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Why should ecosystem services be used for poverty alleviation? Establishing the ethical foundations of ESPA

Research Project Summary

WhyESPA is an interdisciplinary research project aiming to understand and influence debates about why ecosystem services might be governed in the interests of the poor. This research is timely because, while a growing body of research now exists documenting links between ecosystem services and human wellbeing and poverty, none has comprehensively considered the ethical foundations of the proposition that ecosystem services *should* be governed for poverty alleviation. WhyESPA is also timely because it links with vigorous debates surrounding the so-called 'New Conservation' manifesto. The New Conservation debates interrogate the ethical foundations of conservation and partly concern the role of local people in conservation interventions in the tropics. We aim to achieve our research aims in two ways: firstly, by canvassing debates and perspectives in the biodiversity conservation sector, and secondly, by highlighting justifications grounded in the political philosophy and environmental ethics literatures.

WhyESPA is led by Dr Janet Fisher, University of Edinburgh, and involves the collaboration of the following people:

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