

Offsetting as if people mattered: social aspects of biodiversity offsetting

Why do we need to consider social issues when designing and implementing biodiversity NNL/NG?

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Poll Question 1

How much can social aspects influence the success of a biodiversity offset?

Scale 1 – 4:

1 = Not at all

2 = A small amount

3 = A fair amount

4 = A lot

Poll Question 2

In your opinion, compared with the technical challenges facing biodiversity offsetting, how much weight should be given to addressing the social aspects?

Scale 1 – 4:

1 = None

2 = A small amount

3 = A fair amount

4 = A lot

Poll Question 3

Do you think that the design and implementation of biodiversity offsetting at present takes social aspects into account enough?

Scale 1 – 4:

1 = I don't know

2 = No

3 = Yes, but could do more

4 = Yes

Biodiversity offsetting: yes or no?

Concept of NNL and biodiversity offsets continues to be discussed

Biodiversity Offsets

love



or



leave

Challenges facing biodiversity offsetting

- **Technical challenges**

- Metrics
- Like-for-like
- Longevity



No to Biodiversity Offsetting!

Challenges facing biodiversity offsetting

- **Governance issues**

- Capacity
- Compliance, M & E

- **Potential effectiveness**

- Lack of evidence

Nature Not For Sale

Challenging biodiversity offsetting and the financialisation of nature



Why consider social aspects of offsetting?



But thinking has shifted to include:

- People's use and cultural values associated with biodiversity

Costs – economic displacement, restricted access to natural resources, etc.

Benefits –
improved livelihood options, access to improved nature, etc.

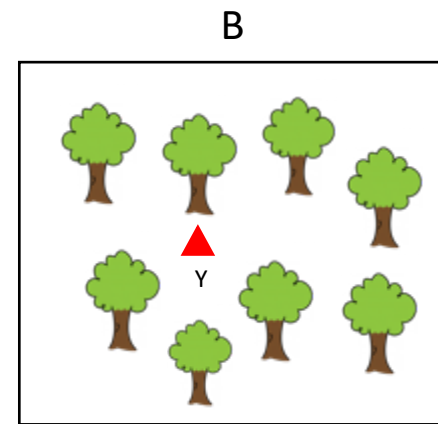
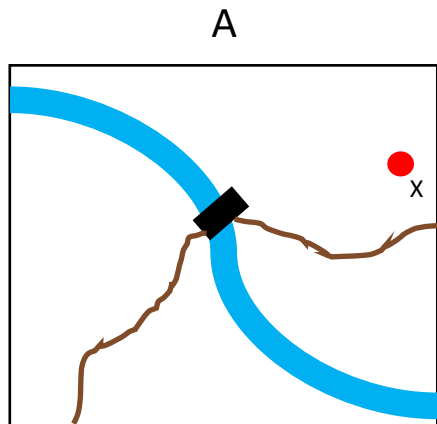
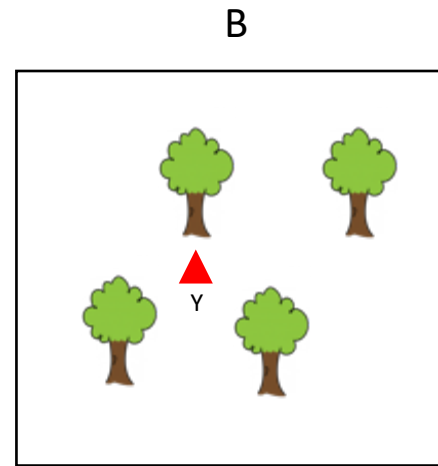
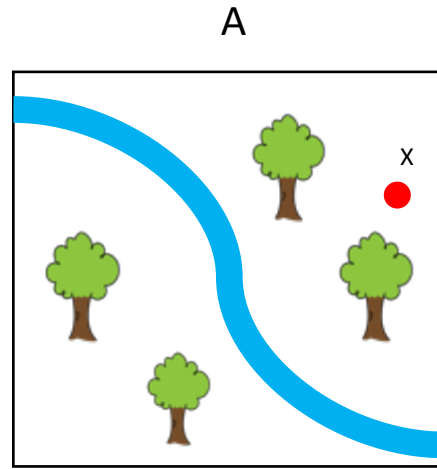


Why consider social aspects of offsetting?

