Where now for the environment movement?

Weathercocks and signposts ten years on

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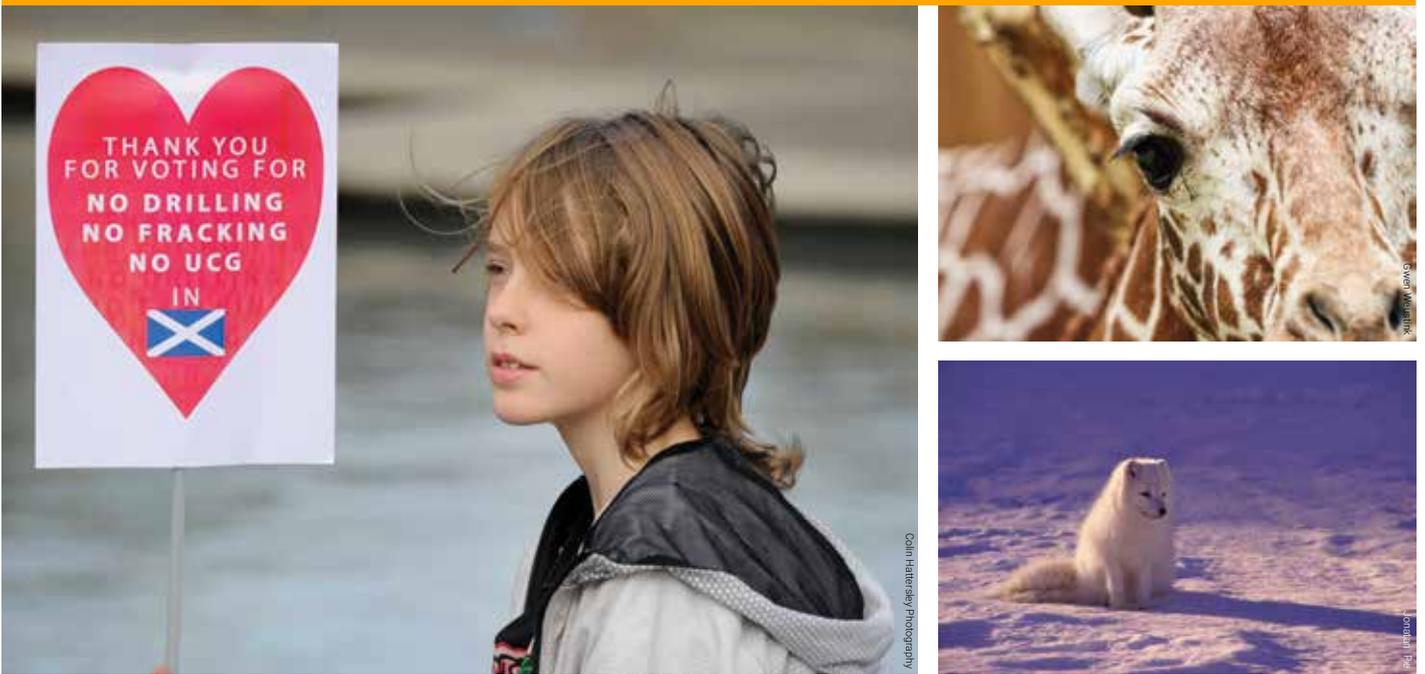
Note on author

This essay was written by Tom Crompton. Tom worked for environmental NGOs, including Greenpeace International, RSPB, WWF International and WWF-UK for eighteen years. He left WWF-UK in 2015 to help launch Common Cause Foundation, which he now co-directs.

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Context

It's ten years since the publication of *Weathercocks and Signposts: The Environment Movement at a Crossroads*.[1] **This report raised probing questions about whether the strategies deployed by the mainstream environmental movement in the UK were proportional to the scale of challenges we confront.** It argued that there were fundamental reasons why these strategies were unlikely to deliver the scale of change needed. Indeed, it went further, advancing the case that these strategies might be inadvertently undermining the very basis of public support and engagement upon which we rely to drive transformational change. These arguments are as pertinent today as they were a decade ago, while the evidence base underpinning them is now even more compelling. On the one hand, the scale and urgency of environmental challenges is now known on many counts to be even greater than previously thought; on the other, **the inextricable links between the environmental crisis and wider political change have become ever more obvious.**

This essay updates the arguments developed in *Weathercocks and Signposts*, highlighting some of the ways in which these have strengthened since 2008.

I wrote *Weathercocks and Signposts* while working for WWF-UK, hoping that this would help to bring greater focus to a debate that I was having with friends across many different environmental organisations. But it quickly became apparent that this was a debate which had, necessarily, to involve people working for organisations focused on other 'causes' – from human rights to public health, and from international poverty to animal rights. The tendency to define non-governmental organisations (NGOs) through the 'causes' upon which these focus can be problematic. It can frustrate an understanding of the fundamental motivations for public expressions of concern about social and environmental issues, and it can make work to build systemic public support for action more difficult. As this essay will highlight, such public concern is inspired by particular values, and these values cut across diverse 'causes'.

I am now employed by Common Cause Foundation (CCF), which takes this broader perspective as the departure point for its work. But this essay is written in appreciation of CCF's origins within WWF-UK, and with a feeling of particular fellowship towards the people who work in environmental NGOs.

Where is environmentalism now?

The birth of modern environmentalism is often traced to the publication, in 1962, of Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*.[2] This was a book that led US President John F Kennedy to order his Science Advisory Committee to examine pesticide misuse, and to subsequently launch the Environmental Protection Agency. **Carson's mass appeal, and therefore the political influence of her work, was built upon an expression of 'deep and imperative' meaning.**[3] She mobilised popular concern about the impacts of pesticide around people's love for the more-than-human world.

Despite its successes, premising environmental concern on deep and imperative meaning left environmentalists vulnerable to the charge that we were motivated by a high-minded idealism, expressed through various forms of self-denial that only educationally-privileged and economically secure people could be expected to embrace. It was a charge that picked at an existential insecurity that many of us, myself included, experienced – as folk with university educations and (fairly) stable jobs.

