting of Amboseli as a National Park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Animal Defenders International (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals Asia Foundation (Hong Kong)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Free Foundation Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Free Foundation UK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born Free USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for the Wild International (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cetacean Society International (USA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Habitat (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East African Wild Life Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EIA (UK)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Elephant/Vrienden van de Olifant (Ne’lands)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 8

**Contrasting views of residence in new national parks in Gabon**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Statements about residence in parks reported by the Wildlife Conservation Society ¹</th>
<th>Number of residents reported by Schmidt-Soltan ²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lope National Park</td>
<td>'No villages existed within the park when it was created, but some Bongo “pygmy” groups still hunt and gather in its south’</td>
<td>2,000 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waka National Park</td>
<td>'Waka National Park is situated in one of the most remote areas of Gabon. Surveys before and after park creation indicate that the protected area is completely uninhabited by humans’</td>
<td>400 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birougou National Park</td>
<td>'Currently no permanent settlements exist inside Birougou National Park’</td>
<td>1,417 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivindo National Park</td>
<td>'From a conservationist’s perspective, Ivindo National Park is fortunate in that, with the exception of the presence in the northeastern corner, there are few human settlements in close proximity (less than a day’s walk) from its boundaries’</td>
<td>1,568 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Mountains National Park</td>
<td>'Human density is low (less than 1 person per km²) and concentrated along a poorly maintained road dividing the park in two 600 km² forest blocks separated by a 25 km wide zone. No people live inside the park’</td>
<td>400 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayumba National Park</td>
<td>'There are no people living within the boundaries of the Mayumba National Park, but communities in the surrounding area have much to gain from park activities’</td>
<td>350 ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loango National Park</td>
<td>'About 500 people live in the park’s vicinity’</td>
<td>400–650 ³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Contd...)
Table 8 (Contd…)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Statements about residence in parks reported by the Wildlife Conservation Society ¹</th>
<th>Number of residents reported by Schmidt-Soltan ²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bateke National Park</td>
<td>‘The present-day ecosystem of the Bateke Plateau (savannas, gallery forests, etc.) has been deeply influenced by human activity (agriculture, hunting, savannah burning, etc.) for at least 3000 years. More than almost anywhere else in the Congo Basin, the maintenance of biodiversity on the Plateau is directly related to human activities. Recently, these human activities, mainly commercial hunting, have intensified to the point that the biodiversity of the Bateke Plateau is seriously threatened. In an ecosystem of nearly 6 million hectares (1,482,630 acres), the only zone still relatively rich in fauna is that defined by Bateke Plateau National Park (200,000 hectares). In addition, the ancient and rich cultural traditions of the Téké Kingdom (one of the three large kingdoms in the sub-region) are also under threat from rapid cultural change taking place’</td>
<td>89 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹WCS website: http://www.wcs.org/international/Africa/gabon/accessed 23rd June 2006. Note that this table contains only information about park residents. The website includes detailed information about diverse populations said to be living around the outside of the parks.
²(Schmidt-Soltan 2005b). Specific sources are respectively:
³Estimate (basis not clear)
institutional—between their central offices and their field offices, it is often possible for these actors to promote the kind of conservation that they personally endorse. For example in addition to the questionable data on Gabon, senior staff of the Wildlife Conservation Society have called for the removal of people from protected areas in India (Guha 2003), and downplayed the value of resident peoples’ forest conservation in South America (Redford and Sanderson 2000).7

Many independent governments are also significantly dependent on external funding and AID money, of which considerable proportions can be controlled by, or influenced by conservation NGOs (Brockington 2006; Duffy 2006).

One of the distinguishing features of the way international organisations (conservation or otherwise) operate is as part of larger consortiums of actors, with state actors almost always at the forefront and apparently in charge. As such, discerning patterns in their influence will be difficult indeed. How are we to understand these types of relationships?

In his discussion of governance in contemporary Africa, Mbembe (2001: 67) presents the related concepts of ‘private indirect government’ and ‘the privatisation of sovereignty’. Here he builds on the long-standing truism of Africanist political economy that African states are weak and highly dependent on external support. He further argues that sovereignty and control in such situations is fragmented and highly decentralised—employed in different ways, by different state actors, in different contexts, with very little centralised control. Following political and economic liberalisation, it became possible for state actors to enter into strategic alliances with private investors and international NGOs.

