Beyond Inclusive Conservation: The Value of Pluralism, the Need for Agonism, and the Case for Social Instrumentalism

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Abstract
Recent debate within the conservation community about how to define our mission and delineate our objectives has highlighted frictions between conventional (biodiversity centered) conservation and “new” (socio-economically driven) conservation. It has also prompted calls for “inclusive conservation,” aimed at accommodating both conventional and new perspectives under one big tent, and quelling continued debate. In focusing on the compatibility between two well established perspectives, however, and constructing conservation as a universal agenda rooted in a common environmental ethic, inclusive conservation reinforces currently dominant thinking in the field. We argue here that, despite its name, inclusive conservation further suppresses marginal views within the conservation community by denying the very existence of margins. Drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser and Chantal Mouffe, we underscore the importance of conflict and agonistic pluralism in maintaining space for historically underrepresented points of view. In doing so, we stake out a position in the conservation debate for what we call social instrumentalism, which is an already marginalized perspective that is further suppressed by calls for inclusivity. Finally, we offer a positive alternative vision for the future of conservation, or more aptly, for a future characterized by many different conservations.
positions and embrace conflict as an essential element of democratic governance, we assert that inclusive debate, rather than simply inclusivity, is needed to facilitate conservation in its many manifestations, and thus to ensure social and environmental progress. In doing so, we stake out a position in the debate for what we call social instrumentalism, which is an already marginalized perspective within conservation and one that is further suppressed by calls for inclusivity. We conclude with a positive alternative vision for the future of conservation, or more aptly, for a future characterized by many different conservations.

The trouble with inclusive conservation

In a recent commentary published in *Nature*, entitled “A Call for Inclusive Conservation,” Tallis & Lubchenco (2014) along with 238 co-signatories call on the conservation community to “end the infighting” over why we conserve nature. They assert that the tenor of the debate is “stifling productive discourse, inhibiting funding, and halting progress” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014, 27), and they envision an approach to conservation that “recognizes and accepts all values of nature … and welcomes all philosophies justifying nature protection and restoration” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014). In doing so, however, they construct conservation as a universal agenda rooted in a common environmental ethic; the effect of which is to reinforce currently dominant thinking in the field.

Further, the values differences they cast as easily reconcilable are referenced only in the context of a binary between eco- and anthropo-centric worldviews, where in fact many diverse conservation perspectives exist. As a result, this resounding call to action, despite its message of inclusivity, further suppresses marginal views within the conservation community by denying the very existence of margins.

The signatories advocate an approach to conservation that incorporates both economic instrumentalism and the intrinsic value of nature: two camps within conservation thinking whose proponents have conspicuously clashed (Kareiva et al. 2012; Soulé 2013; Kareiva 2014). Regardless of whether or not the conciliatory ground staked out by the signatories can accommodate these two disputing factions, it is by no means broadly inclusive. As Josef Settele notes in the comment section of the online version of the article, two thirds of the signatories have institutional affiliations in the United States, with another one-quarter in UN WEOG countries. A mere 8.3%, Settele indicates, have affiliations in the entire rest of the world (Africa, Asia, South America, and Eastern Europe). This is not inclusive. It is heavily skewed towards perspectives from the northern hemisphere and those whose worldview is framed by “Western” values.

In addition, the signatories’ call is specifically aimed at broader inclusion of “scientists and practitioners” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014, 27), thus neglecting (consciously or not) perspectives from the social sciences and environmental humanities, and most significantly from the local communities upon whom conservation is so often enacted.

Equally troubling is the fact that inclusive conservation bears striking resemblance to the position that a majority of new conservationists have held all along. Juniper (2013), for example, is emphatic that intrinsic values are compatible with economic ones, and Skroch & Lopez-Hoffman (2010) insist that economic valuation need not displace nonmonetary ways of valuing nature. In fact, only the most extreme views within new conservation maintain the “incompatibility” claim and support strong forms of neoclassical environmental economics (see for example the themed issue of *Ecological Economics* 65.4). While these hardliners enjoy significant political and especially private-sector backing, they receive as much criticism from their more moderate economic instrumentalist counterparts (known as ecological economists) as from traditional conservationists (Gómez-Baggethun 2010; Muradian et al. 2013). Similarly, those who fiercely defend positions that are based purely on intrinsic values (e.g. McCauley 2006; Foreman 2004; Soulé 2013; Wilson 2016) describe their perspective as being routinely disparaged, or simply “written off” (Crist 2014, 5). Indeed, beneath its revised label, the “inclusive” perspective offered by the signatories is actually the dominant perspective within conservation today.