Before development of the dam



After development of the dam



Okay to accept that there are winners and losers associated with exchanges in biodiversity?

Goal - Social outcomes from NNL should be sustainable and equitable



**People should be left “no worse off” in terms of their wellbeing
as a result of the NNL activities**



Why consider social aspects of offsetting?

Housing



Material
What you have



Income



Education



Freedom of
choice and
action



Social relations

WELLBEING



Health

Relational
*What you can do
with what you have*

Subjective
*How you feel about what you
have and what you can do*

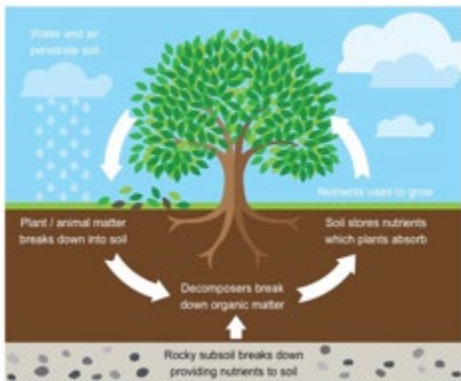
Why consider social aspects of offsetting?

Access to nature can influence wellbeing in a range of different ways



Why consider social aspects of offsetting?

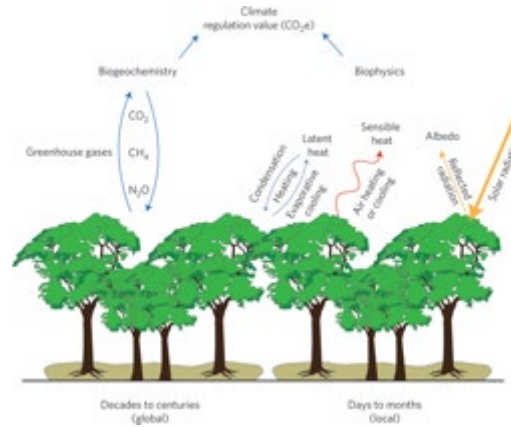
Ecosystem services



Supporting
services



Provisioning
services



Regulating
services



Cultural
services

People's wellbeing

Why consider social impacts of offsetting?

Goal - Social outcomes from NNL should be sustainable and equitable

Moral imperative: to make local people “*no worse off*”



Why consider social impacts of offsetting?

Goal - Social outcomes from NNL should be sustainable and equitable

Practical imperative: License to operate, risk management etc.



<https://www.themercury.com.au/subscribe/news>

Why consider social impacts of offsetting?

Goal - Social outcomes from NNL should be sustainable and equitable

Regulatory requirement: National policies, IFC PS standards etc.



**Performance Standard 6
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living
Natural Resources**

January 1, 2012

Overview of Performance Standards on Environmental and Social
Sustainability

- Mandates NNL in certain situations
- Requires implementers to consider **how their project affects ecosystem services**

Poll Question 4

Has a knowledge of the principles of UNDRIP changed the way you engage with Indigenous peoples during habitat offsetting projects?

- Yes, we are required to consider UNDRIP principles
- Yes, we choose to consider UNDRIP principles
- No, we choose not to consider UNDRIP principles

Poll Question 5

Have you used UNDRIP like principles of engagement including consent with non-Indigenous peoples during habitat offsetting projects?

- Yes, we are must
- Yes, we choose to
- No, we do not have this requirement

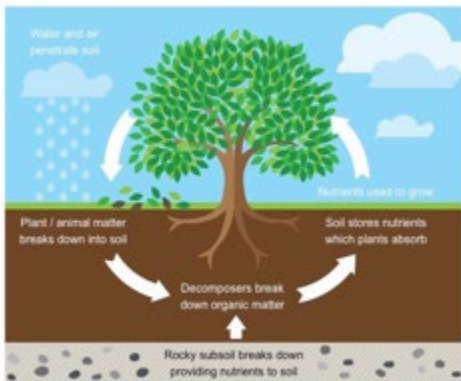
Poll Question 6

If your engagement on habitat offsetting projects is now more fulsome and meaningful (UNDRIP like), what are you doing?

