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The Study of Ecology and Environmental Management: : Reflections on the Implications of Ecological History



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Source: [Environmental Management and Health](#), Volume 5, Number 4, 1994 , pp. 7-15(9)

Publisher: [Emerald Group Publishing Limited](#)

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Abstract:

While environmental protection legislation has been put in place to prevent gross damage to natural systems, there is debate about how successful these efforts have been. Legislation has reduced the ubiquity of some kinds of gross damage while neglecting or expressly permitting other kinds. However, in the developed world, expectations for environmental protection have increased. Not only does society wish to prevent damage, but it also wishes to maintain ecosystems in a healthy and robust condition. Because human societies depend on the ecosystem services provided by natural systems, these services must be protected in order to maintain our standard of living. As populations increase, demands increase, and undamaged natural areas capable of providing such services decrease, the demands for ecosystem service production will increase. Public policy must respond to this increased need.

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Keywords: [Conservation](#); [Ecology](#); [Environmental Management Strategy](#); [Green Issues](#); [History](#); [Legislation](#); [Preservation](#)

Document Type: Research article

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/09566169410069396>

Publication date: 1994-04-01

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