“Inclusive conservation” is not always invoked by name, as in the *Nature* article, but its dominance is evident in the rapidly growing body of literature that advocates bridging the perceived economic/noneconomic valuation rift and warns against the pitfalls of continued controversy (Skroch & Lopez-Hoffman 2010; Chan et al. 2012; Kareiva et al. 2012; Juniper 2013; Tallis et al. 2013; Wunder 2013; Kareiva 2014; Marvier & Kareiva 2014; Tallis & Lubchenco 2014; Scharks & Yuta 2016). The embeddedness of “inclusivity” within conservation practice can be seen in the high percentage of seats on the boards of environmental agencies and NGOs occupied by wealthy donors, politicians, bankers, and CEOs (Holmes 2012; MacDonald & Corson 2012). Perhaps most significantly, its dominance is reflected in the paradigm shift among the biggest and most influential conservation organizations worldwide, whose discourses, campaigns and priorities have been historically defined by notions of the planet’s intrinsic worth, but whose language and strategic plans have been modified in recent years to
accommodate and promote economic valuation as well (Holmes 2011).

Choosing not to address the social or political implications of this “economic turn” (Campbell 2014, 49), the signatories instead focus on gender and cultural bias as a hindrance to conservation, and propose a more “unified and diverse” conservation ethic (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014, 27). Laudably, they “support an equal role for women and for practitioners of diverse ethnicities and cultures in envisaging the future of conservation” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014), however it is unclear how the inclusion of more diverse perspectives aligns to their call to “end the infighting.” To presume that a broader pool of participants will “more quickly and effectively advance our shared vision of a thriving planet” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014, 28), disregards the multiple unique perspectives and contested visions that underrepresented individuals might bring. We can do better than to embrace a greater number and diversity of people participating in conservation. We can, and should, embrace their diversity of ideas as well—including the ones that exist in tension with, or directly challenge, our own.

**Agonistic pluralism**

Here we draw on feminist strands within the work of Nancy Fraser to uncover the emancipatory potential of “counterpublics” in elevating historically repressed points of view. Similarly, we draw on the work of Chantal Mouffe to reveal the importance of conflict in creating and maintaining space for poor, minority, and other disadvantaged perspectives. Together, these two scholars offer valuable insights for the debates around conventional, new, and inclusive conservation.

Fraser’s (1990) contribution to the conservation debate is in re-conceptualizing the notion of the public sphere within deliberative democratic governance. The public sphere, as originally conceived by sociologist Jürgen Habermas, is constituted by the converging discourses and interrelations of society beyond the state and economy (for example, those that occur in the pages of academic journals). Habermas’s conception was of an idealized space in which difference—gender, class, race—is bracketed and all members of society can participate on equal footing. The result of discussions in this sphere represent “public opinion,” which then guides policy in democratic society and holds power to account. Of course, the “full utopian potential” of this elite conception was never realized in practice, particularly with regard to the claim of open access (Fraser 1990, 59). Whereas Habermas (1962) conceived of this failure as merely an unfulfilled utopian promise, Fraser (1990) conceives of it as a “masculinist ideological notion that functioned to legitimate an emergent form of class rule” (Fraser 1990, 62).

Fraser’s key insight is that gender, class, race and other exclusions from the public sphere rest on a particular notion of “publicity” that accepts at face value the elite assumption of a singular inclusive public space of deliberation. This has never been the case. Indeed, along with the dominant public sphere, “there arose a host of competing counterpublics” (Fraser 1990, 61) and, from the very beginning, these competing publics contested elite notions of public opinion. Corson et al. (2015) describe, for example, how elite assumptions of an inclusive public sphere plagued the Rio+20 Earth Summit.

Hundreds of nonstate actors were invited by the UN to develop a Common Statement to represent the interests of “civil society,” despite their disparate environmental perspectives and complicated intra-group power dynamics. Determined not to spark controversy that could jeopardize future participatory opportunities, many actors abandoned their radical positions and unpopular views to sign onto a diluted statement reflecting the group’s “least common denominator” of concerns. Thus, “civil society relinquished one of its foremost democratic rights—the right to a diversity of opinions—in exchange for access and formal participation” (Corson et al. 2015, 11).