- we are more flexible and open to design input
- we provide more time for negotiation
- we offer more information
- all or most of the above

Cultural ecosystem services

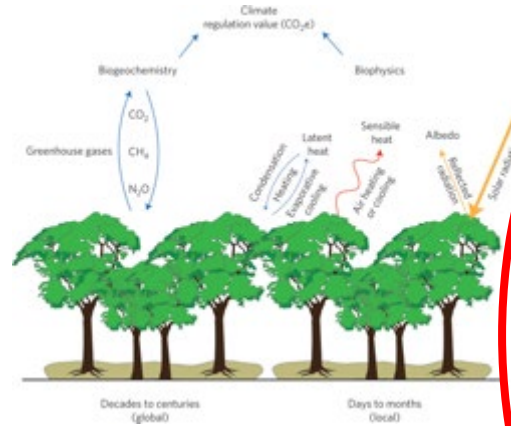
Ecosystem services



Supporting services



Provisioning services



Regulating services



Cultural services

People's wellbeing

Cultural ecosystem services

Nature and culture are inextricably linked

- With human cultures shaping, and being shaped, by nature
 - Protect (or degrade) species, habitats and landscapes
 - Shaped collective and individual identities
 - Influenced knowledge, belief systems and traditional practices



Cultural ecosystem services

- Understanding cultural values:
 - Helps justify and motivate strategies
 - Meaningful to local people
 - Align with their own priorities
- Powerful means of building community support and creating partnerships



Cultural ecosystem services

- During design of NNL strategies:
 - Attention needs to be paid to **socio-economic** and **cultural values** people attribute to nature

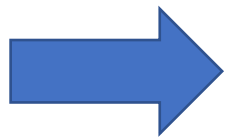
BUT

Lack of empirical research on *how to* include cultural ecosystem services into NNL strategies

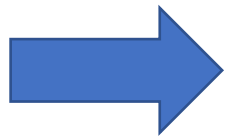


Research aim

- Expand NNL to include people's *social* and *cultural* values associated with biodiversity
- Whether and how biodiversity NNL can be achieved



Whilst ensuring local people are 'no worse off'



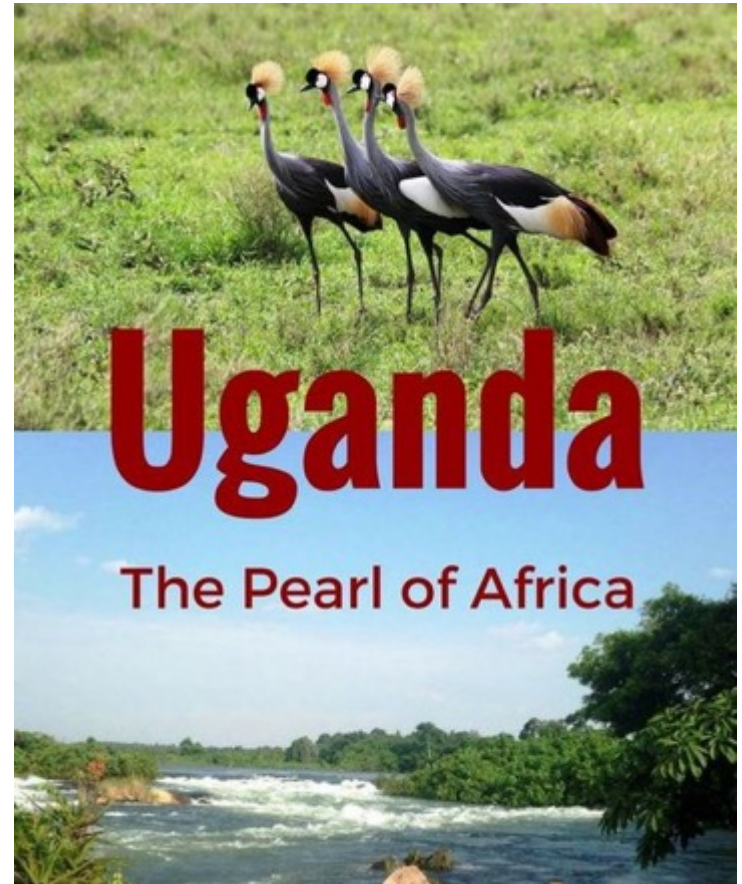
WRT *cultural ecosystem services*



Case study



http://www.thesafaricompany.co.za/Map_Uganda.htm



<https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/693484042595102392>

Case study



Bujagali HPP (250 MW)

- Completed in 2012
- Predominantly World Bank funded
- Flooded Bujagali Falls



Isimba HPP (183.2 MW)

