

Meredith Gore

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Dr. Meredith Gore is an Associate Professor in the Department of Fisheries & Wildlife and the School of Criminal Justice. She is a social scientist leading inquiry and applying knowledge to improve the effectiveness of environmental governance and reduce risk to people and the environment. Gore is motivated by: 1) generating knowledge to help address conservation problems, 2) improving conservation social science methods, and 3) enhancing understanding of risk concepts and their application to conservation. She uses interdisciplinary approaches to build understanding about how declines in natural resources are both a cause and a consequence of

Global Research Interests

Meredith's research interests include: risk perception and public support for wildlife conservation, gender-in natural resource management, conservation criminology, compliance and security, corruption in conservation, community-based management; interdisciplinary approaches for natural resource decision-making, and risk communication.

Description of Research Proposal:

Increased globalization of illicit trade in natural resources threatens the efficacy of sustainable development, deprives developing economies of billions of dollars in lost revenue opportunities, and fuels sociopolitical conflict. The United Nations calls this increasing trend an "environmental crime (EC) crisis. *The United States' (US) interests in development assistance are undermined, and security interests are threatened, by ECs.* A 2013 US Presidential Executive Order recognized effects of natural resource trafficking on US interests and mandated 17 agencies to reduce risks to the US and its allies from ECs. One strategy to address these major issues is to develop a deep understanding of the causes and consequences of human behavior that underlie EC activities, particularly related to risk perception. Risk perception can influence individuals' behavioral decisions about ECs, EC crime control, and EC-related behavior change. Unfortunately, we know little about risk perception in this context. Her research goal is to develop theory that explains *why* different people perceive environmental risk differently. Proposed objectives are to: (1) develop and test a new theory of environmental risk perception, (2) examine how different groups of people spatially identify, behave, and prioritize risk associated with environmental crime, and (3) investigate effects of participatory environmental risk mapping on risk perception and behavior.

Region/Country of research:

Madagascar, Namibia, Mozambique