Fraser’s observation is not simply that the ideal of inclusivity in public deliberation is commonly unrealized, but that it is unrealizable. Instead, “the ideal of participatory parity”—that is, the notion that debate can be inclusive of all perspectives, even those that are marginal and subordinated—“is more closely approximated by arrangements that permit contestation among a plurality of competing publics than by a single, comprehensive public sphere” (Fraser 1990, 68). The important implication here is that minority or alternative perspectives are better represented by contrasting counter-narratives than by ostensibly inclusive spheres of public deliberation.

In a related critique, Mouffe (1999) describes that consensus-based politics within an inclusive public sphere works to “domesticat[e] hostility” and “defuse the potential antagonism that exists in human relations” (1999, 754). It “aims at the creation of unity in a context of conflict and diversity” (Mouffe 1999, 755). In doing so, deliberative consensus politics conceals uneven power relations, permitting the advancement of particular policies, norms, or conventions. In his analysis of the 2012 World Conservation Congress, for example, Fletcher (2014) describes that the dominant trend toward neoliberal conservation was advanced despite a wide range of participants with diverse views. Through a series of strategies aimed at “orchestrating consent,” from segregating attendees by theme and limiting time for questions, to...
establishing a “culture of restrained politeness” (Fletcher 2014, 337), dissenting perspectives were disciplined and thus underrepresented views further suppressed. Mouffe (1999) contends that the ideal of “consensus without exclusion” cannot be achieved in the face of inherently contradictory value frames. Against this, she conceptualizes “agonistic pluralism” (from the Greek “agon,” meaning struggle), which recognizes and appreciates the importance of political conflict in the expression of competing ideals. An agonistic framework embraces conflict as an essential element of democratic politics and makes space for important minority perspectives.

Though not yet widely recognized, the potential value of agonistic debate within environmental decision-making has been previously noted in conservation journals. Peterson et al. (2013), for example, draw on Mouffe to endorse agonism as a mechanism for resistance to “powerful interests who may oppose efforts to conserve biodiversity” (2013, 98), and “to disturb current power structures that have enabled environmental destruction” (Peterson et al. 2013, 100). Peterson et al. (2005) similarly propose “an argumentative model of environmental decision making,” aimed at challenging “current power hegemonies that dictate unsustainable practices” (2005, 762). Here we echo calls for a transition from consensus-based to “dissent-based conservation” (Peterson et al. 2006), but also suggest a need to take this agenda even further. Beyond facilitating agonistic debate that exposes uneven power relations between development-minded and ecology-minded environmental decision makers, we must acknowledge the power structures, dissenting voices, and existing status quo within the conservation community itself.

**Social instrumentalism**

Framing the conservation debate as a clash between “those who argue that nature should be protected for its own sake” and “those who argue that we must also save nature to help ourselves” (Tallis & Lubchenco 2014, 27) is an oversimplification that constructs an unhelpful binary. The feud between ecocentrists and anthropocentrists, while real, is exaggerated by proponents of inclusive conservation, who subsequently position themselves as centrists.

While it has been suggested that “the nonhuman world as a whole would be far better off if we weren’t around” (Hettinger 2014, 3), defenders of nature’s intrinsic value overwhelmingly consider the health of the planet to be in the interest of humankind as well (Soulé 2013, 896). Calls for a dramatic scaling back of humanity’s presence on earth (Wilson 2016), and a corresponding remaking of human–environment relations around “the ideals of biotic membership and biospherical egalitarianism” (Crist 2014, 5), typically align rather than conflict with efforts to “achieve the stabilization required for our own survival” (Wilson 2016, 3). Even the most ardent deep ecologists, who offer scathing critiques of “self-centered humanists” (Foreman 2014, 116) governed by “the conceit that this planet is human real estate” (Crist 2014, 11), suggest that intrinsic valuation provides “human opportunities to attain humility” (Soulé 1998, 7), and offers the kind of “bold, hopeful vision” (Foreman 2004, 142) that is actually “more becoming of the human spirit” (Crist 2014, 21).