- Downstream of Bujagali
- Under construction
- Chinese and Ugandan Governments

Case study

Kalagala Offset

- Offset includes:
 - Kalagala Falls & Itanda Rapids
 - No power generation activities
 - Develop tourism activities at the falls
 - Conserve Mabira & 6 other Central Forest Reserves





Nile
Victoria

Isimba Dam (2)

Nawanyago

Buyabi

Kalagala
Offset
Catchment

Buwenge

Kalagala Falls

Itanda Rapids

Mutai

Bujagali Dam (1)

Kasowa

Magamaga

Mabira Central Forest Reserve

Kakira

Jinja

Lake Victoria

Namataba

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Image Landsat

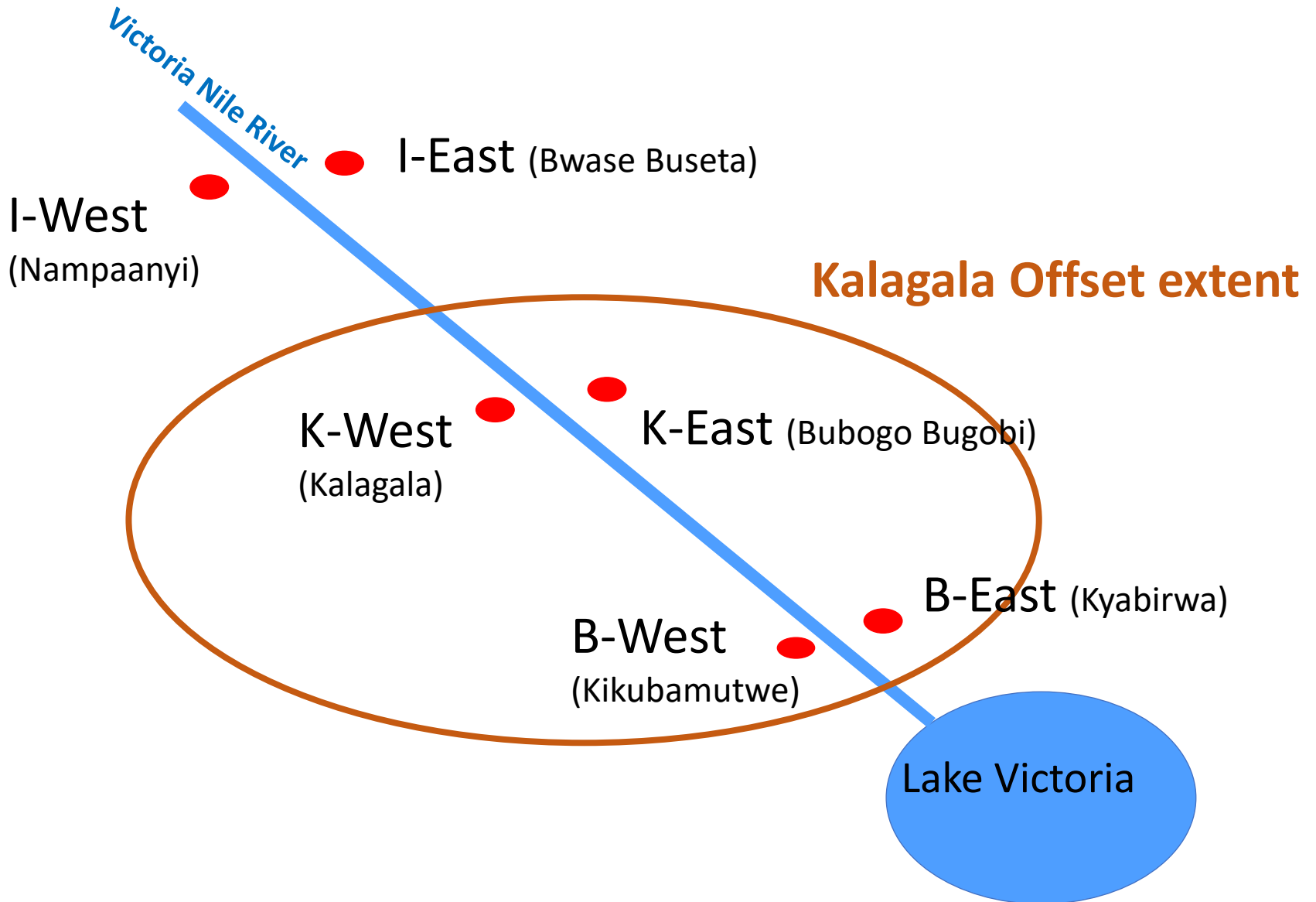
Google earth

16.2 km

Cultural and spiritual values in the study area



Methods



Cultural heritage and biodiversity offsetting

Questions:

1. How important is cultural heritage to local people's wellbeing?
2. How does this vary geographically and between socio-demographic groups?
3. How do the hydropower developments impact cultural heritage? (according to local people)
4. How can these impacts on cultural heritage be managed and incorporated into NNL strategies?

1. Importance of CH to people's wellbeing

Key themes from the FGDs:

- **Spirits**

- Myths and stories, rituals and ceremonies – considered 'intangible' by Western cultures

"He understands cultural heritage through spirits. He has shrines with his family spirits at his household"

(Bujagali-West, men's FGD)



1. Importance of CH to people's wellbeing

Key themes from the FGDs:

- **Nature**
 - Medicinal herbs, totems, sacred sites, natural resources to build shrines, bark cloth

“There are certain diseases that can only be cured with herbs”

(Kalagala-East, women's FGD)



1. Importance of CH to people's wellbeing

Key themes from the FGDs:

- **Cultural heritage changing**
 - Changed for the worse, become less important to people
 - Religion, Western culture, modernity, development projects

“Ever since the dam was constructed, everything got spoilt. It destroyed the falls and trees and other sacred sites”

(Bujagali-East, men's FGD)



1. Importance of CH to people's wellbeing

How important is cultural heritage to your wellbeing?

- Important – 46%
- Very important – 31%

“Cultural heritage is a person's identity. You need few other things to supplement one towards living a good life”

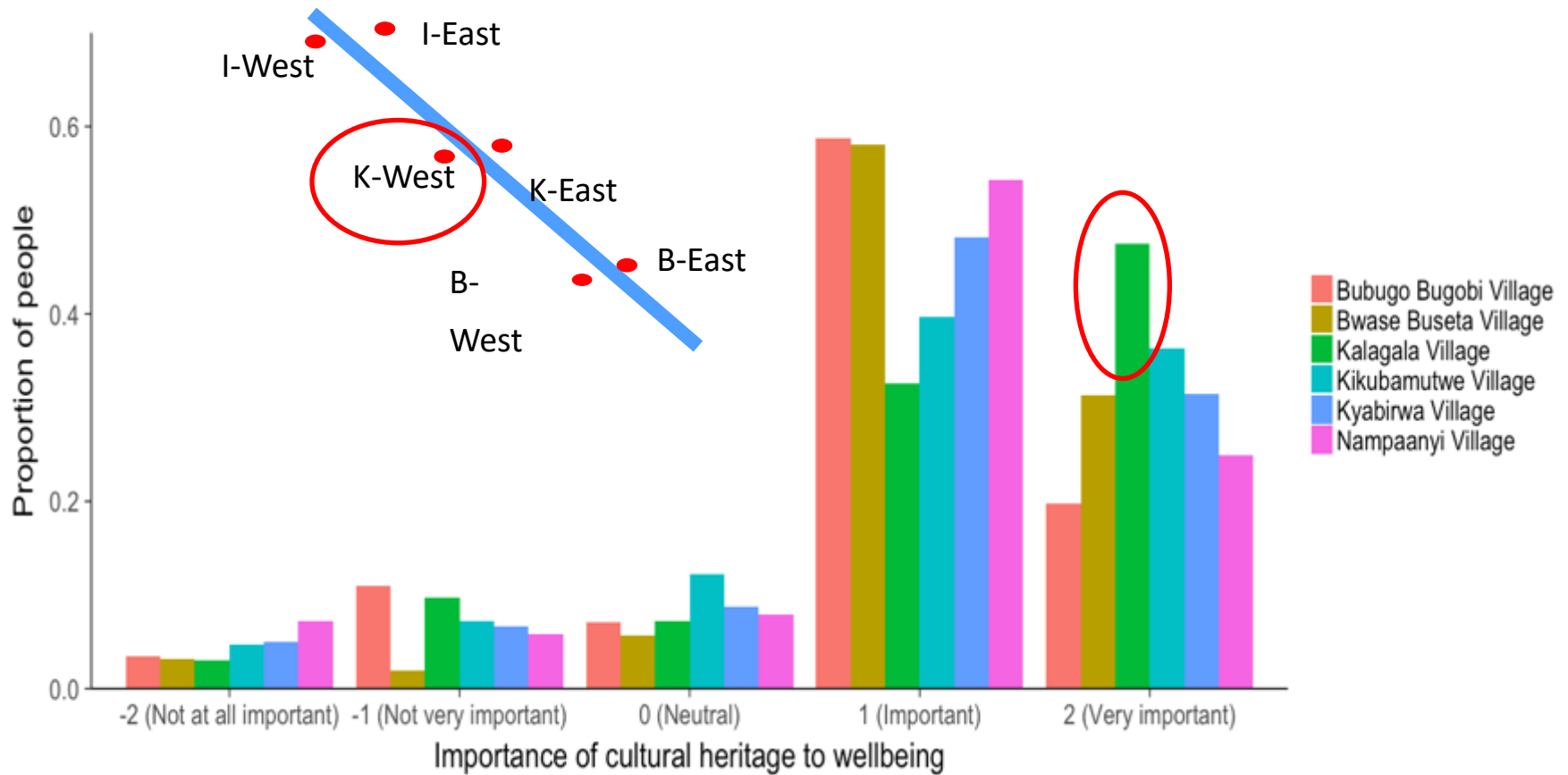
(Bujagali-East, men's FGD)

