

1 **Evaluating deterrents of illegal behaviour in conservation: carnivore killing in rural**
2 **Taiwan**

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21 **Abstract**

22 Rules restricting resource use are ubiquitous to conservation. Recent increases in poaching of
23 iconic species such as African elephant and rhino have triggered high-profile interest in
24 enforcement. Previous studies have used economic models to explore how the probability and
25 severity of sanctions influence poacher-behaviour. Yet despite evidence that compliance can
26 be substantial when the threat of state-imposed sanctions is low and profits high, few have
27 explored other factors deterring rule-breaking. We use the randomised response technique
28 (RRT) and direct questions to estimate the proportion of rural residents in north-western
29 Taiwan illegally killing wildlife. We then model how potential sources of deterrence:
30 perceived probabilities of detection and punishment, social norms and self-imposed guilt,
31 relate to non-compliant behaviour (reported via RRT). The perceived likelihood of being
32 punished and two types of social norms (injunctive and descriptive) predict behaviour and
33 deter rule-breaking. Harnessing social norms that encourage compliance offers potential for
34 reducing the persecution of threatened species.

35
36 **Keywords:** compliance; enforcement; guilt; randomized response technique; social norms
37

38 **1. Introduction**

39 Effective conservation depends on understanding human behaviours, particularly those that
40 threaten biodiversity such as illegal logging (Laurance 2008), fishing (Hilborn 2007) and
41 hunting (Milner-Gulland and Bennett 2003). Positive incentives, such as the provision of
42 resources to those behaving in a pro-conservation manner, is one way of encouraging
43 behaviour change (Milner-Gulland and Rowcliffe 2007). However, conservation and natural
44 resource management are widely dependent upon negative incentives, principally the making
45 and enforcing of rules that restrict access and use of resources (St. John et al. 2013). As a
46 result, successful management demands an understanding of factors deterring rule-breaking
47 so that compliance can be encouraged.

48

49 Recent increases in wildlife crime including the poaching of iconic, commercially valuable
50 species such as African elephant (Burn et al. 2011) and white rhino (Biggs et al. 2013; Smith
51 et al. 2013) have triggered increased interest in enforcement (Goldenberg 2013; The White
52 House 2013) which typically involves the use of patrols to detect infractions (Keane et al.
53 2008) and the application of state-imposed legal sanctions to punish violators. By increasing
54 the severity of sanctions, criminal justice policies aim to increase deterrence (Kennedy 1997).
55 Rational choice theories of crime assume that individuals weigh up potential costs
56 (probability of being detected and likelihood and severity of penalties), rewards and
57 preferences when deciding how to act (Becker 1968; Garoupa 1997). The rational actor
58 therefore should comply when fairly certain of capture and punishment. The physical
59 distribution or 'ecology' of crimes suggests that offenders do make rational choices: by
60 committing crimes against poorly protected targets (e.g. houses, public property or people) in
61 familiar locations, offenders reduce risk, effort, and inconvenience (Clarke and Cornish
62 1985). However, the assumption that offenders act as rational utility maximizers who
63 respond to the threat of sanctions in a predictable fashion has been challenged (Akers and
64 Sellers 2009; Paternoster 1987). Evidence suggests that, constrained by availability of time,
65 ability and information, human behaviour is only boundedly rational (Simon 1955): rather
66 than assessing the pros and cons of alternative courses of action, people employ 'shortcuts' or
67 rules-of-thumb (also referred to as heuristics) when processing information and opt for
68 satisfactory rather than optimal solutions (Clarke and Cornish 1985; Cornish and Clarke
69 1986; Milner-Gulland 2012). Further, social-psychological factors also influence people's
70 behaviour. With respect to pro-environmental behaviours, attitude, social norms, behavioural
71 control and moral norms influence the decisions that people make (Bamberg and Möser
72 2007; Mastrangelo et al. 2013; Williams et al. 2012), whilst people's feelings (Van Gelder
73 2012), perceptions of informal social control (Felson 1986), self-control (Pratt and Cullen
74 2000) and an ability to manage fears, moral scruples and guilt influence criminal decision
75 making (Cornish and Clarke 1986).

