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"Nature Conservation and the Precautionary Principle"

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The application of the precautionary principle to an area of environmental protection, such as nature conservation, requires commitment to the idea that full scientific proof of a causal link between a potentially damaging operation and a long term environmental impact is not required. Adoption of the principle in Government statements related to sustainable development should therefore be seen in this context. The paper addresses the particular case of marine fish farming in Scotland where the principle was advocated but not upheld in practice. In the light of this experience there is a need for educators and philosophers, ethicists and concerned scientists to ensure that the principle is more widely interpreted and understood.

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