

New Directions in Conservation Leadership Symposium 2023



About:

12 – 14 July 2023

Hosted by the Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership in the David Attenborough Building, Cambridge, UK

A three-day gathering designed to bring together key actors offering training programmes around the world with a focus on conservation leadership capacity building, including those working in universities, NGOs and specialist training agencies. This event will build on the shared vision of this group for learning and non-competitive collaboration to establish a Global Conservation Leadership Community of Practice to improve our programmes and address unmet capacity needs around the world.



Meeting Objectives:

- Improve individual and collective leadership development practices and initiatives through peer learning and exchange.
- Enhance collaboration between individual organisations, capitalising on relative strengths to advance each other's work and overall leadership development practices in the conservation field.
- Determine future structure, purpose, resourcing, and plans for the 'New Directions' group.

The symposium is Facilitated by Alison Coburn (Common Purpose), Fred Nelson, Anna Davis, Kahaso Mtana (Maliasili) and Chris Sandbrook, with support from Shelley Bolderson (Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership)

We ask participants to consider: **What would you really like to talk about with this group?**

Suggested reading:

- [Conservation Leadership Capacity Building: a Landscape Study](#)
- [Notes from the New Directions in Conservation Leadership Symposium 2019](#)

The first New Directions in Conservation Leadership symposium was held in Cambridge in 2019. Since this initial meeting, an informal network of roughly 25 organisations and conservation leadership practitioners has held quarterly online meetings to share information, explore opportunities for collaboration and support each other's programmes.

Agenda:

Day 1, Wednesday 12 July

Arrive from 9am

9.30am	Welcome and introduction	Welcome and overview of the Symposium agenda
10am	Participant introductions 1	Getting to know one another
10.45am	Horizon scanning	Surface and share some of the key trends in conservation leadership
11.15am	BREAK	Refreshments
11.45am	Horizon scanning - identify key themes	Identify themes/issues we want to explore further over the course of the Symposium
12.10pm	Participant introductions 2	Getting to know more about one another and our organisations' work
1pm	LUNCH	Refreshments
2pm	What are we working on?	Small group discussions to deepen our understanding of what colleagues are doing
3pm	Horizon scanning - review key themes	Review the themes and add/remove/ or adapt them in preparation for more in depth discussions on Day Two
3.30pm	Review of the day	Reflections on Day One and introduction to Day Two
3.50pm	Close and depart for CCI Seminar at 4pm	The CCI Seminar with Isabella Tree runs 4-5pm with a drinks reception afterwards

Agenda:

Day 2, Thursday 13 July
Arrive from 8.45am

9am	Briefing for the day	Overview of the agenda for the day
9.30am	What is emerging?	Walk in Emmanuel College garden and reflection on the key issues we want to prioritise and discuss further
10.45am	BREAK	Refreshments
11.15am	Silent Reflection	A moment to gather ideas
11.30am	Open Space	The group sets the agenda for the open space conversations
12.30pm	LUNCH	Refreshments
1.30pm	Open Space – round 1	Small group conversations on the issues identified by the group
2.30pm	Open Space – round 2	Small group conversations on the issues identified by the group
3.30pm	BREAK	Refreshments
4pm	Share the projects, themes, and ideas	Develop a shared understanding the projects, themes, ideas discussed by each group
4.45pm	Final review	Reflection on the day and plans for the final morning
5pm	CLOSE	
6pm	DINNER	Dinner at the Tiffin Truck

Agenda:

Day 3, Friday 14 July
Arrive from 9am

9.15am	Briefing for the day	Overview of the agenda for the day
9.30am	What will we take away?	Reflection on the previous two days and looking ahead
10.15am	This group - purpose and functions group	Draw out what we want this group to do and how we want it to work
11.15am	BREAK	Refreshments
11.45am	Actions and planning ahead	What do we need to do, and what are we prepared to do, over the next 12 months to deliver on the group's purpose
12.30pm	Final review	Reflection on the Symposium experience
1pm	LUNCH	Conversations continue over lunch
2pm	CLOSE	

