

Introduction

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Global biodiversity has been heavily impacted by human development over the past 100 years (e.g., Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1992, Sisk et al. 1994). The need to conserve species and habitats was recognized in the late 19th century and, since then, there have been many attempts to protect individual species, ecosystems and landscapes. The success of these attempts has varied, and the growing list of documented extinctions demonstrates that there is still a considerable way to go. The manuscripts in these proceedings arose out of the conference *Monitoring the Effectiveness of Biological Conservation* conference, held 2-4 November 2004 in Richmond, BC. These manuscripts examine some of the concepts, problems, successes and failures associated with efforts to conserve biological diversity, and with the effectiveness of such efforts. Effectiveness monitoring focuses on measuring outcomes in relation to specific objectives; it asks 'what did we achieve'. This format provides a direct measure of achievement because it measures the real impact of management action (Salafsky et al. 2002). With effectiveness measurement, there is explicit recognition of the link between programmatic goals, objectives, activities, and management processes and the indicators used to measure progress toward achieving conservation goals and objectives.

Efforts to conserve biological diversity tend to follow either a 'fine-filter' or a 'coarse filter' approach. 'Fine-filter' conservation is the approach used to protect individual species, while 'coarse-filter' conservation focuses on habitats and landscapes. An evaluation of success for fine-filter approaches is straightforward as targets are identifiable: persistence of a species is success and extinction is a failure (Schwartz 1999). 'Coarse-filter' conservation is used when planning developments, the question often relating to whether sufficient habitat has been conserved to enable the full suite of species in an area to continue at viable population levels. It has also been used as a framework for biodiversity assessments (see, for example, Noon et al. 2003). However, habitat is much more difficult to assess – the provision of habitat does not necessarily mean that all individuals dependent on that habitat will survive. Assessments of the effectiveness of biological conservation can be made at a number of different scales-and should ideally occur across multiple scales (Nitschke et al., this volume).

"Managing the matrix" between strictly protected areas using both "fine" and "coarse" filter approaches has been advocated as the best way to increase the likelihood of conservation success across a landscape (Lindenmayer and Franklin 2002). Despite the complementarity of "fine" and "coarse" filters, and the need to integrate the two approaches across regions, efforts

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to conserve biological diversity are generally one or the other. Accordingly, these proceedings are divided into sections focused on biodiversity conservation and effectiveness monitoring at the landscape and species levels.

Part 1 of these proceedings provides a succinct overview to the practice of, and challenges associated with, effectiveness monitoring. Part 2 explores the need to incorporate the human element in the formulation of effectiveness assessment programs. While biological diversity is seen as a desirable value, its conservation is also dependent on the associated costs which may be economic, social or cultural. Part 3 focuses on monitoring and effectiveness evaluations at the landscape level, while Part 4 concentrates on fine-filter conservation efforts focused on individual species.

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