Abstract: We explore the implications of blockchain technology for conservation and environmental policy. Drawing on an analysis of 27 initiatives, we examine their goals, assumptions, visions and workings. We find that these initiatives do not yet form a coherent approach, there is too much variety in their environmental focus, and the role of blockchain technology in achieving their goals. However, they share a faith in environmental-commodity markets, a penchant for surveillance and upward accountability, and lack a critical analysis of the main causes of environmental problems. Blockchain initiatives are forming a growing community of praxis and deepen ongoing trends in neoliberal environmental governance, characterised by the increased commodification and global accounting, surveillance and marketisation of environmental goods, services and outcomes. We suggest these services and outcomes fail to challenge the actual root causes of environmental degradation. At the same time, they are not all necessarily flawed by these characteristics. They can render information held by communities financially valuable in ways those communities may find useful. Future research should focus on exploring whether blockchain initiatives may at least translate in concrete environmental outcomes and contribute to the well-being of natural resource managers.

@article{a8cc10a6-3772-34b2-b226-bde9563931ad, ISSN = {09724923, 09753133}, URL = {https://www.jstor.org/stable/27100578}, author = {Andrea Stuit and Dan Brockington and Esteve Corbera}, journal = {Conservation & Society}, number = {1}, pages = {12--23}, publisher = {[Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment, Wolters Kluwer India Pvt. Ltd.]}, title = {Smart, Commodified and Encoded: Blockchain Technology for Environmental Sustainability and Nature Conservation}, urldate = {2024-03-11}, volume = {20}, year = {2022} }

https://www.jstor.org/stable/27100578