Participants:

Reece Alberts | Francois Retief

Researcher | Professor in Environmental Management

Protected Areas Research Group

North West University

natural-sciences.nwu.ac.za/unit-environmental-sciences-and-management/environmental-management

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researchgate.net/profile/Reece-Alberts

Full event

The programme is built around the following 5 key themes:

- 1) conservation governance
- 2) conservation psychology
- 3) conservation ethics
- 4) conservation leadership
- 5) futures thinking

The learning outcomes will allow graduates to successfully position themselves in leadership positions within the conservation sector. The content provides a critical understanding of the legal and policy context for conservation governance together with an in-depth understanding of the different conservation governance approaches and instruments. Students will also engage with different ideologies and world views framing conservation whilst being able to critically reflect on conservation psychology and ethics. They will furthermore be expected to demonstrate their understanding of different futures thinking paradigms and methods and how these inform conservation leadership.

Lenke Balint

Head - Partnerships, Communities and Capacity Development

BirdLife International

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Full event

BirdLife is a founding member of the Conservation Leadership Programme (CLP), run in collaboration with FFI and WCS, which provides direct project funding and training to early career leaders from developing countries who are tackling priority conservation challenges. BirdLife also runs the Graeme Gibson Fellowship which provides mid-career conservationists from the BirdLife Partnership with the opportunity to hone their leadership skills.

Adam Barlow

Executive Director

WildTeam

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Full event

We support aspiring and professional conservationists through online training in key conservation skills and through an online global community.

Participants:

Paul Barnes
EDGE of Existence Programme Manager
ZSL
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Full event

The EDGE of Existence Programme is devoted to protecting Earth's most unique and irreplaceable biodiversity through local leadership and capacity sharing in collaborative support networks. One of our core approaches is to champion diversity in conservation leadership and promote approaches that encompass equity and justice. We focus on EDGE species - those that are Evolutionary Distinct and Globally Endangered - because they represent the most unique and irreplaceable branches of the Tree of Life that bestow benefits on all species. Yet, they are also highly threatened and often overlooked by conservationists. One of the most important ways we help to conserve these species is by supporting early-career conservationists in lower- and middle-income countries through our EDGE Fellowship programme. They are the future of conservation, dedicated to their work but typically lacking opportunities and the support needed to maintain a career in conservation. We support them to lead conservation efforts in their countries.

Shelley Bolderson
Networks Manager
Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership
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Full event

The Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership is a ground-breaking course that equips students with the applied leadership and management skills needed to create positive change in conservation. The Masters is hosted in the Department of Geography and delivered in collaboration with the Cambridge Conservation Initiative in the David Attenborough Building. After a decade of delivering the Masters, we now have 220 alumni in 89 countries around the world. After graduation we continue to support our growing and active network. We have formalised the University of Cambridge Conservation Leadership Alumni Network (UCCLAN), which has a Council and its own strategy.

Kitty Brayne
Co-Director: Programmes and Partnerships
Well Grounded
well-grounded.org
kitty@well-grounded.org

Day 1 & 2

Well Grounded supports organisational development and leadership for civil society organisations working for environmental justice in the Congo Basin region.

Participants:

Marianne Carter
Director, Conservation Capacity & Leadership
Fauna & Flora
fauna-flora.org | conservationleadershipprogramme.org
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Day 1

Fauna & Flora's Capacity & Leadership work spans several areas of conservation leadership development including the Conservation Leadership Programme, the MPhil in Conservation Leadership, Fauna & Flora's Conservation Resilience Fund which supports organisational development for partners globally, Oryx the journal, FFI's own professional development programme, WILDLABS and broader conservation technology development.

Alison Coburn
Chief Executive
Common Purpose International
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Full event

We run a range of programmes for people in the environmental world (not specifically conservation although we have done a lot of work with leaders in conservation including the MAVA Leaders for Nature Academy. One of our main programmes at the moment is Sky Blue which is an international programme bringing together leaders from many different sectors who are working on environmental challenges.

