



Landcare Research
Manaaki Whenua



Ex ante evaluation & prioritisation of community-led conservation projects

Les McNamara

les@pinnaclelearning.com.au

Chris Jones, Landcare Research

Marie Haley, Banks Peninsula Conservation Trust



Trends

- **Community involvement** in biodiversity conservation
- **Devolved responsibility** for prioritisation (eg local treasures)
- Conservation **partnerships**
- **Cost-saving** imperative

Bio-economic project planning and evaluation frameworks

- **INFFER** (Aust CMAs)
(Investment Framework for Environmental Resources)
- **PPP** (DoC)
(Project Prioritization Protocol)

Objectives

In practice, can bio-economic investment frameworks (like INFFER) help community groups develop better projects and prioritise effort?

Methods

- Evaluate four projects using INFFER (and PPP)
- Work with BPCT to identify challenges and opportunities relating to *use* of the frameworks



INFFER

1. List candidate assets

2. Filter/refine list of assets using pre-set criteria

3. Develop a project for significant and threatened assets:
asset significance (value),
threats,
goals,
activities,
effectiveness,
costs
Estimate benefit:cost index for each

4. Select priority projects

5. Develop investment plans/funding bids

6. Implement funded projects

7. Monitoring; evaluation; adaptive management

INFFER Benefit:Cost Ratio

Benefits x likelihood of success (risks)

costs (NPV)

INFFER: Benefits

Benchmark (good) condition (0-100 lookup table)

- Ostensibly 1 = \$20M

Difference made determines the value of benefits

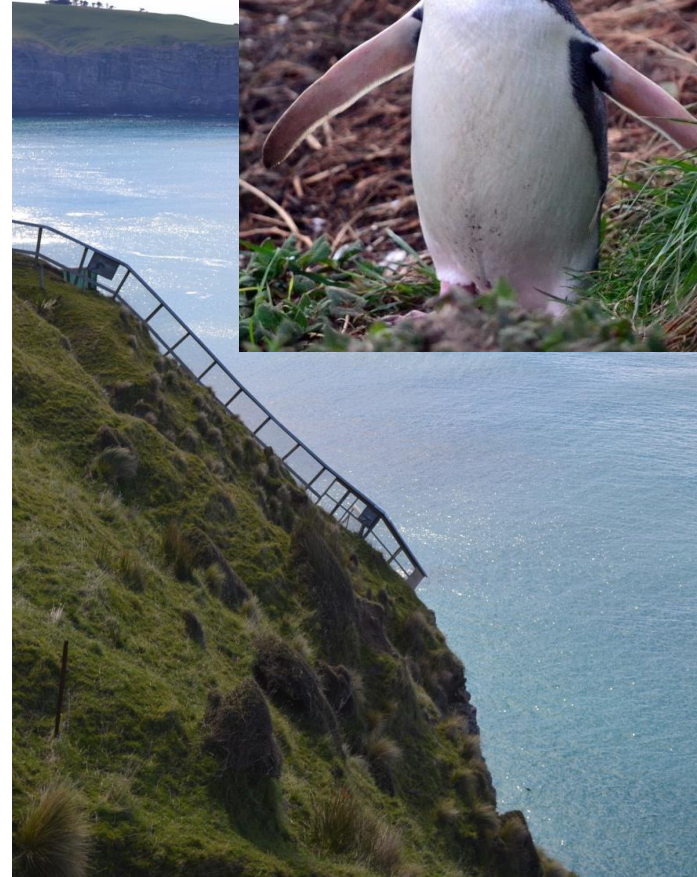
INFFER: Risks

- Technical feasibility
- Socio-political risks
- Probability of securing long-term funding

Wildside, BP



Four projects



Results: Project evaluation

Project	Rank	Score
Yellow-eyed penguin	1	0.9
Tui	2	0.7
White-flipped penguin	3	0.5
Sooty Shearwater	4	0.4

Results: Evaluation of the frameworks

- In theory, bio-economic frameworks can be used to help develop better community projects and prioritise effort
- In practice, there are pros and cons

Implementation challenges

- Drivers of community action are different
 - In reality, grass-roots projects aren't 'selected' based on conservation priorities, threat status, etc.
 - Stewardship and nature appreciation

Challenges

- Negative perception of evaluation
 - What if the results are unfavourable?
 - Prefer hands-on
 - No obvious payback
- Resistance to linking economics to biodiversity – from all quarters

Let wonderfully weird kakapo die - scientist

BRONWYN TORRIE



Last updated 05:00 13/04/2011



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MANAWATU STANDARD

WORTH PROTECTING: The Conservation Department says it has no intention of dropping its attempts to save the kakapo.

"It's a wonderfully weird creature and it's a shame that we will probably lose it regardless of any interventions. Harsh, but somebody's got to say it..." Corey Bradshaw 2011
Species' Ability to Forestall Extinction (SAFE)

Other barriers

- Limited resources for strategic planning monitoring, evaluation (high transaction costs)
- Vague social outcomes
- Usability and design (frameworks need modification)
- Specific issues relating to metrics
 - Relevance
 - Sensitivity of some assumptions (eg V)
 - **Ancillary benefits** not *normally* captured
 - Uncertainty – reliance on expert opinion

Opportunities...

- S.M.A.R.T. targets
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Achievable
 - Realistic
 - Time-bound

Other opportunities

- Provides a structured and rigorous process for project development
 - helps avoid decisions based only on intuition and anecdote
- Supports adaptive management
- Better social targets?
- Better case for funding?

Conclusions

- Can Improve project design and transparency
 - SMART targets
- Benefits of scoring/ranking are limited (covenants?)
- Frameworks need modification
- Groups need consistent support for planning and monitoring