This insecurity could be lessened by aligning environmentalism with what were seen as more universal concerns. **The presumed primacy of**

selfish desires – a view of human nature grossly exaggerated by the neoliberal, or free-market capitalist, worldview – came to colonise mainstream environmental thinking. As one consultant, contracted by a consortium of environmental NGOs to review their communication strategies, wrote in 2006:

"An accurate basic assumption might be that most people are essentially selfish… Any benefits from environmental behaviour, and there should be benefits from every environmental behaviour, must be tangible, immediate and specific to the person carrying out the behaviour."[4]

Although **decades of social psychology show this perspective to be fundamentally flawed,** in embracing it we found a route to freeing ourselves from accusations of middle-class elitism: public support for environmental

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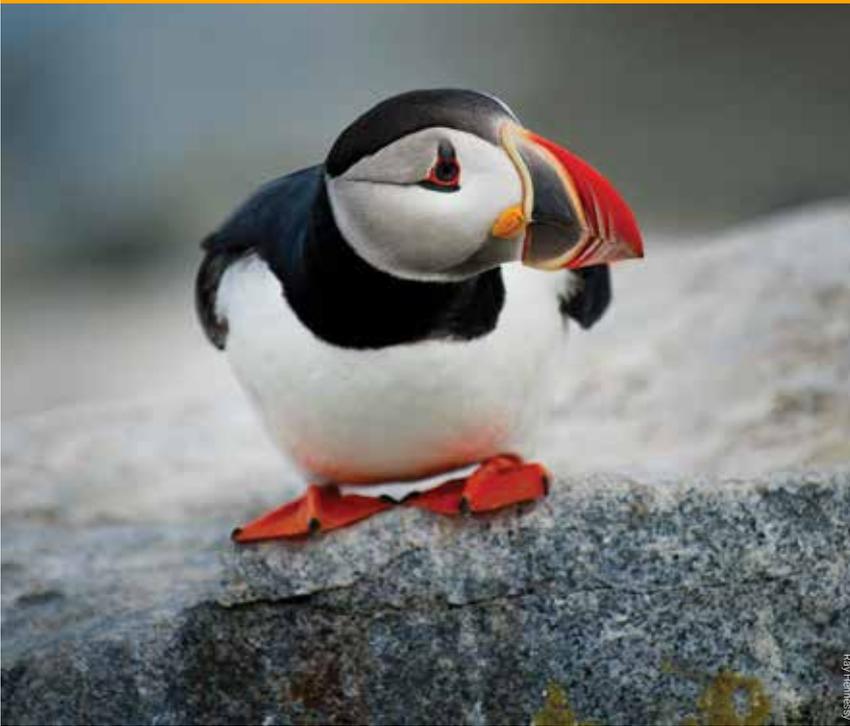
action could now be pursued obliquely, by creating new opportunities for 'sustainable consumption'.

At the time that *Weathercocks and Signposts* was published, a few months after the subprime mortgage crisis in the US, but before the banking crisis really took hold, it may have seemed plausible that public environmental concern could be grafted onto the pursuit of self-interest. Green was heralded as 'the new black', simple and painless behaviours were promoted as conferring social status, you could 'have it all' through 'fractional ownership' of holiday homes or performance cars, and rich people were looked up to in expectation that they could lead new consumer trends by embracing 'deeper luxury'.[5]

And if appeals to self-interest didn't lead to mass public demand for political action, that could also be accommodated. Public support for political change was pursued by highlighting the economic value of the

natural world and the 'services' that it provides. **Many of us working in mainstream environmental NGOs joined in with efforts to help put a 'price on nature'.**

Weathercocks and Signposts argued that **there was a danger, implicit in this new environmental 'pragmatism', of our misunderstanding the basis for people's environmental concern.**[6]

Certainly, the report accepted that it was not viable for environmentalism to rely narrowly upon mobilising people's aesthetic appreciation of the natural world or to 'return' to an exclusive focus on 'deep and imperative' meaning to be found in love for nature. Rather, it argued that **we must situate environmental campaigning in a broader context, connecting with wider motivations for expressing concern.** It called for a new confidence in focusing environmental communications and campaigns on a coherent and mutually-supportive set of values that *included* love for the natural world, but that

also offered far wider scope for connecting with people in ways that may seem – superficially at least – to be unconnected with environmental issues. It suggested working with the importance that most people place on connecting with others and building friendship and community, people's love for other people and the wider non-human world, the value that people place on social justice and equality, and the impulse to be self-directed and creative. These are values that social psychologists call 'intrinsic', though I refer to them throughout this essay as 'compassionate'.[7]

Weathercocks and Signposts, then, advocated communicating and campaigning on the basis of a deep and imperative love for the natural world as *one of many* roots to inspiring environmental concern. But it also highlighted *definite limits* to the kind of arguments that we should make. It made the case that we should seek to widen public support for our aims by appealing to some reasons for expressing concern, while being careful to avoid others. This is because **environmental concern is undermined through appeals to financial success, social status or public image**. These are values that social psychologists call 'extrinsic', though I refer to them throughout this essay as 'self-interest' values.[8]

Such insights lead to the uncomfortable conclusion that, in our anxiety to broaden the case for environmental action beyond a focus on deep and imperative appeals to people's love of nature, we are at risk of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. **In pursuing a new environmental 'pragmatism' we may inadvertently contribute to eroding the very basis of public concern upon which we ultimately rely.**

This essay brings to bear new evidence accumulated over the last decade to refresh and restate the case for a values-based approach to engaging and communicating around environmental issues. It also identifies ways to communicate and campaign differently in the hope that, working in this way, we can indeed transform and massively scale up the responses to current crises, by mobilising people through what motivates them in a deep and sustained way – their 'compassionate' values.

Love trumps money

Weathercocks and Signposts was rooted in an understanding of human nature. This understanding acknowledges the scope for people to behave in line with 'self-interest' values: to compete with others, to

James Pritchett

seek social status, and to pursue security in material possessions. Indeed, kept in balance, these values are essential aspects of our psychological make-up.