Olivia Couchman
CLP Executive Manager
Conservation Leadership Programme
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Full event

The Conservation Leadership Programme has been building capacity of early career conservationists around the world since 1984. We provide grants, training, alumni networking, mentorship and coaching to our Team Award winners and career placements.

Anna Davis
Director Leadership Programs
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Full event

Maliasili ran its first leadership development program for African community conservation CSO leaders (senior) in 2016, the first cohort of the African Conservation Leadership Network (ACLN). Since then we have run a further three cohorts of ACLN with and introduced a similar program focusing on marine conservation organisations in the West Indian Ocean (the African Marine Conservation Leadership Programme in partnership with Blue Ventures) in 2020 which is about to enter its second

Participants:

phase. In 2022/23 we ran the Madagascar Environmental Leaders Program, our first leadership program in Madagascar with 17 leaders from local conservation organisations. This year we launched our program for middle managers called LeadUp and the first cohort of 30 rising leaders is underway in east Africa. We have recently recruited a senior leaders program in the Congo Basin in partnership with Well Grounded. A cohort of 20 leaders from forest conservation organisations across Cameroon, Gabon, Congo-Brazzaville and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

We support ongoing peer networks built of alumni cohort members and currently support six groups that we will be convening with a range of supporters and champions at the African Community Conservation Forum in September 2023.

Kay Farmer

Director

Wild Ally

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Full event

For the past 18 months I co-created and managed a women's leadership programme for ASAP (as a self-employed consultant), focusing on women working with endangered species in SE Asia. I also instigated the development and co-design of a training/mentoring programme to provide basic skills to manage an NGO. I am currently on sabbatical but exploring future collaborations generally, and the incorporation of wellbeing into organisational culture.

Laura Gruber

Senior Programs Manager

Wildlife Conservation Network

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Full event

WCN's Rising Wildlife Leaders initiative is three-tiered supporting Internships for early career conservationists or conservation host organizations, providing Scholarships for graduate education for community-based conservationists dedicated to working in their home countries, and our newest initiative the Career Program which provides 3-5 years of capacity building, mentoring, and financial support to early-career conservationists to ensure they grow and thrive in their field. WCN is also the fiscal and operational home of the Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) program which jump-starts early-career conservation professionals through a combination of conservation and leadership skills training, networking opportunities with peers, mentors, and established practitioners, and the development and completion of a global wildlife conservation initiative.

Participants:

Nina Hadley
Senior Director, Guardians

Full event

Re:wild
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The Guardians of the Earth are the stewards of the world's wild places, and the plants and animals that live there. These are the park rangers, Indigenous peoples and local communities who prove every day that people have incredible power to benefit life on Earth. These are the scientists, women, academics, resource managers, and youth who are dedicating their lives to safeguarding biodiversity.

Re:wild works to ensure that every person in a position to protect Earth's biodiversity has agency to do so. Through our work with guardians, Re:wild cultivates and invests in conservationists on the ground making a profound and lasting difference for our planet.

Chloe Hodgkinson
Head of Learning and Partner Development

Day 1 AM / 2 / 3 AM

Fauna & Flora
fauna-flora.org
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As team head I develop, oversee, and provide strategic direction to three global connected programmes of work: Professional Development, Information Management, and Partnerships and Organisational Development Support. This includes ensuring that FFI's core partners are more capable, resilient, and impactful and the major risks to FFI of working with and through partners are reduced, FFIs professional development work delivers against FFI's ambition to sustain a motivated, talented, committed, and secure workforce and that FFI's learning initiatives are inclusive, fair, transparent and legally compliant and deliver against FFI's work on Diversity & Inclusion.

Jon Hutton
Chief Conservation Officer
WWF International

TBC

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Guiding conservation strategies across the 8000 strong WWF Network, developing the initiatives critical to achieve impact and the safeguards that are necessary to protect both nature and people.

