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Developing Payments for Ecosystem Services Approaches to Carnivore Conservation

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Abstract


Carnivores throughout the world are widely declining as a result of persecution by local human communities, a process that is driven by the costs that carnivores impose on people. Although many species of large carnivores are valued at global and national scales, the concentration of these species' costs at the local level creates a "market failure" underlying carnivore declines. A fundamental challenge to conserving large carnivores throughout the world is overcoming this market failure and creating viable local incentives for conserving carnivores. The widespread emergence of new conservation models termed "payments for ecosystem services" provides a potentially important framework for the wider development of incentive-based approaches to carnivore conservation. Under such payment schemes, local landholders are compensated based on tangible performance criteria related to conserving carnivores. Creative and adaptive experimentation is needed to overcome the technical, institutional, and financial challenges involved in applying these approaches to carnivore conservation.

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Keywords

- payments for ecosystem services,
- carnivores,
- conservation,
- economics,
- incentives

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