There are, however, other – almost universal – aspects of human nature, which most people hold to be significantly more important. These 'compassionate' values are peripheral to the neoliberal worldview. This is undoubtedly one reason why (as I'll discuss below) people tend to underestimate the importance that others place on them.[9] Strong social norms for 'self-interest' values also help to explain why people often try to present their more altruistic or public-spirited behaviours in ways that would lead others to assume these arose in pursuit of self-interest. In other words, people are often happy for their altruism to masquerade as self-interest.[10]

A great deal is known about people's value priorities through demographically representative surveys. In 88 of the 89 countries in which data is available,

an average person reports attaching greater importance to 'compassionate' values than 'self-interest' values.[11] This priority that people place on 'compassionate' values cuts across gender, political orientation, and a person's perception of how well they manage on their income. **The prioritisation of 'compassionate' values by most people provides a powerful opportunity for building public support for environmental action.**

Certainly, these aggregate national surveys conceal the fact that a significant minority of people (around 26% of people in the UK, for example) do place more importance on 'self-interest' values than on 'compassionate' values. But this should not be taken as implying that 'compassionate' values are somehow inaccessible to this minority, or that these people are narrowly focused on living life in pursuit of their own self-interest.

On the contrary, inviting people who attach unusually high importance to 'self-interest' values to reflect

'The prioritisation of 'compassionate' values by most people provides a powerful opportunity for building public support for positive action.'

briefly on the personal importance that they attach to 'compassionate' values such as 'self-acceptance', 'broadmindedness', or 'affiliation to friends and family' significantly deepens their social and environmental concern. Brief **orientation towards 'compassionate' values** (even ones not explicitly related to social or environmental causes) **leads people to express deeper concern about issues such as climate change, child mortality in developing countries, loss of the British countryside or child poverty** in the UK. It also strengthens their belief that action should be taken to address these things.[12]

We underestimate our fellow citizens

More recent research finds that **people typically underestimate each other.** In the UK, for example, 77% of people underestimate the importance that a typical fellow citizen places on 'compassionate' values and overestimate the importance that a typical fellow citizen places on 'self-interest' values.[13] In its work on values, CCF refers to this as the 'perception gap'.

The **'perception gap' matters, because people for whom this gap is narrower are more likely to feel responsible for their community, to believe that it is important to volunteer, and to show social or environmental concern.** For example, such people are more likely to agree that local government should take further action to address climate change, are more supportive of public money being spent on insulating homes, are more supportive of greening public space, and are more likely to oppose airport expansion. **Finding ways to convey a more accurate perception**

'Finding ways to convey a more accurate perception of what others value presents an important environmental strategy.'

of what others value, including through facilitating dialogue between strangers about what they value in life, **presents an important environmental strategy.**

## Soul-searching for environmentalists

The evidence presented by *Weathercocks and Signposts*, and since elaborated through work done by CCF, is as pertinent now as it was in 2008. Here I'll highlight three key elements to this appraisal of many environmental communications and campaigns.

1. WE DON'T WORK CONSISTENTLY WITH THE VALUES THAT MOTIVATE ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

'Compassionate' values dependably inspire expressions of social and environmental concern.[14] Moreover, when motivated in line with these values, a

person is more likely to stick with a course of action; his or her actions are more likely to propagate into wider commitment to other ways of expressing care; and these actions are likely to contribute positively to his or her wellbeing.[15] It doesn't seem to matter which 'compassionate' values are used: sometimes it will be more effective to appeal to people's self-direction or sense of community rather than appealing directly to environmental concern. Nor does the context in which these values are invoked seem to be important. In experiments, it has been found that communicating about *the rights of disabled people* in a way that connects with 'compassionate' values of self-direction, freedom of choice and social justice, is *just* as effective in leading people to support action for biodiversity conservation as connecting with people's sense of the beauty and inherent value of the natural world.[16] And the reverse is also true: orienting people towards the

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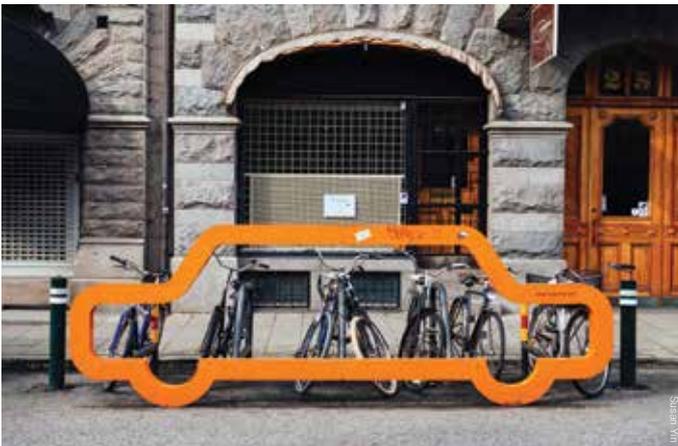
beauty of the natural world deepens concern for the rights of people with disability.

On the other hand, studies find that communicating by invoking 'self-interest' values, such as emphasising the financial savings that may arise from an environmental action, undermines environmental concern.[17] This is because 'self-interest' values are held in a 'see-saw' relationship with 'compassionate' values.[18] *Repeatedly* engaging concerns about financial benefit likely contributes to deepening an audience's commitment to these values in a durable way, while diminishing their support for environmental action – also in a durable way. This is why we should **avoid building the case for environmentally-relevant action on financial imperatives, social status, or public image.**

Environmental NGOs often encourage people to support environmental actions for a diverse range of reasons – indeed, we may highlight a range of reasons in a single campaign or communication. We may seek to promote such actions as being financially prudent; time-saving; socially responsible; high-status; or 'the healthy option'. Our expectation is that public support can be broadened by throwing diverse reasons for supporting environmental action at people, in the hope that 'something will stick'. Yet experiments have found that **appealing to both 'compassionate' and 'self-interest' reasons** in this way **is as ineffective as appealing to 'self-interest' reasons alone.**[19]

2. WE INADVERTENTLY UNDERMINE PEOPLE'S AUTONOMY

Environmental NGOs are sensitive to the charge of coercing people into changing the way that they

live, and it is perhaps partly for this reason that we often place particular emphasis on voluntary action through, for example, consumer choice, rather than regulatory protections.

But it is not inevitable that regulatory protections are seen as coercive and burdensome. This is an unhelpful perception that we could help to mitigate. Furthermore, the alternative to such protections, including reliance upon voluntary behaviours and changes in consumer preferences, are often promoted in ways that are likely to *further undermine* self-directed responses to environmental challenges.

Regulatory protections are needed, as are campaigns for such protections. Environmental laws can be

framed as the best way to protect the public interest – and to safeguard everyone's welfare (particularly that of the most vulnerable).