- Not at all important – 4%

“One cannot survive without things like water, food, fuelwood but they can survive without cultural heritage”

(Kalagala-East, women's FGD)

2. How does the importance vary geographically?



Kruskal-Wallis chi-squared = 26.81, df = 5, $p < 0.05$

2. How does the importance vary between groups?



Education:

- More educated respondents found cultural heritage to be less important to their wellbeing



Wealth:

- Less poor respondents found cultural heritage to be very important to their wellbeing



Age:

- No effect

2. How does the importance vary between groups?

Gender:

- **Men** found cultural heritage to be more important to their wellbeing
 - **Men** were more sad about sacred sites being destroyed; **women** tended to be more neutral
 - **Men** more forthcoming about cultural heritage
 - **Women** less willing to discuss spirits and sacred sites
- Maybe sites are personal and private women, less inclined to divulge details about them?



Cultural heritage and biodiversity offsetting

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(according to local people)
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3. How do the Hydropower projects impact CH?

- Flooding of sacred sites: waterfalls, trees, caves, stones
- Rock blasting affected spirits
- Loss of tourism at sacred sites
- Loss of access to natural resources - used for shrines, traditional arts and crafts etc.



European Investment Bank © EIB Photolibrary

“The dam has destroyed waterfalls which used to habit the spirits. The dam also destroyed all the trees where spirits used to live and the rock blasting activity chased away the spirits”

(Isimba-East, women’s FGD)

Cultural heritage and biodiversity offsetting

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4. How can these impacts on cultural heritage be managed and incorporated into NNL strategies?

4. How can impacts on CH be managed?

Bujagali:

- Engagement with spiritual leaders
- Relocation and transfer ceremonies performed
- 47% unhappy
- New site artificial and not as valuable as old site
- New site ± 2km away – too far to travel, too expensive
- 13% happy



Isimba:

- No compensation and relocation
- Spirits are angry
- Nowhere to worship spirits

4. How can impacts on CH be managed?

➤ Is compensation for lost sacred sites possible? – mixed responses

Yes:

- Provided spirits are consulted and select new site
- Correct transfer ceremonies performed

No:

- Sense of place – difficult to recreate same environment
- ‘Site specific’
- Spirits are unique