In a mirrored sense, economic instrumentalists are largely sympathetic to notions of the inherent worth of the biophysical world, contending that monetary valuation speaks more to “how” rather than “why” we should conserve it (Muradian et al. 2010, TEEB 2010, Juniper 2013). Many argue simply that intrinsic valuation is important, but that it alone is “not up to the task” (Ellison & Daily 2003; also Justus et al. 2009; Marvier & Kareiva 2014; Scharks & Yuta 2016). Indeed the friction between ecocentrists and anthropocentrists is overstated by proponents of inclusive conservation which, more critically, is allowed to overshadow the countless other environmental perspectives and deeply rooted conflicts that exist, including those that cut across eco/anthro distinctions or which sit on other spectra altogether. Here we focus on a particular point of contention between the dominant “inclusive” perspective within conservation, and our own.

Inclusive conservation conflates the instrumental view with capitalist economic methods of managing environmental resources as “natural capital.” Examples of the latter include schemes like PES (Gómez-Baggethun 2010) and REDD+ (Corbera and Schroeder 2011) that aim to incentivize conservation by assigning monetary values to environmental “goods” and “services,” which can then be bought and sold on the open market. Similarly, the global TEEB initiative, based on the premise that “we can’t manage what we can’t measure,” seeks to mainstream “the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity” (TEEB 2010) into policymaking at all scales. Through this conflation, inclusive conservation disregards intensifying cautions against the use of monetary value as a proxy for ecosystem importance (e.g. Redford & Adams 2009; Vira & Adams 2009; Walker et al. 2009; Adams & Redford 2010). Moreover, it marginalizes a growing faction of conservationists, which we refer to here as social instrumentalists, who are broadly sympathetic to instrumental arguments for conservation but unequivocally reject capitalism as the appropriate instrument (Scandrett et al. 2015). Inclusive conservation fails to capture the full picture of dissent towards the scandalous proposition that...
capitalism holds the answers to its own social and ecological contradictions (O’Connor 1988; Büscher 2012).

Social instrumentalism, by contrast, is rooted in the contention that capitalism, a system based on perpetual growth and accumulation, is fundamentally and unavoidably at odds with socially responsible conservation (Büscher et al. 2012). It asserts that the greatest threat to environmental conservation is the steady narrowing of control over natural resources by a select group of wealthy individuals and corporations. This point is reinforced by numerous studies indicating that vastly more of the environmental damage sustained by the planet thus far is attributable to commodification and “export-oriented production” (Agyeman et al. 2003, 110) than to local consumption and resource use (Bryant & Bailey 1997; Schnaiberg et al. 2002). Gaps in wealth and privilege also contribute to clashing sets of environmental practices, priorities, and concerns between “transnational elites” (Holmes 2011, 2012) and the broader populations they claim to represent. Even when rich and poor share similar conservation objectives, economic inequality can impede cooperation. Martinez-Alier (1993), for example, describes how “distributional obstacles” led to significant failures at the first Earth Summit in Rio in 1992. Poor developing nations were fearful that involving international partners in their environmental management would bring additional uncertainty to already tenuous local livelihoods, while wealthy developed nations were reluctant to “put on the table the issue of ecological debt” (Martinez-Alier 1993, 120) owed for the environmental tradeoffs of their industrialization. As a result, neither group had sufficient incentive to enter into proposed agreements.

To put it bluntly, as “uneven development” theorists (Smith 2007; 2008) and environmental justice scholar-activists (Bullard 2000; Boyce 1994, 2007) have done: environmental degradation is the inevitable consequence of socio-economic inequality. This is because privileged groups, which stand to profit most from the extraction of natural resources, are at the same time able to insulate themselves from many of the effects of degradation and depletion, at least to the extent that they are the last to be affected (Agyeman et al. 2003). As resources approach scarcity, the potential profits associated with their development increase, the gap between rich and poor widens, and exploitation becomes ever more enticing.

Schnaiberg’s (1980) “treadmill of production” theory similarly describes how capital accumulation within the industrial sector is increasingly allocated to new technologies over human labor, despite the former being more energy- and chemical-intensive, in order to boost efficiency and productivity. This trend puts strain on both natural resources and social welfare because “each round of investment weaken[s] the employment situation for production workers and worsen[s] environmental conditions, but it increase[s] profits” (Gould et al. 2004, 297). Such profits, then, are reinvested in newer, less labor-intensive, more environmentally destructive technologies—and so turns the treadmill.

