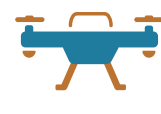


# PRINCIPLES FOR THE SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE USE OF CONSERVATION MONITORING TECHNOLOGIES



Conservation monitoring technologies such as drones, satellites, and camera traps are used to collect data in order to aid conservation efforts. They can deliberately or accidentally collect data on humans, and this raises various ethical issues.

Finding ways to address these ethical concerns is crucial in ensuring the avoidance of harm to people as well as successful conservation outcomes. To help in this process, we offer simple principles for conservation practitioners and researchers to follow.

## Why are Principles Necessary?

Conservation monitoring technologies capture data on people

**90%** of researchers using camera traps reported at least one image of people in their most recent project<sup>1</sup>

Concerns can result in communities distrusting conservation monitoring technologies

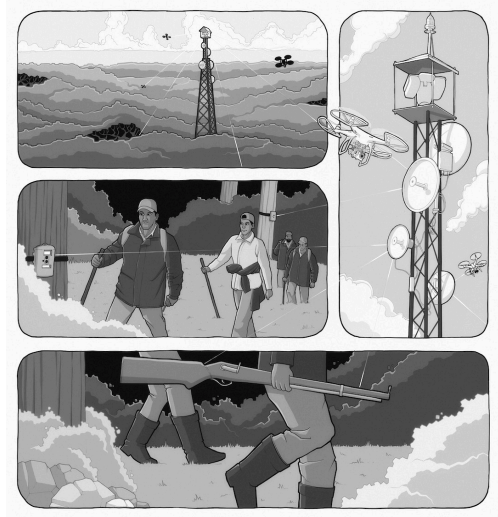
**76%** of researchers using camera traps said that at least one camera trap had been interfered with<sup>1</sup>



Community distrust can result in worse conservation outcomes

**74%** of researchers that had their camera traps interfered with said that this was damaging to their project<sup>1</sup>

Conservation monitoring technologies can cause harm to local residents



Harm to local residents can include invasion of privacy, the use of data for coercion and sexual harassment. This can create a climate of fear in the community<sup>2</sup>.

## How To Use Conservation Monitoring Technology Responsibly



**RECOGNISE** and **ACKNOWLEDGE** that conservation monitoring technologies can have social impacts



Deploy conservation monitoring technologies based on **NECESSITY** and **PROPORTIONALITY** relative to the conservation problem



**EVALUATE** all potential impacts of conservation monitoring technologies on people



**ENGAGE** with and **SEEK CONSENT** from people who may be observed and/or affected by conservation monitoring technologies



Build **TRANSPARENCY** and **ACCOUNTABILITY** into the use of conservation monitoring technologies



**RESPECT** peoples' rights and vulnerabilities



**PROTECT DATA** collected to safeguard privacy

PLANNING

DATA COLLECTION

POST CAMPAIGN

## Next Steps

### 1. Read our papers for a more complete discussion

Sandbrook et al. (2021) [Principles for the socially responsible use of conservation monitoring technology and data](#)

Sharma et al. (2020) [Conservation and people: Towards an ethical code of conduct for the use of camera traps in wildlife research](#)

### 2. Join the Conversation about the ethics of conservation tech on the [WILDLABS ethics forums](#)

### 3. Watch the WILDLABS Tech Tutors Webinar

### 4. Share how you apply these principles with your colleagues using [#ethicaltech4wildlife](#)

1; Sandbrook et al. (2018) [Human Bycatch: Conservation Surveillance and the Social Implications of Camera Traps](#)  
2; Image used with permission of Trishant Simlai

Contributors: Chris Sandbrook, Louis Cohen, Stephanie O'Donnell, Trishant Simlai, Tuuli Toivonen, Koustubh Sharma, Jennifer Cobbe, Bill Adams, Douglas Clark