

Biography

Rosaleen Duffy is Professor of International Politics at the University of Sheffield. Rosaleen uses a political ecology lens in order to understand global environmental change. She is particularly interested in the global politics of biodiversity conservation, and focuses on global environmental governance, wildlife trafficking, poaching, transfrontier conservation and tourism. Recently, her work has sought to understand the growing links between global security and biodiversity conservation. She is currently PI on a European Research Council Advanced Investigator Grant of EUR 1.8 million for BIOSEC - Biodiversity and Security: Understanding environmental crime, illegal wildlife trade and threat finance. She is author of *Nature Crime: How We're Getting Conservation Wrong* (2010) and co author of *Nature Unbound* (with Dan Brockington and James Igoe).

Abstract

The political ecology of security: conservation, capitalism and global security converge

Conservation is not just intertwined with capitalism, it operates to drive and deepen capitalism by opening new frontiers in non human nature to capital. However, there has been recent 'security turn' in conservation – approaching species losses, especially as a result of the illegal wildlife trade, as a threat to global security; but this security turn is also a means by which nature is made compatible with capital. I aim to set out a new framework, a political ecology of security, to trace the emergence of the security turn out of neoliberalisation of nature. The shift towards security-oriented approaches in conservation has facilitated the entry of a greater range of militaries, private security contractors and technology to the field. These developments are problematic because security-oriented approaches distract from dealing with the underlying drivers of wildlife losses. The focus on the roles of armed groups and organised crime networks in the illegal wildlife trade conveniently sidesteps the negative impacts of the wider system of capitalism on the environment. Further, the security-oriented approach actually opens new opportunities for accumulation thereby deepening and driving the very logics that produce species losses in the first place.