



Re-Inventing Magnificence
The Motivation to Contribute
One Page Summary

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On-line Summary

Uncover the motivations that create and sustain the desire to contribute to the common good in the members of the international business elite.

Abstract

While in the short-term demand reduction campaigns will be needed to change people's motivations to consume illegal and endangered wildlife 'products', to ensure a long-term sustainable future we must provide alternative ways to engage with nature. This involves re-directing desire as the final step in demand reduction campaigns.

We cannot re-direct these users to 'legal luxury consumption'. Simply reverting to mainstream luxury products does not fulfil their desire and would be seen as a backward step by the elite users of illegal wildlife products. Many of the target group already engage in all forms of 'legal luxury consumption', which is one of the reasons they have moved to 'illegal luxury consumption' to differentiate themselves from the broader elite group. For this group, if we don't provide a motivation to not consume products from nature, they will simply substitute one product for another (e.g. rhino horn, ivory, helmeted hornbill [red ivory]) in response to demand reduction campaigns.

Currently many users of illegal wildlife products in Asia gain status with their peer group by consuming these rare and precious 'products' or gifting them. At the same time, many of the elite male, primary users of wildlife products also aspire to, and are influenced by, international business leaders who have gained an even higher status than their current peer group. Many of those same international business leaders have pledged or are already contributing a large part of their wealth to the common good including nature.

The purpose of this empirical research is to understand what motivates those who have chosen to contribute to do this and how their direct involvement in such philanthropic projects makes them feel about themselves and adds to their personal identity. The aim is to use the insights gained, from interviewing 20-30 of these leaders, to create campaigns that will trigger lasting behaviour change away from consumption of illegal/endangered wildlife to contribution to the common good, in Asia's wealthy elite groups driving the current poaching crisis.

By creating a new narrative about re-investing in the natural world as a way to demonstrate status and prestige, can we provide these elites an alternative to fulfil their self-image needs and a way to 'win' in the social comparison stakes? This is based on re-inventing Magnificence, a concept steeped in history, but subverted by luxury in recent centuries.

Additional Information

Re-inventing Magnificence: Conservation Is The New Black

<http://breakingthebrand.org/re-inventing-magnificence-conservation-is-the-new-black/>

Re-Inventing Magnificence: Breaking The Brand of Luxury Wildlife Products

<http://breakingthebrand.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Symposium-Presentation.pdf>