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Research Areas:

- Animal behavior
- Behavioral Ecology
- Sociobiology
- Evolutionary biology
- Mathematical Modelling and statistics

In which areas do global and especially changes in biodiversity affect our daily life? Which changes did already take place and which development do you see in the future?

Answer: There are many changes which affect us to different extents. At present I think the most important change that is directly affecting many of us is the origin of new pathogens, mostly transferred from animals. These new diseases erupt unexpectedly and because they are new, they have no cure or treatment and some of them can be fatal. Changes in Ecology are significantly responsible for transfer of these pathogens from animals to humans and increased global travel of humans is responsible for spreading the new pathogens. Unlike the problems of loss of biodiversity related to agriculture, medicinal plants etc., there is great urgency in the problems associated with new pathogens. Moreover what we can and should do to minimize the origin and spread of new pathogens is far less obvious.

Which factors are important to develop strategies that do not only improve our current situation immediately, but also lead to a sustainable change?

Answer: As I said above the solutions are not obvious and those that are obvious are very expensive or inconvenient. We may have no choice but to significantly increase the level of medical/public health surveillance for all travellers. Some measures such as improving the handling of farm animals can also be taken to minimize the transfer of pathogens to humans. We may also have to examine whether there are steps that can be taken to improve the general innate immunity of the human population, especially in the case of frequent

travellers. It must be added that the urgency of the problem of new diseases has unfortunately relegated to the background (even in my mind as I answer these questions) many serious but not so „urgent“ problems of changes in biodiversity of other kinds. In many of these cases, well-known solutions such as preservation of natural habitats need to be strengthened.