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"Humans Valuing Nature: Synthesising Insights from Philosophy, Psychology and Economics"

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A rational process for assessment of environmental policy options should be based on an appreciation of how humans value nature. Increased understanding of values will also contribute to the development of appropriate ways for us to relate to and manage natural areas. Over the past two decades, environmental philosophers have examined the notion that there is an intrinsic value in nature. Economists have attempted to define and measure the market and nonmarket economic values associated with decisions concerning natural areas. Psychologists have tried to assess the extent to which people believe in an intrinsic value in nature, and have also begun to work with economists to improve nonmarket valuation techniques. I briefly review the contributions made to our understanding of natural area value by environmental philosophy, psychology and economics, and develop a model that integrates insights from these disciplines. Components in the model include cognitions, held values, assigned values and various modes of value expression. I make recommendations for future validation, development and use of the model.

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