Dear Andy,

I wanted to bring something to your attention that I’ve been struggling with recently.

Recently, Andrew Balmford and Rhys Green asked if I could do an analysis for a short paper they were working on. The paper contrasts the estimates of BII in Newbold et al (2016) with the results of recently published work on biomass intactness of terrestrial ecosystems, as well as other proxies of human pressure. This paper is not yet complete, but so far we have found that in most places vegetation biomass has been reduced by human pressures more than biodiversity (measured using BII). This result is a bit surprising. We are generally concerned that the BII might have underestimated the actual extent of biodiversity loss in some areas, although we are not sure why yet. Given these results, we are also hoping to encourage more debate and discussion about the use of BII as a metric to inform policy targets such as CBD.

Rhys and Andrew have suggested I be first author of this paper, but because I have obviously been involved with some work your group has been doing this has made me feel a bit uneasy. On the one hand I have the possibility first author paper which would help my career, but on the other hand I greatly value my relationship with the PREDICTS team. I want to assure you that our paper is a discussion of one result that has come out of the PREDICTS project and not the project as a whole. I still think PREDICTS is extremely valuable and would be still like to be involved with your group in the future.

This is also not a personal attack as everybody in your group, particularly you, has been very kind to me particularly when I was job-hunting.

I wondered what your thoughts were on this and my involvement. I value my relationship with you and your group such that if you felt this was a major barrier I would be happy to remove myself as lead author of the paper.

Many thanks,

Phil Martin