

Introducing Conservation Criminology: Toward Interdisciplinary Scholarship on Environmental Risks

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Solutions to wicked environmental problems?

- Literature on CHANS (coupled human and natural systems)
 - Liu et al. 2007. Science 317: 1513-1516
- A priori desire to do something systematic and synthetic
- Reverse design/engineering
 - bring seemingly disparate disciplines (back) together



Foundations of conservation criminology

Discipline	Historical Core Strength	Historical Core Weakness	Evidence of Contemporary & Convergent Evolution
<i>Natural Resource Mgt</i>	understanding of natural systems and their interactions	focus limited to ecology and biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • critical reflection upon and movement beyond core weakness • stakeholder involvement/ public participation • application of interdisciplinary theory • broader contextual application • adaptive and proactive • evidence-based
<i>Criminal Justice & Criminology</i>	understanding human behavior, crime	focus limited to crime detection and prevention	
<i>Risk and Decision Science</i>	systematic approach to characterizing risk	focus limited to experts and technology	



QuickTime™ and a
decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Key Characteristics

- Enables unique focus on multiple environmental “offenders” and “victims”
- Cross-cultural application
- Proactive and reactive application
- Traits of coupled human and natural systems (e.g., emergent properties, time lags, indirect effects)



Scope

- Multiple domains where risks occur
 - individual/national/global
- Environmental risks are rooted in social processes, structures, and reactions
- Contexts influence environmental risks and environmental risks influence context
- Harms to and from the environment



Assumptions



- Co-conservation of ecological and social systems is possible
- The relationship (nature and direction) between ecological and social systems is an emergent property of the interaction
- No assumptions about
 - causes or solutions to environmental harms
 - framework being universally applicable
 - definitions/semantics

Implications

- *Theory*
 - exploits multiple streams of literature, forces their integration
 - fosters theoretical elaboration within a single discipline
 - helps explain the relationship among/ between factors that shape human interactions with the environment and choices to influence sustainability of resources
- *Research*
 - informs how we can frame and conduct research
 - affirms what we already know is a methodological flaw
- *Practice*
 - with testing, new insights for environmental risk research and governance
 - more sustainable decision-making
 - foster more democratic discourse about environmental risks

Calibrating the framework

- Decision-making in contentious fisheries management
- Lemur poaching
- Illegal logging in protected areas
- Electronic waste: environmental risks and criminal elements
- Structural disadvantage, lead exposure and crime
- Risk perceptions associated with climate change
- Food safety and small farmers

Questions? Comments?

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CHALLENGES	OPPORTUNITIES
Existence of reliable, longitudinal datasets	Information sharing between local, national, international scholars; database creation
Interactions between, not just within systems	Enrich knowledge base of theories, methods, and governance about environmental risks, moves us toward more generalizable theory
Buy in from decision-makers entrenched in discipline-specific approaches	Expand suite of risk governance options, applications, and evaluation
Costs associated with using different languages and bringing multiple disciplines together	Integrated theory provides a body to move beyond limitations of single discipline