

## Final conference comments after Peter Taylor's concluding reflection

- Need to accept the importance of wildness for adolescents.
- People who have seen big cats (wild in Britain) are transformed by their experiences.
- A next gathering should counter the polarity ie. we should go out with gamekeepers; make a study tour with another fraternity to learn from each other.
- We can't move forward on species specific ticket.
- Can people really accept these animals eg. bear????
- Is there habitat (and carrying capacity) for bear in Scotland? We need to ask the botanists (bears diet is 85% vegetation)
- As deer numbers come down and the vegetation can recover there will be more berries for the bears.
- Traditional Japanese farmers prized wolves because the wolves would stop the deer eating their arable crops
- In Romania, hunting happens differently eg. communities own their forest and they hunt and value their bears... Its different from, for instance, what happens in the Pyrenees. So we should ask hunting communities how they do it
- And we should learn from California where children are educated about what to do when they come across big animals, predators etc
- We need to accept culling and killing; we have to accept death – of species and of us, with grace (eg. the story of the acceptance by his family of the death of the young man jogger killed by cougar outside Denver USA – see ecos Vol 27 Issue 3/4)
- But will people fund / buy into the idea of having to kill / cull?
- Have we given any thought to the Health and Safety agenda?
- We need to be more strategic. Landowners need to work together not just pursue their individual agendas (eg. story of Hawk and Owl Trust buying land in Somerset which joins up land owned by other conservation agencies but not taking the opportunity to look at joint management/ bigger scale opps). So get involved in your local groups and agencies to influence what they do.
- We need to be looking at bio-regional zones – as outlined in the book Beyond Conservation by Peter Taylor.
- A next step must be an incentive payment for wildland
- Need to investigate subsidy for wildland (eg. agri-environment schemes). There is the example of the Knepp Estate where Natural England has been flexible about the rules but we need to go further than this
- HLS Higher Level Scheme agri-payment was supposed to embrace re-wilding approaches but this has not happened
- The next stage of CAP reform in 2013 offers opportunities ... need to get involved in this discussion now
- But taking land out of food production to make our wild spaces, does this create problems elsewhere eg, biofuels across the world effect and food security issues?
- Re-wilding areas are rarely major food production lands.
- We could signal, demonstrate, to the world a new way eg. integrated land management & connectivity (ie. Holland example)
- And eco-system restoration brings benefits eg. flood prevention
- We need to pay for what we value in order to protect it from market forces
- and payments for environmental services should not come from farming agencies
- Is a new organisation required to champion wildland? Or is it better to work through the Scottish Wildland Group? But some NGOs are not so keen on our reintroduction agenda so we need to get them more on board.

To bring big mammals back we need to shrink back, scale back our (human) effect – be more sustainable – ask less of the earth.