Valuing nature: how do conservation decision-makers choose what to save and how to save it?

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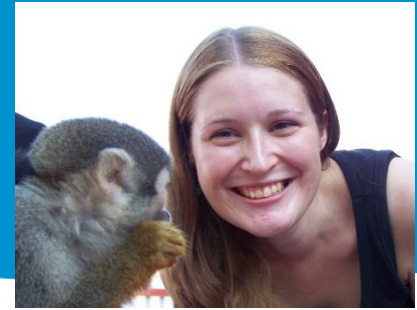
Royal Holloway, University of London

Placement objectives

- 3 month placement with Dr. Anat Bardi in the Department of Psychology, Royal Holloway to:

  - (i) gain understanding of key concepts and related methodological techniques in psychology and

  - (ii) use these skills to develop and undertake a research project to investigate the role of individual values in decision-making by conservation practitioners.

Dual processing decision-making

- Decision making uses two systems:

  - System I
    - intuition / experience / emotions / values
    - 'gut feelings'

  - System II
    - analytical information processing
    - 'rational'

An example of dual processing decision-making

Should I have more cake?

- System I
  - I'd like more cake (immediate reaction)

- System II
  - Too much cake is bad for me (thinking about weight gain, diabetes, the price, not being hungry for dinner)

Project: Decision-making in conservation

- Conservation planners make evidence-based recommendations for conservation...

   ...and assume system II decision making

- Biodiversity conservation is a value based discipline so:

   Do practitioners use system I decision making?

Is there evidence for dual processing decision-making in conservation practitioners?

Methods & analysis:

- Semi-structured interviews with conservation practitioners

- Discuss how they decide which species to conserve, where to conserve them, and which methods to use

- Analysed using applied thematic analysis to identify values and system I thinking associated with the decisions described

Thanks for watching

Sorry I can't be there to meet you in person !