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Global food security, biodiversity conservation and the future of agricultural intensification

Tschamtké T, Clough Y, Wanger T, Jackson L, Motzke I, Perfecto I, Vandermeer J, Whitbread A.

Biol Conserv. 2012 Jul; 151(1): 53-59

DOI: 10.1016/j.biocon.2012.01.068

 Joern Fischer, Leuphana University Lüneburg, Germany. [F1000 Ecology](#)

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RECOMMENDED

 15 Oct 2012 | [Controversial](#)

This is a very important paper providing a much needed counter-point to recent work on how to simultaneously meet the goals of sufficient food production and biodiversity conservation.

Tschamtké et al. criticize 'land sparing' {1,2} as failing to account for real-world complexity in several ways. The authors show that smallholder production is the backbone of global food security, and that much food is currently wasted – arguing that the link between the amount of global food supply and food security is only weak.

Tschamtké et al. further advocate agroecological intensification, placing a major emphasis on the ecosystem services provided by both planned and associated components of farmland biodiversity. These ecosystem services remain largely ignored in the currently popular farming of 'land sparing' versus 'land sharing'.

This paper provides an urgently needed balance to an active debate on one of the most important issues facing humanity at present.

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DOI: [10.1126/science.334.6056.593-a](#)

Disclosures

Joern Fischer published two short notes {3,4} in 2011 with the following authors of the evaluated article: Tschamtké T, Jackson L, Clough Y, Vandermeer J and Wanger TC. The article was selected solely on the basis of its scientific merits.

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