But rather than framing the principle of regulation in this way, we often perceive public opposition to regulation as essentially immutable and invest energy in promoting alternative voluntary actions. Unfortunately, this is a capitulation that risks further deepening mistrust of regulatory protections, not least because people then see that even those organisations which might be expected to be the first to step up and advocate these protections are failing to do so.

It has not always been the case that environmental protections were met with resentment or mistrust, and

'Communicating by invoking 'self-interest' values, such as emphasising the financial savings that may arise from an environmental action, undermines environmental concern.'

acceptance of these could be promoted by seeking opportunities to celebrate the crucial role that such protections play. We can derive courage to work in this way from that powerful insight that most people across the world place particular priority on 'compassionate' values.

So an emphasis on voluntary action is problematic insofar as it threatens to erode commitment to regulatory protections. But there is a second problem, inherent to the way in which we often promote voluntary action.

It is ironic that, although perhaps pursued in part to deflect accusations that environmental NGOs seek to trample over cherished freedoms (to drive, to fly, to eat meat, etc.), **an emphasis on voluntary action may actually erode people's feelings of autonomy.**

A programme of work within social psychology, called self-determination theory, distinguishes between autonomous and non-autonomous action. Non-autonomous action is enforced. This enforcement can take many forms. Most obviously, enforcement may be achieved through punitive measures – for example, fines for environmentally damaging behaviour. But

it may also be exerted in other ways – for example, implicit moral pressure, or the threat of social censure, or even the promise of financial reward.

Motivationally speaking there's little to distinguish these means of enforcement – each undermines people's autonomy and each is found to be (at best) fickle and (at worst) counter-productive when it comes to motivating a sustained commitment to living in a more environmentally responsible way. So when exhorted to make the 'right choice', people are often, contrary to the rhetoric, having their autonomy suppressed.

However, research has repeatedly found that **when people pursue environmental actions for more autonomous reasons** – for example, because they want to help or connect with others or express their creativity – **they are more likely to stick at these behaviours,** and these behaviours are more likely to propagate to other environmental actions.[20]

There are, then, subtle ways in which communications or campaigns can inadvertently erode people's autonomy. But this is not inevitable. Rather, these

problems arise as a result of the way in which these choices are promoted – including by environmental NGOs themselves. **The danger is that we leave people feeling brow-beaten** about the way they heat their homes and how warm they have them; whether they bath or shower, and – if they shower – how long they spend in there; whether they run the tap as they clean their teeth; whether they leave their TVs on standby after they've watched them; whether they switch the light out as they leave the room; what coffee they drink and what kind of cup they drink it from; and the days of the week that they eat meat.

We constantly **remind people of 'simple actions to help save the planet' – as though the intrusive nature of these lists of actions can somehow be mitigated by emphasising how simple and painless they are.**[21] It's akin to coaxing a recalcitrant child to eat her sprouts by telling her how small they are and how, if she barely chews them and swallows them quickly, she needn't notice the taste. This is not conducive to developing her love of sprouts – or for that matter her desire to try other hitherto untasted vegetables for the first time.

Responding to **this problem requires an important shift in emphasis – away from campaigning on the specifics of particular behaviours or shopping choices, and towards nurturing environmental concern rooted in 'compassionate' values** – because this leads people to *want* to embrace different choices. When people *want* to embrace such change, the actual behaviours are easily identified. Most people know what these are, or can easily check if they want to, and this awareness will rapidly spread as uptake widens. Providing more information about these choices could sometimes be helpful. But it is not the most useful thing to be doing. The challenge is to nurture the motivation to do *anything* differently, rooted in a sense of autonomy. **Providing endless lists of simple things that people can do, or advice for the conscientious shopper, is to overlook the prior and more pressing question of how to inspire people to express their care in the first place.**

3. WE ARE TOO READY TO SETTLE FOR WHAT IS POLITICALLY FEASIBLE TODAY

Although we may not choose to frame it in these terms, many of us have given up on helping to deepen public appetite for ambitious political change. **Our focus has turned to working with what's possible within the constraints of today's political opportunities.** As a result, our perception of the role of members and supporters has subtly changed: we have increasingly come to view supporters as a source of financial revenue, rather than a means of applying collective political pressure.

But **without an engaged and vocal supporter base, it is more difficult to challenge the power of those in positions of political influence.** As a result, it becomes still more attractive to focus on interventions that are politically palatable.

'Providing endless lists of simple things that people can do is to overlook the more pressing question of how to inspire people to express their care in the first place.'

Jeremy Bishop

Identifying these more politically palatable interventions requires us to triangulate between public acceptability, political will, and environmental need. While there is some scope for today's public concern and today's political will to nudge one another in helpful directions this will not create momentum for action that is proportionate to the environmental challenges we face. Such ambitious action is simply too remote from what is politically feasible in the absence of a clamour of public demand for change.

Nowhere is reliance on the coincidence of environmental imperative and current political priorities more clearly illustrated than our frequent appeal to the economic case for action.

This case comes in various guises. Most obviously:

- the business case for the more efficient use of natural resources
- opportunities for export-led growth in new environmental technologies
- future economic losses averted through environmental action today
- contributions that environmental services make to the national economy

But economic analysis is of limited help. This is partly because, **especially in the case of a policy arena that is as politically fraught as the environment, prior ideological commitment trumps economic analysis.** Economic analysis is either used retrospectively to support a policy position to which political commitment has already been made, or it is simply disregarded. The economic case *for* on-shore wind has

not swept away obstructive planning policies, and the economic case *against* new nuclear has not dimmed the UK government's enthusiasm for this technology. Were these policy priorities to be reversed under a future government, much would doubtless be made of those economic arguments. But such a change would be driven in the first instance by ideological commitment rather than the persuasive influence of 'objective' economic analysis.[22] It is here, then, that the more important debate is to be found.

If the economic case for environmental action in the UK was ever to prove its mettle, this should have been in the months following the financial crash of 2008.

Austerity, championed on the grounds of enduring pain today in order to avert worse things tomorrow, presents a logic that might be expected to extend to serious action to avert the future economic impacts of climate change, while seizing the business opportunities that

it represents. From the perspective of the economic case for environmental action, it seems perverse that austerity coincided with a period of roll-back of environmental regulation.[23]

It is often argued that the economic case for environmental action must be made even more forcefully. But there are tensions between the pursuit of economic growth and the pursuit of environmental protections, which arise from the antagonism between 'self-interest' and 'compassionate' values. From the point of view of this understanding, making a song and dance about the economic case for environmental action is recognised as counter-productive.

