Dear Dr Goymer,

We have prepared a brief communication for publication in Nature ecology & evolution. The manuscript is entitled “Maximising the leverage of existing knowledge could reduce research waste in applied ecology and conservation”. In it we illustrate (with a worked example) where one aspect of “research waste” could be reduced through the use of well-established workflows. The concept of “research waste” is not often explicitly or widely discussed in the ecology & evolution literature. Given that many scientists who work in our field are publicly funded, we feel that it is important that efforts to reduce research waste are given much higher priority by funders, researchers and other stakeholders. Formal assessments of the existing literature (we use a cumulative meta-analysis in our simple example but highlight some other approaches) would allow researchers and funders to identify which questions need to be answered and which already have sufficient evidence to be considered a low priority.

Our manuscript has two display items in the main document and a supplementary figure and supplementary table. It is 1197 words long with 14 references and an abstract that is 68 words in length. We have just submitted an un-refereed web preprint of our manuscript to be hosted by EcoEvoRxiv Preprints.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our brief communication for publication.

Kind regards

Matt

Dr MJ Grainger (on behalf of all authors)

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