Worryingly, this cycle of social injustice and environmental destruction is not only unaddressed but perpetuated by new conservation. In its endorsement of market-based instrumentalism, new conservation presumes that social benefits flow naturally from enhanced environmental robustness. Social instrumentalists consider this view problematic for two reasons: first of all, because the notion of environmental robustness is itself contested, but secondly, because the social benefits of conservation are rarely distributed evenly among a population and in many cases disproportionately serve the most privileged (Paudel 2006; Dowie 2009; Holmes 2012; Matulis 2014). In this way, capitalist conservation initiatives actually impede long term environmental objectives by exacerbating the directly associated problem of social inequality. New conservation, which adopts a capitalist framework and fails to acknowledge the socio-economic and political conditions that underlie environmental exploitation, is therefore directly at odds with social instrumentalism. Moreover, inclusive conservation, which explicitly embraces new conservation while stifling debate, effectively excludes and suppresses social instrumentalism.

Beyond social instrumentalism, there are countless other neglected approaches to conservation, for example from indigenous (Humphreys Bebbington 2013), steady state (Czech & Daly 2004), feminist (Nightingale 2006), degrowth (Martinez-Alier et al. 2010) and peasant perspectives (Jarosz 1996). Among the many views that exist, there are compatibilities as well as contradictions. Our aim here is to illustrate that it is misleading to cast the conservation debate as a simple dispute between business-oriented economic instrumentalists and ethics-oriented proponents of nature’s intrinsic value, whose ideas can be easily reconciled. As in the example above, it is simply not possible to merge capitalist economic instrumentalism with anticapitalist social instrumentalism, regardless of whether or not either may be joined with intrinsic values. The inherent tension between these two perspectives prevents them from being able to coexist in an “inclusive” public sphere of deliberation.

From a social instrumentalist standpoint, we urge the conservation world to reject capitalist values because they are antithetical to both social and environmental well-being. It is perhaps worth reiterating here that a rejection of capitalist values ought not be construed as an attempt to silence voices in the debate. Conservationists
can support fundamentally incompatible agendas and still acknowledge one another’s legitimate participation in the process, and indeed recognize the value of contestation to its increased rigor. More relevant here, however, is the fact that agonism demands acknowledgement of the power dynamics at play among differently interested groups. Given the current dominance of capitalism, the need to “hear out” associated views, much less invite them into the tent, is moot. (Were a particular peasant or feminist perspective to rise in prominence so dramatically as to overshadow all other perspectives, questions of its deserved consideration would become equally so.) Social instrumentalists urge a rejection of capitalist values because to include them is to displace those that make truly sustainable conservation possible. Even more fundamentally though, like groups from every other marginalized perspective, we require space in ongoing debates to voice our position.

**Enacting agonism**

At first glance it might appear that substantial efforts have been made to resolve the issue of exclusivity within conservation governance, broadly speaking. A range of fora (including the IUCN parks and conservation congresses, the COPs to the various UN conventions, and other “multi-stakeholder initiatives” such as the Forest Stewardship Council) have gone to great lengths to integrate diverse stakeholder groups. These institutions purport to create the mechanisms by which alternative perspectives and grassroots initiatives may gain a foothold in global-scale governance processes. As MacDonald (2010a, b) and Fletcher (2014) have identified, however, the debates that occur at such fora are carefully choreographed in spectacular television-quality productions designed to give the appearance of engagement and little more. Where stakeholder groups are incorporated more fully into the proceedings of these events through official participatory processes, Corson et al. (2015) have shown that alternative perspectives are routinely disciplined to dominant views and enlisted in the reproduction of institutional hegemony. Campbell et al. (2014) describe how a focus on seemingly “neutral” scientific and technical progress indicators, such as biodiversity targets, serves to mask the political struggles and ideological negotiations that shape their development, and Moog et al. (2014) have demonstrated how inclusive conservation arenas can actually expand corporate influence and private power.

So what might move us beyond managed inclusivity to activate the agonism described above? The answer is not in the integration of dissenting perspectives to the current processes of conservation governance, but rather in making (and taking) space for a range of dissenting voices to engage with the process on their own terms. This is only possible through the explicit acknowledgement of, and persistent willingness to address, uneven power relations. Such a task is unending and in perpetual flux alongside a continually changing socio-political landscape, but the integrity and efficacy of global conservation governance hang in the balance. Accordingly, we suggest a few strategies below. We do so cautiously, however, in the knowledge that the greatest potential for enacting agonism lies with marginalized populations themselves, who are too often advised rather than asked what to do already, and whose expressions of dissent frequently carry substantial political and personal risk.