Both state actors and outsiders bring important resources to the table, without which these alliances could not operate effectively. Outsiders, in this case conservation NGOs, bring money and other external resources, on which officials from impoverished states are highly dependent. State actors bring sovereignty—the means of coercion that make it possible gain advantage in struggles over resources traditionally the exclusive purview of the state (ibid: 78). Outsiders wishing to directly control, or otherwise define the use of these resources, are highly dependent on state actors for this commodity.

This does not usually mean that state actors cede sovereignty to these outsiders—although this does sometimes happen. More often state actors are able to use sovereignty to leverage resources and other forms of support from their powerful, and usually foreign, allies. Although Mbembe applied this analysis specifically to African states, his title—On the Post-Colony—implies that it can be fruitfully applied to any post-colonial situation, in which weak states and aid dependence gives external actors extraordinary influence over the policies and actions of state actors. The relationships that emerge from these dynamics are usually ones of mutual dependence, characterised by a great deal of strategic negotiation. Such negotiations are usually difficult to discern, obscured as they are by discourses of official prerogatives.
This situation poses two challenges, the first to conservation NGOs, the second to researchers. For the former privatised sovereignty is immensely useful. It provides plausible deniability with respect to evictions and other forms of displacement. Consider, for example, the late Paul van Vlissingen, who as chair of the African Parks Foundation undertook to manage the Nechisar National Park, but he stated that ‘We didn’t want to be involved in the resettlement, so I put a clause in the contract that said we wouldn’t take over the park until the resettlement was completed’ (Pearce 2005b: 48). But with the plausible deniability comes great responsibility. There are now numerous calls for a conservation code of practice which would encourage a greater sense of social responsibility among conservation practitioners (Brockington and Schmidt-Soltzau 2004; Winer et al. 2006).

For researchers understanding how these types of networks operate in different contexts will require careful institutional ethnographies of practices and culture at different levels of meaning and action. It will require paying careful attention to how conservation NGOs operate in different contexts, taking into account the types of variables outlined in this brief discussion. Most importantly, it will be necessary to look beyond the stated reasons for specific conservation activities, especially evictions, to understand the motives, actions, and influence of the various actors involved. This type of meticulous and nuanced analysis will be time consuming. Such an approach is necessary for understanding the reasons for any government’s executive orders with regards to protected area evictions and how these are reported.

And What have the Studies Found?

Unsurprisingly where the consequences of eviction have been well studied they add to the weight of studies which have demonstrated that forced relocation inflicts considerable material and psychological harm. But it is not just damaging for its material effects, rather for the reshaping of landscape and memory it imposes. Perhaps the best study of which we are aware was undertaken in Nepal for the well studied Royal Chitwan National Park by McLean and Straede (2003). These authors examined the impact of forced removal on the Tharu people. Between 1994 and 1999, 2000 people were moved from an enclave within the park. The authors worked with the Tharu before they were moved and examined the consequences immediately afterwards. They found that people were optimistic about what might happen and were expecting the move to bring improvements. However these hopes were dashed. The evictees were resettled on poor soils, three hours away from water and without access to forest resources.

The study is unusual for its mixture of qualitative and quantitative data and its collection of data before and after the removals. This sort of research is being planned more frequently (Wilkie et al. 2006), but otherwise most researchers have to reconstruct the costs from historical or comparative
evidence. Some of the better cases here both concern pastoral populations. Ganguly’s (2004) work around the Gir National Park, last home of the Asiatic lion, provides a rich ethnographic account of the livelihoods and lives of women moved from it. She gives an account of the reconstruction package offered and reports in detail the difficulties and trials of re-establishing life in new host communities. Brockington takes a more quantitative approach to the impacts of removals from the Mkomazi Game Reserve (Brockington and Homewood 1999; Brockington 2001, 2002). He used the records of cattle markets over a twenty year period to chart changes in cattle sales following the removal of pastoral populations. The removal of tens of thousands of livestock resulted in the collapse of one market with serious consequences for the local economy. More seriously a far higher proportion of female stock are now sold, which is a clear indication of stress in pastoral economies. In addition data on household livelihoods showed that, comparatively pastoralists at Mkomazi had higher levels of calf mortality than elsewhere in East Africa. There were also complicated intra-household dynamics, with husbands trying to visit the consequences of livestock loss onto their wives and appropriate women’s independent income for general households needs for which they would normally provide. Women resisted in diverse ways where possible.