Commitment to environmental action is eroded by insistence upon a compelling economic case for such action – because in our insistence on this point, we tacitly promote the pre-eminence of economic concerns over the creation of a safe and just environmental space within which living things can thrive.

As seen above, the financial case for action is one that is built on 'self-interest' values. As a result, **drawing attention to the economic case for action on biodiversity conservation leads to weaker intention to support an environmental NGO than drawing attention to a person's inherent love for the more-than-human world.** (This result holds even among people who attach unusually high importance to extrinsic values, such as 'financial success'.)[24]

In other words, **in privileging the economic case for environmental action over other imperatives,**

we are likely to erode the very foundation of public support for environmental action. This is an insight well understood by many NGOs working on poverty or human rights which recognise that an emphasis on the economic imperatives for action to address social injustices or inequalities devalues the people whose interests they are working to promote.[25]

Five key opportunities for creating a step-change in the environmental movement

There are ways in which our environmental community could work more effectively to inspire the broad-based and durable movements that will create pressure for proportionate action on environmental problems. In its work over the last several years, CCF has developed, tested and extended these recommendations. They include the five I summarise here:

Aaron Burden
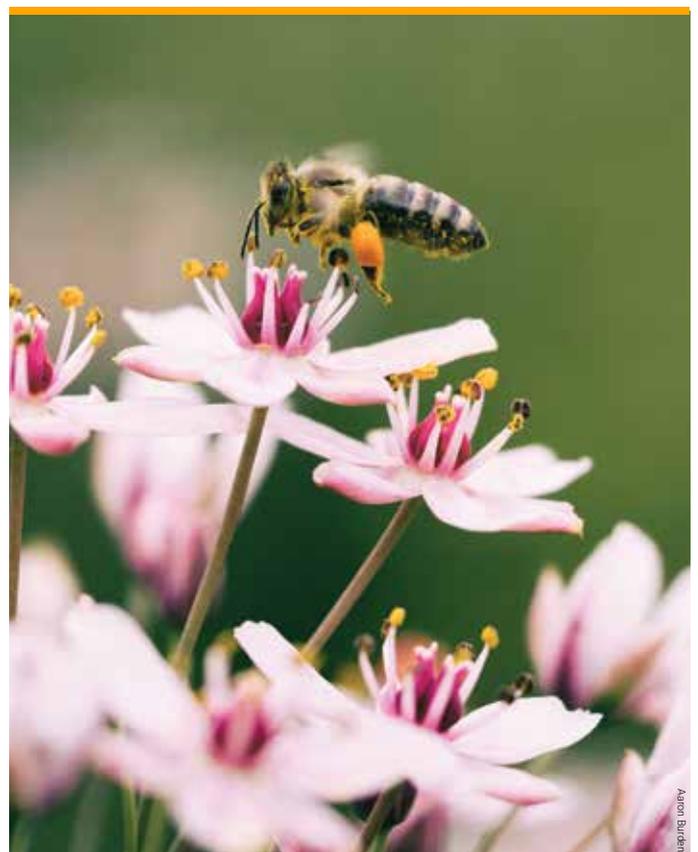
1. TRUST AND EMPOWER PEOPLE

The best hope for systemic and durable change is to engage people *as though* they are interested and committed to helping make things better. This is a powerful strategy for the simple reason that it is true: everyone holds these values to be important at some level, and most people accord them particular priority.

It is helpful to provide facts about the contribution that specific actions can make to addressing environmental problems. But it is more important that we encourage and normalise simple expressions of the concern that most people feel – without becoming too hung-up about the material impact of these expressions of concern. This is more likely to happen if environmental NGOs **invest effort in** *facilitating conversations between* **supporters, rather than** *conveying information to* **supporters.**

Such conversations will help participants to *experience* the truism that most people value the same things as most other people. These are things like friendship, responsibility and helpfulness: concerns that cut across stark political divides on some key issues (including Brexit), and that spill over into environmental concern.[26]

2. ROOT CAMPAIGNS AND COMMUNICATIONS IN 'COMPASSIONATE' VALUES

Research shows that environmental appeals rooted in 'compassionate' values are likely to be more effective – even among people who place relatively high importance on 'self-interest' values (and relatively low importance on 'compassionate' values).

Chris Johnson

There is a very broad palette of 'compassionate' values to choose from, and there is good empirical evidence that it matters little which of these values we use.[27] In other words, **communications need not specifically invoke environmental concern in order to encourage and normalise the values upon which environmental concern is most dependably built.** The important thing is that we stick to 'compassionate' values.

The creative flair of gifted communicators and campaigners then comes to the fore in tailoring a particular communication, framed in terms of 'compassionate' values, to resonate with a particular audience. This is a process which is likely to have at least as much to do with an audience's background, age, interests, etc., as it is with the particular 'compassionate' values which one seeks to use.[28]

3. AVOID APPEALING TO 'SELF-INTEREST' VALUES

As discussed, it's important to **avoid appealing to values of financial success, social status or public image. Studies find that these are less effective in motivating expressions of environmental concern** – even when communicating with the minority of people who attach particular importance to 'self-interest' values.[29]

4. DEVELOP COLLABORATIONS BEYOND THE ENVIRONMENTAL SECTOR

An understanding of the ways in which environmental concern can be mobilised by engaging 'compassionate' values that may at first seem unrelated to the environment opens up extensive new opportunities for collaboration.

