

Anthropocene

Stewardship: Linking Ecological Sustainability, Social Justice, and Well-Being in Settler-Colonial Hawai'i

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Motivation

- What is "just conservation" in the Anthropocene? In Hawai'i, land stewards are piloting biocultural land governance. This transdisciplinary research investigates stewardship's potential to transform land conservation by centering Indigenous and ecological concerns and attending to Hawai'i's ongoing problems of settler-colonialism and overtourism.

Project Description

- This project uses ethnographic and ecological research to understand how the coalition enacts well-being and land health in pursuit of just sustainability.
- The project also centers community participation through a workshop and participatory research.

Context

- Protected-area conservation remains a widespread response to environmental crisis.
- It remains, difficult, however, to merge ecological with social needs and political challenges, particularly as relates to local/Indigenous concerns.
- This project seeks to demonstrate a model for social-ecological research.



How is the **renaissance of Hawaiian biocultural land stewardship** being translated into protected-area conservation? What insights can this case offer other initiatives to make **social-ecological well-being more just in the Anthropocene?**



Project Deliverables

- Ethnographic and ecological descriptions of a multi-species community in a coastal reserve.
- Preliminary comparison of biocultural stewardship concepts with existing land governance frameworks.
- Preliminary map of community understandings of land health and well-being.
- Undergraduate work study opportunity.
- Material for future multi-year collaborative research proposal writing.

Potential Impact

- Identification of key social-ecological feedbacks relevant to adapting to global change.
- Investigate reconfigurations of foundational concepts and practices in conservation science and land governance.
- Developing a locally grounded conceptual model of land health and well-being.
- Promoting a more serious engagement in conservation with settler-colonial histories,
- Enhancing anthropological research on place-making.

References and/or Acknowledgements

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