

# Seeking Sustainable Solutions in a Time of Change

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Global change is impacting our lives in many ways. This is not only limited to climate change but also worldwide changes in land use, pollution, the over-exploitation of natural resources, biotic invasions, changes in plant–animal interactions, species extinctions, and emergent diseases [1]. These changes can have synergistic effects and are changing our environment and our lives in profound ways.

A dominant paradigm of wildlife and habitat conservation in the 1970s was built on the protection of enough land to assure the survival of at-risk taxa (i.e., the SLOSS debate [2]). In the 1980s, some of the SLOSS concepts were challenged (e.g., National Parks for faunal conservation [3]). We have learned some difficult lessons (e.g., declines and extinctions of amphibians [4]) that warn us that the impacts on species and habitats are not restricted to a single area or continent. Solutions need to be more comprehensive in the light of what we now know about species, habitats, and global dynamics. The effects of global change are operating at much larger scales. Our approaches need to go beyond protected areas. The role of the public and stakeholders has become recognized and implicated in conservation actions [5].

This Special Issue summarizes examples of evolving actions to conservation. Sixteen contributions showing how the needs of specific species and habitats are being addressed. In some way, all of them deal with the delicate relations between humans and wildlife [6] and movements toward sustainable human-dominated landscapes [7–10]. Major topics in this Special Issue include: (1) the impact of roads on fauna mortality (rates, detection, and modelling [11–13]); (2) the protection and conservation values of rural areas and species responses to habitat changes such as farming [8,9,14]; (3) the effects of changes in populations and habitats [7,15,16]; and (4) modelling species abundance and distribution [13,17]. Other notable subjects are reviewed, such as the role of private lands in species conservation [18] and the management of habitat in global bear conservation [19]. An interesting paper deals with understanding the environmental awareness of visitors to protected areas in Northern England [20]. From a taxonomic point of view, vertebrates (amphibians, reptiles, and mammals such as rodents, lagomorphs, bats, carnivores, ungulates, and humans) are the focal species. Lastly, we included the ins and outs of the startup and development of a LIFE project [21].

Our work gathering these studies in a Special Issue of *Land* is our humble contribution to addressing the escalating threats to our environment and the associated challenges. Our aim is that this collection will be of help to all who are aiming to work and study habitat and species conservation with their feet firmly planted in sound theory and practice. This is a growing, interdisciplinary field, and all hands and minds are welcome. In our opinion, this determined vision is needed to make a difference in times of change.

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