In view of their limited resources, environmental **NGOs need to enlist what help they can in strengthening the values that underpin public commitment to environmental action.** The work of CCF shows that this is possible, even in collaboration with organisations that have no formal remit to work or communicate on environmental issues, and that working in this way will create multiple benefits – for example, promoting community cohesion and wellbeing.[30] A commitment to celebrate the 'compassionate' values that underpin environmental concern, and to follow where these lead, is exemplified by a campaign run by the Australian Conservation Federation (ACF) urging its community to support a change in the law to allow same-sex couples to marry. The person who orchestrated this campaign has shared her insights on the CCF blog.[31]

5. CALL-OUT PUBLIC POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS THAT EMBED 'SELF-INTEREST' VALUES

We are operating in a landscape filled with audio and visual messages which engage and exercise particular values. Such messaging permeates the spaces that most of us occupy; on public transport, radio, social media, and in our workplaces. **Many factors that serve to strengthen 'self-interest' values in society, and that therefore erode public concern and action for environmental and other problems, should be challenged by civil society more broadly.**
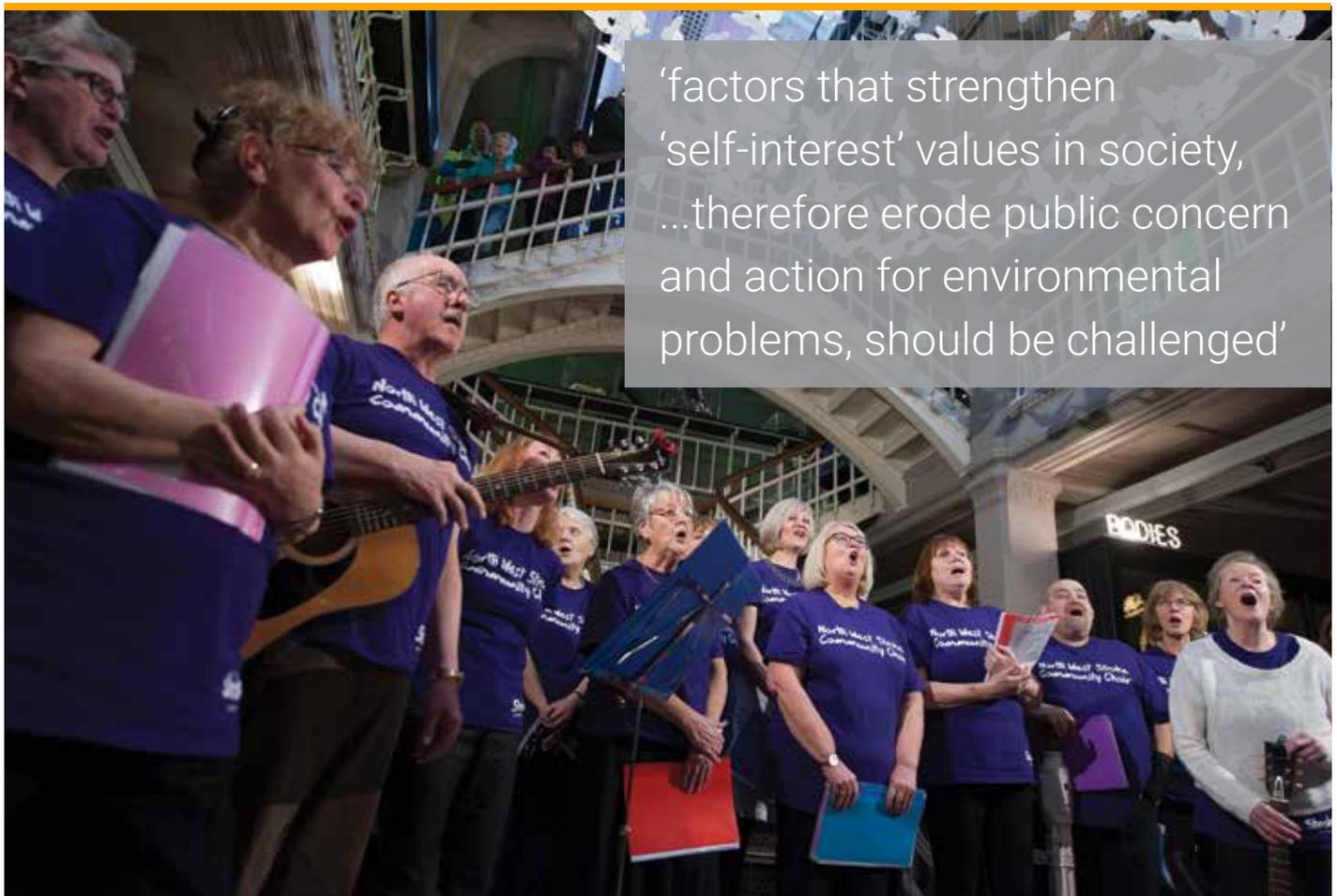
Here, by way of example, are three pervasive factors:

• advertising – especially where this targets children

• obsessive use of economic performance indicators as measures of social progress

• celebrity culture, particularly where this ascribes social status to conspicuous consumption

These are factors that are likely to have a profound effect on people's support for the aims of a very wide range of different groups working in the public interest, including environmental NGOs. They are issues which 'fall between the cracks', given the way the third sector is currently structured, around discrete 'causes'.

It will fall to environmental NGOs – as much as any other – to begin to convene the kind of collaborations that would be needed to launch campaigns to counter the impacts of these factors.

'factors that strengthen 'self-interest' values in society, ...therefore erode public concern and action for environmental problems, should be challenged'

Notes & References

[1] WWF (2008) *Weathercocks and Signposts: The Environment Movement at a Crossroads*. Available at: http://valuesandframes.org/resources/CCF_report_weathercocks_and_signposts.pdf (accessed on 15 April, 2018).

[2] Carson, R. (1962/1965) *Silent Spring*. Penguin, London.

[3] *Ibid*., p.121.

[4] Hounsham, S. (2006) *Painting the Town Green: How to Persuade People to be Environmentally Friendly*. Green Engage. (Quote at p.139).

[5] 'Fractional ownership' was a way of enjoying a high-consumption lifestyle without actually needing to buy outright the material things necessary for this. This was heralded as a more sustainable route to owning performance cars, holiday homes, or even expensive handbags. For further discussion, see *Weathercocks and Signposts*, p. 20. On the role of the rich in driving new consumer trends, see *Deeper Luxury: Quality and Style when the World Matters*, published by WWF-UK in 2007. Available at: http://assets.wwf.org.uk/downloads/luxury_report.pdf (accessed on 15 April 2018).

[6] Although defended on grounds of 'pragmatism', it is moot to ask whether responses that are politically feasible in the short term are necessarily 'pragmatic'. Perhaps a more thorough-going pragmatism would demand change proportionate to the profound environmental challenges that we confront.

[7] CCF has variously used the academic terms 'intrinsic' and 'self-transcendent' values, and the more accessible, and perhaps memorable, phrase 'compassionate' values (which is not used in the academic literature). It is important to recognise, though, that these values are about more than just compassion: they include, for example, values items such as 'broadmindedness', 'a world of beauty', and 'honesty'.