There have been some scattered attempts to quantify the costs of existing or planned evictions. Tacconi and Bennet (1995) describe the differences between commercial and subsistence valuations of land in Vanuatu and the difficulties this poses for establishing adequate compensation packages. Shyamsundar and Kramer (1997) calculated the losses of access to forests in Madagascar by profit-maximising farmers. Their findings suggest that 18–19% of agricultural income would be lost, although the assumption of profit maximising by these sorts of farmers is questionable. Emerton’s work in East Africa also explicitly addresses the costs and benefits which protected area establishment will have for local resource users (Emerton 1999a, 1999b, 2001).

But if detailed quantitative assessments of the consequences of displacement for conservation are few, the literature on the historical erasures and reinventions of place, people and landscape is rich. Jane Carruthers and Terence Ranger (Carruthers 1995; Ranger 1999) have explored how parks were reinvented for diverse political purposes, and how these purposes were manipulated and confronted by local reactions. Brockington’s research at Mkomazi has shown how successfully evictees removed from the Reserve were erased by representations of its landscape as a wilderness restored (Brockington 2004). Brooks has examined a similar reinvention of place, and exclusion of African residents at the Hluhluwe Reserve in South Africa (Brooks 2005). Many authors have observed that the role of national parks in the USA in forging a nation and national consciousness were dependent on erasing memory of the former inhabitant’s use of the land (e.g. Jacoby 2001).

While the problematic consequences of displacement are manifold, some of the more sensitive studies of relocation for conservation have shown how
these consequences are distributed differentially among local residents, and how many groups will try and turn the situation to their advantage. Maitse Bolaane’s work on the Moremi Game Reserve in Botswana (better known as the site of the Ockavango Delta) takes this argument a step further. She documents well the impact that the establishment of this reserve has had on local San groups (Bolaane 2004a). But more importantly she shows how active local Tswana leaders were in their lobbying for the establishment of the Reserve in the first place (Bolaane 2004b, 2005). Moremi was for them a way of keeping out unwelcome Afrikaans hunters.

In many cases eviction for conservation is closely connected to other evictions. Indeed we have previously argued that conceptually development-induced and conservation-induced displacement are indistinguishable, either from the perspective of the state (both are due to state management of resources as part of plans to increase prosperity and well-being), or from the point of view of people evicted (for whom the precise cause of eviction is of little importance). Often protected areas can be established where people have been previously moved for other government projects. In Ugalla, protected areas were created in places vacated for sleeping sickness control (Fisher 2002). In Laos the establishment of protected areas is being undertaken as a form of environmental compensation to mitigate the massive dams being constructed on the Mekong (Goldman 2001). These may well result in the eviction of the hill peoples living within them. In Botswana the contentious removal of the San people from the Central Kalahari Game Reserve is closely connected to the desire of the state for its people to become modern citizens of the state (Hitchcock 2001; Ikeya 2001; Kuper 2003).

Yet despite the close similarity between development and conservation-induced relocation there has only been one attempt to apply frameworks for examining displacement produced in the development literature to the conservation literature. The best available is Michael Cernea’s Impoverishment Risks and Reconstruction (IRR) which examines affected peoples’ livelihoods in eight major impoverishment risks:

1. Landlessness (expropriation of land assets and loss of access to land)
2. Joblessness (even when the resettlement creates some temporary jobs)
3. Homelessness (loss of physical houses, family homes and cultural space)
4. Marginalisation (social, psychological and economic downward mobility)
5. Food insecurity (malnourishment, etc.)
6. Increased morbidity and mortality
7. Loss of access to common property (forests, water, wasteland, cultural sites)
8. Social disarticulation (disempowerment, disruption to social institutions)

The model has been productively applied to removals from twelve protected areas and national parks in six Central African countries by Schmidt-Soltan (2003).
Finally we should note the importance of a section of the literature, which examines the return of lands from which people were moved for conservation purposes. This is a distinguishing feature of conservation efforts in Australia and South Africa. In the latter, people evicted from their lands under Apartheid have been given the chance to reclaim them. Much of the protected area network was created as a result of this process and consequently much of it is under claim. But so far all lands returned by restitution from conservation have remained under conservation management. In all eight cases reported by Fabricius and De Wet communities winning access back their lands have elected to lease it back to the conservation authorities and share the resulting benefits (Fabricius and De Wet 2002). They are mirrored in the greater controls over protected areas won by Aboriginal groups in Australia (Griffin 2002). The co-management schemes are necessarily learning experiences and have not always been straightforward (Palmer et al. 2002). But these are providing models for innovative conservation mechanisms globally.