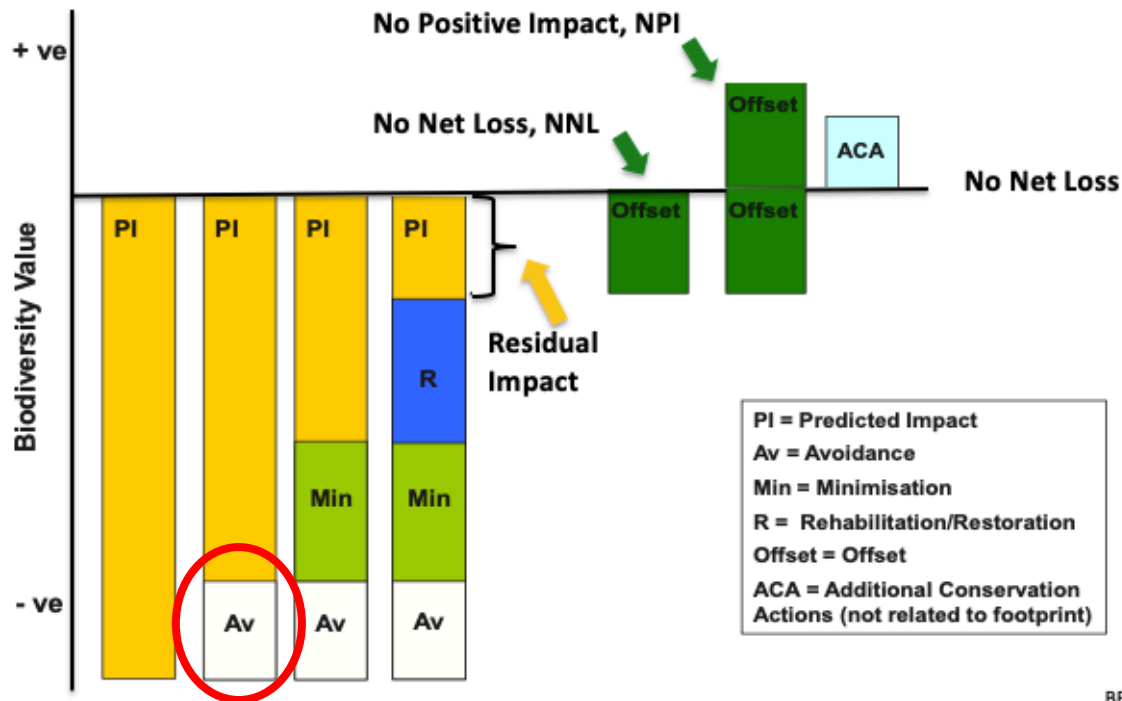


“Once the spiritual site is demolished, it will be the end and it cannot be gotten back”

(Kalagala-West: men’s FGD)

4. How can impacts on CH be managed?

- Apply mitigation hierarchy



BBOP 2013

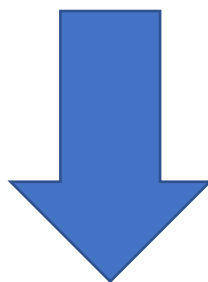
BUT

Trade-offs occur:

national economic
benefits
>
local spiritual values

4. How can impacts on CH be managed?

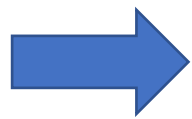
- Decisions on how to compensate people?
- Achieving **both** biodiversity NNL **and** ensuring people are ‘**no worse off**’ may not be possible
- Despite compensation efforts



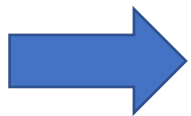
High irreplaceability of some natural features of high cultural or spiritual significance

4. How can impacts on CH be managed?

- Decisions on how to compensate people?
- Achieving **both** biodiversity NNL and ensuring people are 'no worse off' may not be possible
- Despite compensation efforts



Ignores place-based values which may really matter to people's wellbeing



High irreplaceability of some natural features of high cultural or spiritual significance



Conclusion

- Understanding cultural heritage can be difficult, complex and time consuming
 - Cultural values are hard to articulate
 - People may not be willing to share cultural knowledge easily and openly
 - Spirits and sacred sites are sensitive topics



BUT

Ignoring cultural values or failing to account for them can undermine people's **wellbeing**

Conclusion

- Taking time is vital
 - including comprehensive engagement
- Helps with improving social outcomes (and acceptability) of projects and their offsets
- Assisting with the design of **equitable NNL strategies** that **leave local people 'no worse off'**



Conclusion

Offsetting as if people people
DON'T matter

=

badly designed offsets that
risk failure

Might need an offset AND
separate social compensation
measures

People matter!



Good Practice Principles

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**ENSURING NO
NET LOSS FOR
PEOPLE AS WELL
AS BIODIVERSITY:**

GOOD PRACTICE
PRINCIPLES



Also available in French!

Thank you for listening!

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