[8] CCF has variously used the academic terms 'extrinsic' and 'self-enhancement' values. The phrase 'self-interest' values, used here, is not apparently used in the academic literature.

[9] Common Cause Foundation (2016) *Perceptions Matter: The Common Cause UK Values Survey*, London: Common Cause Foundation.

[10] Further discussion of this point see *ibid*., p.26

[11] For discussion of the extant data on people's own values, see Common Cause Foundation and Co-operatives UK (2017) *The international prevalence of co-operative values.* Available at: https://www.uk.coop/sites/default/files/uploads/attachments/the_international_prevalence_of_cooperative_values.pdf (accessed on 15 April, 2018). Only in Rwanda does a citizen, on average, place greater importance on 'self-interest' than 'compassionate' values. Note that such results do not apparently arise as a result of biases in the way that people report their values. For further discussion of this point, see *op.cit.* 9, p.13.

[12] Chilton, P., Crompton, T., Kasser, T., Maio, G. & Nolan, A. (2012) *Communicating bigger-than-self-problems to extrinsically-oriented audiences.* Godalming, Surrey: WWF-UK. Available at: http://valuesandframes.org/resources/CCF_report_extrinsically_oriented_audiences.pdf (accessed on 15 April 2018).

[13] This 'perception gap' does not apparently arise as a result of reporting biases (*op.cit.* 9, p.13). See also: Hanel, P.H., Wolfradt, U., Lins de Holanda Coelho, G., Wolf, L.J., Vilar, R., Monteiro, R.P., Gouveia, V.V., Crompton, T. & Maio, G.R., (2018). The perception of family, city, and country values is often biased. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology,* 49(5), 831-850.

[14] Baker, S., Thompson, K.E., Engelken, J. & Huntley K., (2004). Mapping the values driving organic food choice: Germany vs the UK. *European Journal of Marketing, 38*(8), 995-1012; Brunsø, K., Scholderer, J. & Grunert, K. (2004). Testing relationships between values and food-related lifestyle: results from two European countries. *Appetite, 43*(2), 195-205; Caprara, G.V., & Steca, P. (2007). Prosocial agency: The contribution of values and self-efficacy beliefs to prosocial behaviour across ages. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 26*(3), 220–241; Cohrs, J.C., Maes, J., Moschner, B. & Kielmann, S. (2007). Determinants of human rights attitudes and behaviour: a comparison and integration of psychological perspectives. *Political Psychology, 28*(4), 441-470; Cohrs, J.C., Moschner, B., Maes, J. & Kielmann, S. (2005). Personal values and attitudes toward war. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology, 11*(3), 293-312; Davidov, E., Meuleman, B., Billiet, J. & Schmidt, P. (2008). Values and support for Immigration: a cross-country comparison. *European Sociological Review, 24*(5), 583-599; Degenhardt, L. (2002). Why do people act in sustainable ways? Results of an empirical survey of lifestyle pioneers. In P. Schmuck & P.W. Schultz (Eds.), *Psychology of sustainable development* (pp. 123–147). Dordrecht, Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers; Dietz, T., Kalof, L. & Stern, P.C. (2002). Gender, Values, and Environmentalism. *Social Science Quarterly, 83*(1), 353–364; Doran, C.J. (2009). The role of personal values in fair trade consumption. *Journal of Business Ethics, 84*(4), 549-563; Dreezensa, E., Martijna, C., Tenbültb, P., Koka, G. & de Vriesb, N. (2005). Food and values: an examination of values underlying attitudes toward genetically modified and organically grown food products. *Appetite, 44*(1), 115-122; Duriez, B., Vansteenkiste, M., Soenens, B. & De Witte, H. (2007). The social costs of extrinsic relative to intrinsic goal pursuits: their relation with social dominance and racial and ethnic prejudice. *Journal of Personality, 75*(4), 757-782; Feather, N.T. & McKee, I.R. (2008). Values and prejudice: predictors of attitudes towards Australian Aborigines. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 60*(2), 80-90; Feather, N.T. (2004). Value correlates of ambivalent attitudes toward gender relations. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 30*(1), 3-12; Fischer, R. & Hanke, K. (2009). Are societal values linked to global peace and conflict? *Peace and Conflict, 15*(3), 227-248; Grønhøj, A. & Thøgersen, J. (2009). Like father, like son? Intergenerational transmission of values, attitudes, and behaviours in the environmental domain. *Journal of Environmental Psychology, 1*(2),

105–126; Haider-Markel, D.P. & Joslyn, M.R. (2008). Beliefs about the origins of homosexuality and support for gay rights: an empirical test of attribution theory. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 72*(2), 291-310; Hall, D.L., Matz, D.C. & Wood, W. (2010, February). Why don't we practice what we preach? A meta-analytic review of religious racism. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 14*(1), 126-139; Homer, P.M., & Kahle, L.R. (1988). A structural equation test of the value-attitude-behavior hierarchy. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(4), 638–646; Hopper, J. R., & McCarl-Nielsen, J. (1991). Recycling as altruistic behavior. Normative and behavioral strategies to expand participation in a community recycling program. *Environment and Behavior, 23*(2), 195–220; Lieserowitz, A. (2006). Climate change risk perception and policy preferences: the role of affect, imagery and values. *Climatic Change, 77*, 45-72; Milfont, T. L., Duckitt, J. & Cameron, L.D. (2006). A Cross-cultural study of environmental motive concerns and their implications for proenvironmental behavior. *Environment and Behavior, 38*(6), 745-767; Pepper, M., Jackson, T. & Uzzell, D. (2009). An examination of the values that motivate socially conscious and frugal consumer behaviours. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 33*(2), 126–136; Roets, A., Van Hiel, C. & Cornelis, I. (2006) Does materialism predict racism? Materialism as a distinctive social attitude and a predictor of prejudice. *European Journal of Personality, 20*(2), 155-168; Sagiv, L., Sverdlik, N. & Schwarz, N. (2011). To compete or to cooperate? Values' impact on perception and action in social dilemma games. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 41*(1), 64–77; Sawyerr, O.O., Strauss, J. & Yan, J. (2005). Individual value structure and diversity attitudes: the moderating effects of age, gender, race, and religiosity. *Journal of Managerial Psychology, 20*(6), 498-521; Schultz, P.W., Gouveia, V.V., Cameron, L.D., Tankha, G., Schmuck, P. & Frank, M. (2005). Values and their relationship to environmental concern and conservation behaviour. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 36*(4), 457-475; Schwartz, S.H. (2007). Universalism values and the inclusiveness of our moral universe. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 38*(6), 711-728; Spini, D. & Doise, W. (1998). Organising principles of involvement in human rights and their social anchoring in value priorities. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 28*(4), 603-622; Thøgersen, J. (1996). Recycling and morality. A critical review of the literature. *Environment and Behavior, 28*(4), 536–558.

