

Economist, Meet Biologist. Now Let's Save the World



Taylor Ricketts

Director Gund Professor, Rubinstein School for Environment and Natural Resources

CURRENT RESEARCH

Aligning economics with conservation

By 2050, we will need to feed two billion more people. How can we do that without overwhelming the planet? Scientists are beginning to realize that the natural world actually underpins our own economies and livelihoods. Dr. Taylor Ricketts, Director of the University of Vermont's Gund Institute for Ecological Economics, is working to understand the various ways that nature benefits people, and the ways that we can manage ecosystems more wisely with that knowledge. His research explores the relationships between nature, the economy, and society by quantifying the benefits we receive from the environment, and calculating the cost of its destruction. His work creates a powerful business case for landowners, industries, and government to protect ecosystems and species that humans need to thrive.

Dr. Ricketts and his team combine the strengths of natural and social sciences to address these sustainability challenges. Through field experiments, they quantify the importance of wild species to our food supply. Through sophisticated computer modeling, they map the economic "return on investment" in conserving nature. And through pioneering uses of "Big Data" – the torrent of information now available from long-term datasets, social media, and the Internet – they determine how nature affects people's mental and physical health. Dr. Ricketts' research goes beyond the walls of a laboratory, or even the boundaries of a field experiment, to find solutions to real-world problems. In all of his research, he collaborates closely with people in non-profit and government sectors to link rigorous research with practical conservation and policy efforts worldwide.

Current research includes:

- The...

AFFILIATION



University of Vermont

EDUCATION

- Ph.D., in Biology, 2000 , Stanford University
- B.A., in Earth Sciences, 1991 , Dartmouth College

AWARDS

- Named one of the "World's Most Influential Scientific Minds: 2014"
- Committee on Status of Pollinators, National Research Council, 2006
- Zayed Prize for Scientific Achievement in Environment (shared), 2005

RESEARCH AREAS

Environment, Ecology, Global Policy

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Taylor Ricketts, of the University of Vermont, as he focuses on how to meet the needs of people and nature in an increasingly crowded and changing world. Donations will fund the necessary \$600K/year required to support Ph.D. students and postdoctoral researcher team who are driving this research forward. It will also support the field experiments, powerful computers, and lab facilities needed to conduct the work. Join Dr. Ricketts in understanding and protecting the crucial role that nature plays in our economies, communities, and livelihoods.

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