The upcoming 2016 World Conservation Congress represents a particularly high profile and global-scale opportunity to promote agonism and disallow the orchestration of consensus. In anticipation of this event, we focus our attention here on formally structured international conservation fora, which are among the many venues through which this approach can be advanced. As a baseline, the determination of entry fees, event locations, languages, membership rules and voting structures at such fora should not just consider but be directly aimed at tackling inequality. The FSC’s tricameral structuring (Moog et al. 2014) was a gesture towards this goal, whereas the WCC’s creation of a “Partners” category for business and industry (Fletcher 2014) was an assault on it.

Moderator and facilitator roles, in addition to presentation slots, should be filled by individuals with underrepresented views, and the kind of “meeting culture” that encourages professionalism and conformity to Western customs should be opened up to allow for the expression of emotion, energy, passion and lived experiences that serve as the engine for conservation initiatives around the world (Corson et al. 2015, 8). At the same time, informal “side events” and “outside” activities, including acts of protest and social movement (for example the climate action camps at the COPs to the UNFCCC), ought to be recognized for the democratic rigor they contribute to the process, rather than ignored (Fletcher 2014, 338), quelled (MacDonald 2010a, 258), or used as an excuse to revoke “inside” privileges (Corson et al. 2015, 10).

Consensus as a goal should be abandoned, and instead conflict embraced. This entails voicing dissent, as well as actively engaging with dissent when it is voiced. Alternative framings and radical views should be articulated and differentiated, rather than relegated to separate arenas or appropriated into the mainstream. Conference formats should facilitate productive confrontation between discordant groups, rather than encourage them to follow separate “journeys” (Fletcher 2014), and ample time should be allotted for directed questioning and
face-to-face argumentation. Moreover, end-of-day summaries and post-event publications should not only represent a diversity of participant contributions, but they should highlight particular points of contention between them. Such outputs should be considered incomplete and problematic if they represent only the most popular opinions expressed.

Crucially, a focal shift from consensus to conflict need not stall or impede action. In fact, the practice of modern day conservation lends itself readily to pluralism. While promotion of a single unifying conservation ethic may have been pragmatic during the early coalescence and mobilization of the movement, it is unnecessary and impractical, as Sandbrook points out, for the much broader, renowned, and more “mature” conservation of today (2015, 566). Moreover, synchronization of a comprehensive and coordinated plan of action is just not possible. Conservation is now carried out by individuals, communities, organizations, corporations, governments and international bodies; across ecosystems, disciplines, cultures, and borders; at different geographical and temporal scales; and through various social, political, economic, physical, and virtual means. The many and varied actions performed under the banner of conservation have the capacity to explore and strengthen human-nature relations, provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, and inspire emerging forms of stewardship. Given that these actions do not enjoy comparable levels of financial and political backing, however, a commitment to pluralism is needed to keep many of them afloat. In contrast, attempts to reign in such diverse activities so they might align with a more specific common vision would be oppressive and ultimately self-defeating.

Alongside the expansion and diversification of conservation in recent years, it has become standard practice for organizations of all kinds—from neighborhood committees to the global extractive industries—to tout environmental responsibility. Likewise, it is increasingly useful for conservationists to be able to identify potential allies and similarly focused groups within the community, with whom collaborations or partnerships might be possible. A pluralistic vision of conservation would, as Sandbrook points out, “enable niche forms of conservation to get on with their work” (2015, 566). Further, an agonistic vision would facilitate the articulation of clearer and more targeted critiques of particular forms of conservation, without fear of undermining the movement’s many achievements, hindering its continued progress, or tarnishing its name.

Our central claim here is that marginal views are not represented in, and are in fact further edged out by “inclusive conservation”. In echoing calls for a more diverse representation of genders, ethnicities and cultures in the biological and conservation sciences, our hope is that additional participant groups will expand and intensify ongoing debates, rather than simply endorse the dominant perspective rebranded as inclusive. Indeed, alternative perspectives are more likely to gain expression through “arrangements that permit contestation among a plurality of competing publics than by a single, comprehensive public sphere” (Fraser 1990, 68). Truly inclusive conservation is not harmonious, but riddled with conflict, struggle, and vigorous debate over not only the use or nonuse of resources, but over the very way in which we value and frame the biophysical world.

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