CONCLUSIONS

As we stated at the start of this discussion, all the patterns drawn out above are based on a patchy and parlous literature. Some of the patterns above are likely to prove robust descriptions of the state of eviction and displacement from protected areas, but clearly they require further scrutiny. There is an important research agenda here. Notwithstanding the number of peoples affected and the extent of the territories involved, these are questions which are fundamentally important to the success and prosperity of both conservation and local communities. We have summarised the most important of these questions in Table 9.

Some hypotheses require elaboration. With the exception of some regions (hypothesis 1), we believe that there have been substantially more evictions in the past than have currently been recorded (hypotheses 2–6). Currently, although protected areas have expanded remarkably, there does not appear to be a corresponding rise in evictions (hypothesis 7). We believe this much of the protected area growth has occurred after social scientists became alert to the evictions protected areas can entail. Moreover a considerable proportion of the growth has continued to consist of more strictly protected areas (category 1–4, see Figure 2). Yet despite this there are relatively few reports of recent or contemporary evictions. At the same time there are numerous complaints from biologists about the problem of paper parks.

We recognise that there is a danger that hypothesis 7 will be quoted out of context. This would be unfortunate because we do not believe at all that the problem of protected area evictions has subsided. We would not have written this paper otherwise. Many people still reside illegally in protected areas. If conservation legislation is enforced in the future the problem will become
Table 9

Hypotheses about eviction and conservation

1. South America, the Pacific, Caribbean and Australia have experienced relatively few incidents of eviction from protected areas compared to the rest of the world.
2. The countries of the former Soviet Union have a long history of displacement from strictly protected areas.
3. Most protected areas from which evictions have occurred were established before 1980.
4. Eviction from protected areas did not occasion significant public debate before the 1980s.
5. There were many more evictions from protected areas in all regions before 1980 than are currently reported in the literature.
6. Complex nationally based environmental movements are driving recent and contemporary evictions from protected areas.
7. Large scale evictions from large protected areas are currently less prevalent than they once were.
8. Evictions will become more common if existing conservation legislation in Africa and South Asia is enforced.
9. Economic displacement and exclusion from protected areas is more significant in people’s lives and complaints about protected areas than physical eviction.

Figure 2

Growth in strictly and weakly protected areas 1950 to present

Prevalent again, indeed more serious than before (hypothesis 8). Poorer parts of the world have continued to create large strictly protected areas which could have significant impacts on large numbers of people (West et al. 2006). Furthermore a new wave of displacements and evictions is beginning to occur from community based conservation schemes (Dzingirai 2003). While each of these is small, they are numerous, insidious and difficult to document. Their aggregate impacts could be significant.
Finally we must reiterate that in dwelling on eviction in the paper we have only focussed on one aspect of displacement (hypothesis 9). Time and again in the literature it was clear that the act of eviction alone was but one part of a whole series of marginalisations, inconveniences and impoverishments that merely addressing relocation will miss. Indeed all these are possible without physical eviction occurring at all. Important as understanding eviction trends is, it is more important to comprehend the bigger displacement picture.

In addition to the patterns we have documented, it is equally important to notice and attend to the silences of the conservation literature apparent in Table 9. For while the questions above indicate at least some attention to these issues, albeit scanty in places, there are clearly other important questions which have not been broached. The first is the growing importance of private-protected areas. There are some countries where conservation is dominated by these. Large parts of Scotland, the private hunting estates of wealthy landlords, are effectively private conservation areas. In South Africa private game ranches occupy twice the area of state protected areas, a full 11% of the country, and the area of land devoted to wildlife is growing rapidly. In Tanzania wealthy individuals such as Paul Tudor Jones, an American billionaire, are invigorating the protection and conservation status of vast tracts of land, and are trying to persuade more villagers to leave their lands in the interests of conservation. There are challenges of eviction and displacement from private protected areas as much as from state protected areas (Langholz 2003). We know that the vast areas of Scottish wildness were created through mass evictions of crofters in the notorious Highland clearances (Pringle 1988; http://www.theclearances.org/). In South Africa the expansion of public-protected areas is often being pursued by the purchase of private farmland – from which farm labourers, often resident there for generations, have first to be removed (Luck 2003; Groenewald and Macleod 2004; Connor 2006). Alienation from place, nature and home, which is, at bottom, the root objection to the dislocation caused eminent domain, are just as easily inflicted by laws of property and the behaviour of the market.

