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Schmidtz, David, "When Preservationism Doesn't Preserve"

Schmidtz, David. "When Preservationism Doesn't Preserve." *Environmental Values* 6, no. 3 (1997): 327–39. doi:10.3197/096327197776679103 .

According to conservationism, scarce and precious resources should be conserved and used wisely. According to preservation ethics, we should not think of wilderness as merely a resource. Wilderness commands reverence in a way mere resources do not. Each philosophy, I argue, can fail by its own lights, because trying to put the principles of conservationism or preservationism into institutional practice can have results that are the opposite of what the respective philosophies tell us we ought to be trying to achieve. For example, if the wisest use of South American rainforests is no use at all, then in that case conservationism by its own lights defers to preservationism. Analogously, if, when deprived of the option of preserving elephants as a resource, Africans respond by not preserving elephants at all, then in that case preservationism by its own lights defers to conservationism.

— Article abstract from [The White Horse Press](#) website

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