**Global patterns of freshwater species diversity, threat and endemism**

**Collen B**, Whitton F, Dyer EE, Baillie JEM, Cumberlidge N, Darwall WRT, Pollock C, Richman N, Soulsby A-M & Böhm M. (2014) *Global Ecology & Biogeography*23: 40-51

Ben was my line manager when I first started working at the Institute of Zoology at ZSL in 2009. I was undertaking a six month internship working on the Sampled Red List Index (SRLI), assessing the threat status of various freshwater species groups. This study originally came about because myself and two other interns (Felix Whitton and Anne-Marie Soulsby) were keen to make the most of our time at IoZ and get our names on a publication. Ben readily agreed to help us write a paper, under the proviso that we were to collate the necessary remaining data for it. This meant a lot of late nights creating hundreds of range maps for obscure crab species, and trying to persuade ArcGIS (mapping software) to handle thousands of map files without crashing. The paper dragged on for a long time after our internships were finished and the three of us had scattered to new roles and places – I remained at the IoZ as a Research Technician on a different project (though still sharing an office with the SRLI team), but Felix went to Canada and Anne-Marie to Tanzania. Progress on our parts was slow to say the least, and Ben kindly took the lead and, together with others from the IoZ and the IUCN, we produced an ambitious study which represented the largest compendium of geographical range data for freshwater species available at the time.

The study showed that freshwater species across a range of vertebrate and decapod groups were consistently under a greater level of threat than those resident in terrestrial ecosystems. The results had significant implications for understanding global patterns of both diversity and extinction risk, and demonstrated that basing conservation actions on only one taxon or measure of importance, was likely to lead to key areas and species not receiving the conservation effort they required. It has been cited over 130 times and, for the moment at least, remains the most highly-cited paper for us ex-interns!

I went on to co-author various other papers with Ben, and he was a co-supervisor for my PhD and then a colleague after I took up a post-doc position at UCL. Many others in this volume will discuss the impact he has had for conservation and policy, but for me his greatest gift was his willingness to help others get ahead. He has been a mentor and friend throughout my whole scientific career, and he made going to work that bit more fun. I shall miss him terribly.

Dr Ellie Dyer

Centre for Biodiversity & Environment Research, University College London, London UK