

Understanding tourists' preferences for nature-based experiences may help with conservation

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Charismatic species—such as felines and primates or whales, sharks, and turtles—are attractive to tourists, and the opportunity of seeing them in the wild motivates tourists to visit protected areas. New research indicates that tourists' preferences are not restricted to charismatic species, however, and they extend to less charismatic biodiversity, as well as to landscapes.

Investigators also found that biodiversity-related activities—such as camping and game drives, the sense of wilderness attached to the place [tourists](#) visit, and accessibility of [protected areas](#)—also affect tourists' preferences. In addition, many tourists are more likely to support initiatives that promote a broader biodiversity experience than charismatic species alone.

The findings reveal new opportunities to promote and support [biodiversity conservation](#). "Our results suggest that an increasing number of tourists are appreciating a wider biodiversity experience than only charismatic megafauna. This is important to support the conservation of less charismatic biodiversity," said Anna Hausmann, lead author of the *Animal Conservation* study.

More information: A. Hausmann et al. Ecotourism marketing alternative to charismatic megafauna can also support biodiversity conservation, *Animal Conservation* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/acv.12292](https://doi.org/10.1111/acv.12292)

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