The second is to emphasise the point made by Rangarajan and Shahabuddin in this issue about the general silence on the ecology of eviction. We have seen that few studies of the impacts of eviction offer good quality information on the social impacts of removal. Fewer still examine what has happened with their ecology. This is a vital point, for evictions are carried out in Nature’s name, but often also in surprising ignorance of Nature’s processes.

We need to qualify this point. There are well documented examinations of how natural wildernesses in the USA created by the removal of indigenous inhabitants were then carefully managed by the Parks Services to control fire and remove predators, often, it has later been realised, to the detriment of the ecosystem (Chase 1987; Leopold 1989 (1949)). We know that ring fencing Black and White Rhinoceros and eliminating illicit human contact is allowed
their populations to recover. We know that forest cover within protected areas tends to be better, richer and more continuous than without, and that trends of forest decline tend to be slower, or reversed, within protected areas than without (Bruner et al. 2001; DeFries et al. 2005; Naughton-Treves et al. 2005) – although we know less about the impacts on the larger ecosystems of which protected areas are part. We know that human hunting pressure within forests will locally decrease the abundance of some species (Alvard et al. 1997).

But these apparent successes resulting from the removal of people from landscapes and ecosystem are not a sufficient endorsement of the policy. The extreme measures of rhino enclosures can be deemed a success only when the fences have come down. Indeed the fact that it is now possible to shoot Black and White Rhinoceros in the wild in Africa is oddly the best measure of the success of this policy. Borgerhoff-Mulder and Coppolillo (2005) have observed that the comparison made between protected and unprotected forests which Bruner and colleagues (2004) reported is not a good measure of the consequences of protection with resident peoples, because that research did not examine the effectiveness of such conservation. Only by examining the ecologies of co-existence, of residence and eviction, can we know how or when eviction needs to be used. Given that strictly protected areas will never be sufficiently extensive and that space for nature has to be found outside them, this is a vital task (Rosenweig 2003).

Forced removals are drastic. Eviction is the most violent act a law-abiding state can inflict on its law-abiding citizens. Ultimately it is inimical to conservation’s cause. For if we love nature because of our early encounters with it, and cling to that love despite the diverse alienations and pressures modern life throws at it (Milton 2002) then the real successes are when the fences come down. As Bill Adams has observed:

‘The challenge is not to preserve (or restore) ‘the wild’, but peoples’ relationships with the wild . . . [W]ithout contact with nature, people’s capacity to understand it and engage with it withers. The future of conservation will turn on the extent to which a strong individual connection to nature and natural processes is maintained.’ (Adams 2004: 235–236)

Notes

1. The label is interesting, it recalls Foucault observations that claiming the label ‘science’ is an attempt to acquire power and prestige to suppress opposition. Perhaps here it was chosen as an attempt to acquire authority, distance and some form of objectivity, as well as appealing to the perceived core values and practices of conservation.

2. Both come from authors close to, or working with, the Wildlife Conservation Society.

3. Indeed the best marshalling of the relocation data (by Kai Schmidt Soltau, with assistance from Michael Cernea: Cernea and Schmidt-Soltau 2003, 2006; Schmidt-Soltau 2003; Schmidt-Soltau 2005a) of which we are aware comes precisely from where Wilkie and his team are working.
This work is dated because over 120 protected areas of some 600 protected areas in India were established since that work was carried out. More are proposed (Bhomia and Brockington Forthcoming).

This work too is dated as the extent of category 1 and 2 protected areas on the continent has increased by more than 10% since its publication.

Details in the Public Records Office at Kew, London: CO 533/551/2

In a debate about the value of indigenous people’s conservation work Kent Redford and Steve Sanderson stated that ‘They may speak for their version of a forest, but they do not speak for the forest we want to conserve’ (page 1364).

REFERENCES


A global overview of eviction for conservation


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