

Investigations into Western Preferences over Others' Wildlife: the Nature of the WTP for Giant Pandas and Black Rhinoceros*

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Abstract

In terms of effective demand, the single largest component of value for wildlife species in developing countries often is the non-use value held by westerners in countries far away. In a series of case studies we have investigated the nature of Western preferences, and the extent to which Western values might be channeled toward the conservation of wildlife species, and of biodiversity generally, in the host state.

In the case of the black rhinoceros we have investigated the various forms of non-use values that foreigners hold over the species (bequest, altruism, animal welfare) and attempt to ascertain if these flows are affected by the policies applied in the conservation of the species. We examine this within a case study of the Black Rhinoceros Conservation Programme in Namibia. We observe that foreigners' preferences respond to interventionist policies applied to the species, but in very different ways depending on the source of the values concerned. The study demonstrates that foreign Willingness to Pay (WTP) is increased by interventionist policies of which the respondents approve, but diminished by those of which the foreigners disapprove. We conceptualize these interactions as various forms of consumption externalities, and argue that on account of these externalities there are conflicts inherent within differing conservation policies.

In the case of the giant panda we have investigated further the animal welfare nature of consumer preferences for foreign wildlife. We have attempted to ascertain the willingness to pay to purchase lands for the *ex situ* conservation of the habitat of a given charismatic species. We examine this within a case study of the payment for lands at Wolong Panda Conservation Centre near Sichuan, China. We observe that foreigners' preferences respond positively and predictably to the provision of increased land to the panda. The increased WTP for land for the giant panda is disaggregated, and we find that it is sourced in both animal welfare and habitat conservation values. Crucially, we find that this derived demand for habitat conservation disappears as the prospect for panda preservation goes to zero.

Together these studies demonstrate that foreigners' preferences over policies for wildlife conservation in other countries are complex and potentially in conflict. Consumers preferences over wildlife are sourced in a wide variety of motives (welfare, genetic bequest, demonstration) and these motivations provide some very specific support for some conservation policies, and none whatsoever (or even negative support) for others.

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