**The Impact of Conservation on the Status of the World’s Vertebrates**

Hoffmann M, Hilton-Taylor C, Angulo A, Böhm M, Brooks TM, Butchart SHM, Carpenter KE, Chanson J, **Collen B**, *et al*. (2010) *Science*330: 1503-1509

We began conceptualizing the idea for the impact of conservation paper in late 2009 feeling that we wanted to produce something to help influence – positively – the discussions around the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity under the Convention for Biological Diversity. Until then, all the discussions were focusing around how we were failing to meet the 2010 target to reduce the loss of biodiversity in the face of increasing pressures. This was one of the first major studies to demonstrate that conservation action was making a measurable difference, and it proved to be hugely influential in shaping the discussions around the new strategic plan for biodiversity. It was also pivotal in the formulation around Target 12 which included a recovery aspect.

Ben was part of the core data analysis and writing group and was key to much of the early thinking and design that went into the study – he also helped bring some levity to things as only Ben could! At the time the paper was written, it was one of the largest multi-author papers ever published in conservation biology and was produced against an incredibly challenging time-frame. In many ways, it served as a small credit to the vital contributions of many, many individuals who helped create the core dataset, namely the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, that made the study possible in the first place. Indeed, the Red List is how I first came to meet Ben in early 2004, and over the years he was a major driver in making the Red List what it is today, especially helping develop the Red List Index and Sampled Red List Index and his support for national Red Listing efforts. I couldn’t help feel that sometimes he thought we IUCN folk all took it a bit too seriously – and he was right! – but he was always among its first champions. Ben leaves behind him an incredible legacy of impact, in conservation and in the lives of many who had the great fortune to know him.

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