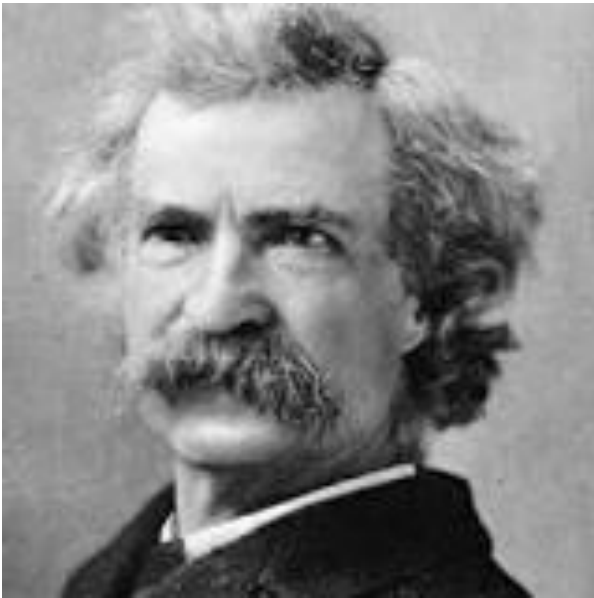


The death and autopsy of UK Biodiversity Offsetting...?

Extracted from: Kirsop-Taylor N., (2015), 'What hope for UK Biodiversity Offsetting now?',
TOR: the open review of Social Sciences: 1 (2) (submitted May, 2015)

By Nick Kirsop-Taylor, Doctoral Researcher, CRPR

‘News of my death has been greatly exaggerated.....’



Though the slow demise of global biodiversity is not

Biodiversity Offsetting recap

- ‘Traditional nature conservation has failed biodiversity’ and the market is the answer...
- Biodiversity offsets – not an old EPI, or are they?
- 45 international schemes with more on the way..... (Madsen *et al*, 2011)
- Mitigation or compensation?
- Economies of scale, habitat and bio-banking

The national and international debate

Biodiversity Offsetting is **controversial** and can evoke some strong feelings....

For - "Offsetting is an exciting opportunity to look at how we can improve the environment as well as grow the economy. There is no reason why wildlife and development can't flourish side by side." – Rt Hon Owen Patterson MP, Minister of State at Defra (2012)

Against - "Biodiversity offsetting will release a spirit of destruction across the land" – George Monbiot, (2013)

"I don't think we have ever seen so much suspicion on either side of a debate," – Defra policy delivery unit, (2013)

International academic, conservation and business communities are split about Offsetting

The UK policy making process

Initial research into UK viability for Biodiversity Offsets (Treweek et al, 2009)

Natural Environment White Paper (2011) 'The intention to utilise...'

National Planning Policy Guidance (2012) – 'Section 118'

Publication of Green Paper (2013)

Public (*and policy community*) consultation (2013) - 'Wrath of the EAC'

Completion of trials, three in Devon (2012-2014)

Results of trials and consultation..... 2015?

Current state of play – not quite dead, but more dead than alive

- Waiting for results and publication of UK national trails and stakeholder consultation
- This may be a long wait....
- Kicked into long grass of last Parliament, but what will the new Parliament bring?
- Certainly ‘live beyond the grave’ in district – county scale planning strategies, section 118 and in *green infrastructure plans*

What may the new Parliament bring?

- 1 **(a)**. Allowed to quietly, but permanently, slip away
- 1 **(b)**. Put on a shelf at Defra to be dusted off some other day
- 2 **(a)**. Rewritten by Defra inclusive of all commentary and stakeholder suggestions
2. **(b)**. Rewritten by Defra exclusive of major commentaries and suggestions
3. Publically 'cancelled as a bad idea'
4. Delayed for 'further consultation and trials'

My thoughts on this are in TOR..... I'd welcome peoples opinions though....

The road to success.... via some policy suggestions

If option 2(a) of last slide is chosen, my suggestions would be:

1. No dumbing down – inclusion of complex metrics for complex nature
2. Towards **true** socio-cultural equivalence, and not just stakeholder engagement
3. Exclusion of non-fungible, special sites
4. **Mandatory and not voluntary**

Success or failure? – a future research agenda

- How contemporary environmental policy making is conducted
- The degree to which *international* scale best-practice is included in *national* scale policy design – *multi-level-governance* compliance
- The role of champions in promoting environmental policy making
- The risk of UK Biodiversity Offsetting becoming *zombie policy* (After Barer *et al*, 1998)
- The autopsy may have to wait a while, but maybe not too long...



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Thank you -
any questions?

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