



Anavilhanas National Park (c) Marcos Mello

Seminar: Models of national park creation: an evolving paradigm.

More than 190 countries adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022, thereby committing themselves to protecting 30% of their national territories by 2030. The goal presents an enormous challenge to many countries and progress to date has been uneven. My talk will develop three themes. First, it is important to understand that park creation is fundamentally an adversarial process. Most parks are vigorously opposed before they are signed into law, and many park proposals fail at this stage. Second, the process through which new parks are established has evolved beyond recognition over the last 100 years and currently involves collaborations between governments, scientists, and NGOs. Third, biodiversity conservation can be favored or hindered by the prevailing socioeconomic context. The current global context is highly problematical and unlikely to favor attainment of the 30 by 30 goal. Nevertheless, some of the current models for creating new protected areas draw heavily on participation by scientists and NGOs in ways that reduce the financial and political obstacles inherent in the political process.

John Terborgh is James B. Duke Professor Emeritus of Environmental Science in Duke University and has current affiliations with the University of Florida – Gainesville and James Cook University, Cairns, Australia. His work focuses on tropical ecology, particularly plant-animal interactions and trophic cascades. He has published more than 300 articles and 8 books and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the National Academy of Sciences. He was awarded a Pew Fellowship In 1992 and became a MacArthur Fellow in the same year and later, in 1996, was awarded the Daniel Geraud Elliot Medal by the National Academy of Sciences. He has served on the boards of numerous conservation organizations and in 1999 founded ParksWatch, an organization dedicated to monitoring and publicizing the status of parks in developing countries. He remains active in research and conservation to the present.

Latest Publication:

[High-quality surrounding landscapes mitigate avian extirpations from forest remnants](#)

Seminar information

Date: Wednesday 22 July, 2026
 Time: 16:00-17:00 AEST
 Venue: Crowther Lecture Theatre, Building A3 Room 003, JCU Nguma-bada Campus, Smithfield followed by drinks and nibbles *(Cairns only)
 Zoom: <https://jcu.zoom.us/j/89227359841?pwd=0fJgarNkiY9PwlUFsz9Mx9rivKnhIE.1>
 Passcode: 676674
 QR Code: Scan the code below to join us on Zoom