Participants:

Thirza Loffeld
Community Manager
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Day 1 & 2

WildHub is a global community of conservation professionals aimed at creating a more diverse and inclusive conservation sector to drive innovation, collaboration, and social justice. We opened our virtual doors in March 2020, responding to the increased need of conservationists worldwide to connect, exchange knowledge and support each other online. Since then we have grown to a community of 3500 members from 140 countries in three years. WildHub is initiated by WildTeam UK, who provides leadership training courses. Conservation Leadership is a topic that is regularly discussed in our global community.

Aaniyah Martin
Team lead: Understanding and Adapting
Women for the Environment in Africa
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Full event

PUTTING WOMEN AT THE HEART OF TRANSFORMING AFRICA'S ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT.

African Environmentalism and conservation is suffering from a profound imbalance in leadership. While we strive to protect the diversity of our environment, we have overlooked the importance of diversity in our teams. Diverse teams are more productive, collaborative, resilient and innovative, yet women are routinely underrepresented in decision-making roles. With the joint crises of biodiversity loss and climate change, we are at a moment when courageous, authentic leadership is needed more than ever. WE Africa was created to remedy this imbalance by empowering women leaders in African conservation to transform their own and others' leadership, creating strong mixed gender teams that will achieve greater environmental outcomes.

Our vision is that WE Africa sparks a movement of women leaders in Africa and beyond, who are role modelling a more effective and impactful way to do conservation. By delivering transformational and deeply African leadership experiences, amplified by a strong pay it forward approach and supported by a connected community, WE Africa is making tangible contributions to the sustainability and wellbeing of leaders and ecosystems. WE Africa is a beacon of hope for the future, locally and globally.

Kate Mastro
Senior Program Manager
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Full event

The WCS Learning and Leadership for Conservation (LLC) strategy focuses on the delivery of four pathways to develop the next generation of conservation leaders not only within WCS programs, but

Participants:

across the sector with particular emphasis on early and mid-career conservationists in developing countries:

1. Achieve scientific excellence through graduate scholarships.
2. Build practical experience through project grants and internships.
3. Improve skills in relevant areas, with a focus on management and leadership.
4. Build networks through peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing.

Through these pathways, LLC will build conservation leaders. We understand conservation leaders to be reputable scientists and, more broadly, individuals who conduct applied projects that inform conservation policy and practice, and are adaptive, collaborative practitioners who advance positive change for nature and people. LLC aims to be on the leading edge of conservation leadership and these pathways will provide key educational and training opportunities to foster growth in early and mid-career conservationists. This will give rise to a necessary diversification of the of the conservation sector, where nationals of highly biodiverse countries are the experts, influencers, and conservation leaders. Overall, a more diverse conservation sector will be one that is more equitable, inclusive, and effective.

Faisal Moola
PhD

Full event

Associate Professor and Coordinator of Master of Conservation Leadership Program
University of Guelph
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The Master of Conservation Leadership (MCL) program is hosted at the University of Guelph, Canada. It is directed towards early to mid-career conservation professionals who are seeking to expand their conservation, partnership, and communications knowledge, expand their understanding of Indigenous conservation governance and collaboration, implement a relevant conservation project, and cultivate the leadership capacities to take on more executive and senior leadership roles in their home organization and the conservation sector more broadly.

Our program has recruited students and conservation professionals from across Canada, the United States and globally from varying backgrounds including international and regional ENGOs and non-profits, regional conservation authorities, Provincial Park agencies, environmental education, environmental consulting, and conservation fundraising and donor outreach. We have had at least one to two Indigenous student in every year of the program to date.

Participants:

Kahaso Mtana
Leadership Programs Coordinator
Maliasili
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Full event

Maliasili has just introduced a fresh leadership initiative to enhance our existing senior and early talent programs. This new program is designed specifically for emerging and rising leaders who play a pivotal role in the conservation sector. Our goal is to nurture a diverse pool of leaders who are actively driving community-led conservation efforts throughout Africa. These individuals are exceptional contributors within conservation organizations, showcasing remarkable achievements and exhibiting great potential for further growth. This program represents a seamless extension of our successful ACLN program, initiated six years ago, and serves as a meaningful response to the demand for capable and motivated future leaders in local conservation organizations.

