

Clash of cultures: The conflict between conservation and indigenous people in wild landscapes

In most human conflicts, there are good guys and bad guys. This is not so in the history of global conservation, which is at least partly a story of good guy versus good guy. The major contestants in the struggle to protect nature and preserve biological diversity may seem to be transnational conservation organisations on one side and rapacious extractive industries on the other. But there is a larger, more lamentable conflict: the one between transnational conservation and the worldwide movement of indigenous peoples - good guys both.

These two forces share a goal that is vital to life on earth - a healthy and diverse biosphere. Both are communities of integrity led by some of the most admirable, dedicated people alive. Both care deeply for the planet and together are capable of preserving more biodiversity than any other two groups on it. Yet they have been terribly at odds with one another over the past century or more, violently so at times, mostly because of conflicting views of nature, radically different definitions of "wilderness" and profound misunderstandings of one another's science and culture. (...)

The article:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2009/jun/03/yosemite-conservation-indigenous-people>