[15] See *Weathercocks and Signposts* (*op.cit.* 1), p. 31 ff.

[16] Crompton, T., Weinstein, N., Sanderson, B., Kasser, T., Maio, G. & Henderson, S. (2015). *No Cause is an Island: How People are Attuned to Values Regardless of Cause*. London: Common Cause Foundation. Available at: http://valuesandframes.org/resources/CCF_report_no_cause_is_an_island.pdf (accessed on 15 April 2018)

[17] Bolderdijk, J.W., Steg, L., Geller, E. S., Lehman, P. K. & Postmes, T. (2013). Comparing the effectiveness of monetary versus moral motives in environmental campaigning. *Nature Climate Change, 3*(4), pp.413–416; Chilton *et al*. (2012) (*op. cit.* 12); Crompton *et al*. (2014) (*ibid*.); Evans, L., Maio, G.R., Corner, A., Hodgetts, C.J., Ahmed, S. & Hahn, U. (2013). Self-interest and proenvironmental behaviour. *Nature Climate*

Change, 3, 122–125; Sheldon, K. M., Nichols, C. P. & Kasser, T. (2011). Americans recommend smaller ecological footprints when reminded of intrinsic American values of self-expression, family, and generosity. *Ecopsychology 3*(2), 97-104; Vansteenkiste, M., Simons, J., Lens, W., Soenens, B., Matos, L. & Lacante, M. (2004). Less is sometimes more: goal content matters. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 96*(4): 755-764.

[18] Maio, G. R., Pakizeh, A., Cheung, W. Y., & Rees, K. J. (2009). Changing, priming, and acting on values: effects via motivational relations in a circular model. J*ournal of Personality and Social Psychology, 97*(4), 699-715.

[19] *See op. cit. 16.*

[20] For further discussion of self-determination theory, see *Weathercocks and Signposts* (*op.cit.* 1), p. 31 ff.

[21] The language of 'simple and painless steps' and 'every little helps', conjoined with an awareness of the scale of environmental problems that we confront and a tacit awareness of the inadequacy of many such responses, may serve perversely to convey a depressing and unhelpful belief: that proportionate environmental change is going to be difficult and painful, and therefore something that's almost certainly unwelcome. For further discussion of the limitations of appeals to 'simple and painless' behaviours, see Thøgersen, J., & Crompton, T. (2009). Simple and painless? The limitations of spillover in environmental campaigning. *Journal of Consumer Policy, 32*(2), 141-163.

[22] To be clear, I'm not suggesting that 'value-neutral' economic analysis is impossible (though there are good arguments that this is the case). Rather, I am arguing that economic analysis is not going to be persuasive in a fraught political context where it is always possible to dismiss such analysis as serving the interests of those who commissioned it.

[23] The UK government, for example, embarked on a 'Red Tape challenge' which entailed the rollback of a wide range of environmental legislation. See "Slashing of environment 'red tape' is far from over" (*The Guardian,* 19 March 2012), available here: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/damian-carrington-blog/2012/mar/19/environment-regulation-red-tape-challenge (accessed on 15 April 2018) and "David Cameron to Rip up Green Regulations" (The Guardian, 27 January, 2014), available here: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2014/jan/27/david-cameron-green-regulations (accessed on 15 April 2018).

[24] See Crompton *et al.* (2015) (*op. cit.* 16)

[25] Here is an anecdote that illustrates the way in which some environmental organisations appear comfortable in using instrumentalist arguments in support of their work, where human rights organisations experience reticence: In preparing for one study, I invited communication staff in the conservation charity WWF-UK and the disability rights charity Scope to write short texts for subsequent use with participants in a large panel experiment (*op. cit.* 16). For the purposes of the experiments, I asked that communication staff wrote about the *economic imperatives*

for action to, respectively, protect the natural world, or help people with disability. In the case of WWF-UK, the experiment sought to test a text that put a financial value on nature. This language was easily produced by staff there, drawing on many existing reports and webpages. I can envisage that communications staff in many other environmental and conservation charities would have found this similarly straightforward. In the case of Scope, I was looking for text that highlighted the economic contribution that people with disability might make when they are in meaningful employment. Communications staff at Scope were very resistant to writing in this way – they said that they had not written about their work in this way, and they worried that it would appear as though they were devaluing the people that they were trying to help.

[26] CCF research (drawing on a survey of 1200 demographically representative people from across Greater Manchester, conducted by Opinium) found that most people placed greatest importance on 'compassionate' values such as friendship, mature love, responsibility and helpfulness. This was the case irrespective of the way in which participants said that they had voted in the 2016 EU referendum. In other words, people on either side of an important political divide nonetheless prioritised the same 'compassionate' values.

[27] For a summary of 'compassionate' values, see "Value surveys and maps", a resource published by Common Cause Foundation and available at: https://valuesandframes.org/toolkits

[28] For examples of NGO communications and campaigns, analysed from the perspective of the values with which these connect, see Crompton, T. & Weinstein, N. (2015) *Common Cause Communications: A Toolkit for Charities,* Common Cause Foundation, London.

[29] See Crompton *et al.* (2015) (*op. cit.* 16)

[30] Note that drawing attention to community cohesion and well-being, as 'collateral benefits', will also serve to engage 'compassionate' values. It may well be the case that promoting 'compassionate' values will also have economic benefits. That's something that we would counsel against highlighting – because of the risk that this will serve to erode 'compassionate' motivations.

[31] Rutter, A. (2018) "My cause is your cause – wedded to compassionate values for Australian marriage equality vote". Available at: https://valuesandframes.org/my-cause-is-your-cause-wedded-to-compassionate-values-for-australian-marriage-equality-vote (accessed on 15 April, 2018).

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