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"Questions of Importance to the Conservation of Biological Diversity: Answers from the Past"

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Paleoecological records are replete with examples of biotic responses to past climate change and human impact, but how can we use these records in the conservation of current and future biodiversity? A recently published [book] (*One Hundred Questions of Importance to the Conservation of Global Biological Diversity*) ... highlights a number of key research questions that need a temporal perspective... . However, it is noticeable that not a single contributor to this list was from the paleo-research community and that extremely few paleo-records are ever used in the development of terrestrial conservation management plans. This lack of dialogue between conservationists and the paleo-community is partially driven by a perception that the data provided by paleoecological records are purely descriptive and not of relevance to the day-to-day management and conservation of biological diversity. This paper illustrates, through a series of case-studies, how long-term ecological records (>50 years) can provide a test of predictions and assumptions of ecological processes that are directly relevant to management strategies necessary to retain biological diversity in a changing climate. (Adapted from the authors' abstract.)

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