Fred Nelson
CEO
Maliasili
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Full event

Maliasili runs a series of cohort-based leadership programs, targeting senior and rising leaders within African community-focused civil society organizations, and complementing a wider package of organizational development support processes.

Stuart Paterson
CEO
The Rufford Foundation
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Day 1 & 2

The Rufford Foundation is a UK registered charity which funds nature conservation projects in countries defined by IMF as emerging economies. The flagship Rufford Small Grants Programme identifies students and conservationists at the very early stages of their careers and provides grants to enable them to achieve their conservation and research goals. Successful applicants can apply for several years worth of repeat funding. Grants range from £6k-£15k currently. Since the Rufford Small Grants Programme was set up over 20 years ago, it has given in excess of £30 million through more than 5100 grants to projects in over 150 countries. Rufford has recently launched capacity building events designed by grantees and delivered by subject experts. Our new strategy will be launched in 2023.

Participants:

Henry Rees
CLP Programme Officer
Fauna & Flora
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henry.rees@fauna-flora.org

1 or 2 days (unspecified)

The Conservation Leadership Programme was established in 1984 and has since been building the capacity of early career conservationists across the world.

Chris Sandbrook
Professor of Conservation and Society
Director
Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership
cl.geog.cam.ac.uk
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Full event

The Cambridge Masters in Conservation Leadership is a ground-breaking course that equips students with the applied leadership and management skills needed to create positive change in conservation. A unique feature of the course is its delivery by a collaboration between the University of Cambridge and ten leading conservation organisations, which together comprise the Cambridge Conservation Initiative. The Masters in Conservation Leadership is designed for applicants with at least three years of relevant professional experience and clear leadership potential.

The curriculum combines taught modules with hands-on experiential learning through a group consultancy and an individual professional placement hosted by a conservation organisation. All students receive 1:1 mentoring from a senior leader. The course is based in the David Attenborough Building, in which it has its own dedicated teaching space, offering students outstanding facilities and constant access to world-leading conservation practitioners and researchers.

Katy Scholfield
Director for Strategic Grantmaking
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Full event

The ultimate goal of the Great Apes & Gibbons Program is to achieve conservation and respect for the great and small apes. This is accomplished by ensuring that resilient populations of great apes and gibbons are protected from extinction and living in habitats that are governed in a sustainable, just, and holistic manner; and that apes in captivity are cared for in accredited sanctuaries or zoos. Grantmaking focuses on 24 priority landscapes across 18 countries in Africa and Asia.

Participants:

Nathan Schulfer

Full event

Director: International & Professional MS Programs

University of Wisconsin-Madison, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies

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I direct two applied MS degrees, one in Environmental Conservation and one in Environmental Observation & Informatics. Both programs emphasize leadership development, the importance of working with diverse groups of people, and interdisciplinary approaches to environmental problem solving. I also oversee our international programming.

Annie Tourette

Full event

Head of Advocacy

Blue Ventures

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Blue Ventures is a marine conservation organisation that supports coastal communities to rebuild fisheries and restore ocean life. Working in places that are home to globally important marine life and some of the world's most vulnerable coastal populations, Blue Ventures partners with small-scale fishers and community organisations to design, scale, strengthen and sustain locally led fisheries management and conservation. It brings partners together in networks to advocate for reform and share tools and best practices to support fishing communities across the globe.

Blue Ventures' work began two decades ago in Madagascar's remote coastal communities and has grown globally. It is now working in more than a dozen countries, protecting over 17,500 km² of vital ocean habitat, and impacting the lives of almost 800,000 people.

Getting here:

Find the [David Attenborough Building](#)

Download the [Visitors Guide](#)

[Recommended accomodation](#)



Contact

For more information about New Directions in
Conservation Leadership:

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[Symposium webpage](#)

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Rufford Foundation