

limit to what you can make an elephant stand for' (p. 5).

The author is a historian with a passion for elephants and a student of zoos, and the book reflects those interests. There are chapters on early Western accounts of the wondrous beasts that included stories of the virtues and strange attributes of these beasts yet to be seen by most authors; chapters on hunting of African elephants by the likes of the then-ex-president of the USA, Teddy Roosevelt, and the tension between the acknowledged threat hunting posed to elephants and the overweening desire for trophies and money from the sale of ivory; and a considerable part of the book is devoted to the acquisition, display and treatment of elephants in US zoos and circuses.

Throughout these accounts, Rothfels muses on what elephants think and feel and how human lives are affected by encounters with elephants. Of particular interest to him is the display of live elephants and the human gaze that watches them, including his own many encounters with zoo elephants and the people who care for them. The elephant trails of the title mark the many things that people think they know about elephants that, he argues, will always be structured by how they perceive these marvellous animals. Being afraid of mice, or wise, or fighting with dragons, or feeling grief are all human projections onto elephants that reflect more what we think about them rather than what elephants really are.

Both of these books illustrate the eternal intertwining of human and non-human animals and our hubris in believing we know what these other animals are. Ultimately, our lives are impoverished by the loss of non-human species; with their loss, we lose parts of ourselves.

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Pathways to Success: Taking Conservation to Scale in Complex Systems by

Nick Salafsky and Richard Margoluis (2021) 305 pp., Island Press, Washington, DC, USA. ISBN 978-1-64283-135-1 (pbk), USD 31.00.

In 1998, Richard Margoluis and Nick Salafsky published *Measures of Success*, a book on designing, implementing and monitoring conservation and development projects. Soon afterwards the Conservation Measures Partnership incorporated many of the principles and processes discussed into the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation (commonly referred to as the Conservation Standards). Numerous organizations have

since adopted the Conservation Standards, as well as other systematic planning frameworks, and the capacity for project design has generally improved over the last 3 decades. However, many practitioners still struggle with certain aspects of planning, especially in complex large-scale programmes, and it is this challenge that Salafsky and Margoluis address in *Pathways to Success*.

As the authors say in the preface, 'this book is intended as a guide to analytical frameworks and tools for conservation program managers and funders who want to increase the scale and the effectiveness of their work' (p. xviii). The focus is on 'lightweight, inexpensive, flexible and... useful' (p. xviii) approaches to plan efficiently and avoid planning paralysis. The book takes the reader through the main steps in project development, from design and implementation to monitoring, evaluation and the use of evidence, with a focus on which tools and approaches to use for large-scale programmes. The authors use a fictional North American coastal conservation programme to illustrate their ideas, which usefully involves diverse partners and covers terrestrial, marine and freshwater biomes. The book is dotted with figures illustrating planning processes, from situation analyses to the eponymous strategy pathways, and the text is broken up by some endearing sketches from Anna Balla.

Having been involved in conservation project planning most of my career, and an active user and proponent of the Conservation Standards, I was excited to read this book. In *Pathways to Success*, the authors meticulously capture and share their thoughts, lessons and ideas from years of practising the art of planning. It is a very thorough and extensive tome, although the level of detail borders on excessive at times; people unfamiliar with the Conservation Standards may find some parts rather dense. A more practical how-to guide would need to be structured more simply (like the Conservation Standards themselves).

I appreciated many of the authors' takes on key issues, such as how to link strategies across a programme and how to synthesize existing evidence, and I was pleased to see them encourage the sharing of data and evidence. I was especially interested in concepts introduced from other sectors, such as the thinking on impact trajectories derived from democracy studies and the approaches to going to scale based on systems thinking.

The book is generally based on the Conservation Standards but does not strictly follow the same terminology. For example, conservation targets have become target factors, and results chains have become strategy pathway diagrams. Natural and constructed indicators are among the other new terms used. The added value of these changes is

not evident, and they risk confusion. The main premise of the book—that the use of strategy pathways will better link different elements of a programme—will help many practitioners rethink their planning. But it would have been useful to explain how this approach can be used for planning projects that need to contribute to the goals and objectives of existing programmes (a common real-world issue that is not touched on directly). Another omission is any discussion of the pressure–state–response–benefit indicator framework. This allows indicators to tell a story of progress along a theory of change and is increasingly used to measure the contributions of programmes to global goals defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Sustainable Development Goals. I would also like to have seen some discussion of how counterfactual approaches, such as randomized control trials, can be used to enhance the attribution of impact. For people wishing to dip in and out of the book for guidance, a concise summary of what they need to do differently in large-scale programmes compared with smaller-scale projects would also have been useful.

Overall, however, this book represents a significant contribution to the conservation planning literature and will be a stimulating read for anyone interested in the topic. The thinking presented will help the conservation community continue to evolve to meet the challenges of delivering impact at scale.

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Birds, Beasts and Bedlam: Turning My Farm into an Ark for Lost Species by Derek Gow (2022) 208 pp., Chelsea Green Publishing UK, London, UK. ISBN 978-1-64502-133-9 (hbk), GBP 20.00.

As a zoologist with a passion for UK conservation, I jumped at the opportunity to read *Birds, Beasts and Bedlam* after learning that it explores Derek Gow's work to convert his farm into a refuge for our threatened wildlife. Although the book delivers on its promised insight into the author's work to rewild in the UK with native species, an unexpected thread throughout its pages explores the conflicting viewpoints of academic researchers and conservation practitioners. Gow's strong opinions may be hard for some academics to stomach but are well worth a read by anyone seeking to understand a practitioner's perspective of UK conservation.