76

77 There is evidence that investment in conservation law enforcement is effective. For example,
78 anti-poaching patrols were a determining factor in the recovery of African buffalo and
79 elephant in Serengeti National Park, Tanzania (Hilborn et al. 2006) and increased
80 effectiveness of anti-poaching patrols reduced poaching of wildlife in Ghana's protected
81 areas (Jachmann 2008). Enforcement however is costly and studies investigating illegal

82 behaviour have reported mixed results concerning the influence that probabilities of capture
83 and punishment have on actors (Kroneberg et al. 2010). For example, compliance in some
84 fisheries was found to be high despite low probabilities of detection and illegal profits in
85 excess of fines (Sutinen and Kuperan 1999), the threat of detection failed to deter drink-
86 driving (Berger and Snortum 1986) and the expectations of capture and punishment were
87 unrelated to people's intention to commit tax fraud or shop-lift (Kroneberg et al. 2010). In
88 addition, industry characteristics more strongly deterred corporate crime compared to formal
89 sanction risk (Simpson and Koper 1992). This raises questions about what other factors
90 encourage compliance and whether they can be harnessed to supplement or even reduce
91 reliance on conventional and costly enforcement.

92
93 Economic models of law enforcement in conservation and natural resource management have
94 incorporated probabilities of detection and punishment based upon information including
95 enforcement data and legal proceedings (Milner-Gulland and Leader-Williams 1992; Sumaila
96 et al. 2006). However, would-be-violators do not know the actual probability of being caught
97 or punished, rather their behaviour is influenced by their perceived threat of enforcement
98 action (Grasmick and Bryjak 1980; Grasmick and Green 1980). Studies investigating the
99 links between perceived sanction risk and severity generally find that criminality is lower
100 amongst those perceiving higher risks of detection and severity of punishment (Nagin 1998).
101 There is evidence in conservation that rule-breakers adjust their perceptions of the risks of
102 sanctions. For example, following an initial market inspection, trade in the North Sulewesi
103 endemic babirusa (*babyrousa celebensis*) halted for one year. However, by the third
104 inspection trade only stopped for one month as traders refined their perceptions of the threat
105 of capture from high to the true level of virtually zero (Milner-Gulland and Clayton 2002).
106 However, none have investigated how an individual's compliance behaviour relates to their
107 reports of the perceived probabilities of detection and punishment.

108
109 Any factor that reduces the expected utility of a crime may encourage compliance and
110 empirical evidence suggests that sources of social control may play a greater role in shaping
111 compliance compared to the certainty and severity of punishment (Paternoster 1987). In
112 addition to regulations enforced by formal institutions, social norms (obligatory, shared or
113 forbidden behaviours) mediate the way in which people in societies behave (Ostrom 2000).
114 Peers may reward individuals for following social norms by conferring status or material
115 resources towards them, or punish transgressions through ostracism or the withholding of
116 favours or goods (Posner 1997). Social norms have been found to deter a range of antisocial
117 behaviours including drink-driving (Berger and Snortum 1986), illegal gambling (Grasmick
118 and Green 1980) and environmental theft (Cialdini 2003). Further, enforcement within some
119 fisheries appears to stem largely from social influences (Gezelius 2002; Sutinen and Gauvin
120 1989). For example, Norwegian fishers comply for fear of being labelled dishonourable by
121 gossiping peers (Gezelius 2002). Evidence from social psychology suggests that two types of
122 social norm influence behaviour: injunctive norms (what people typically approve of) and
123 descriptive norms (what people typically do) (Cialdini et al. 1991). To date, the role of these
124 two types of social norm in encouraging compliance with conservation rules has not been
125 explored in a quantitative manner.

126

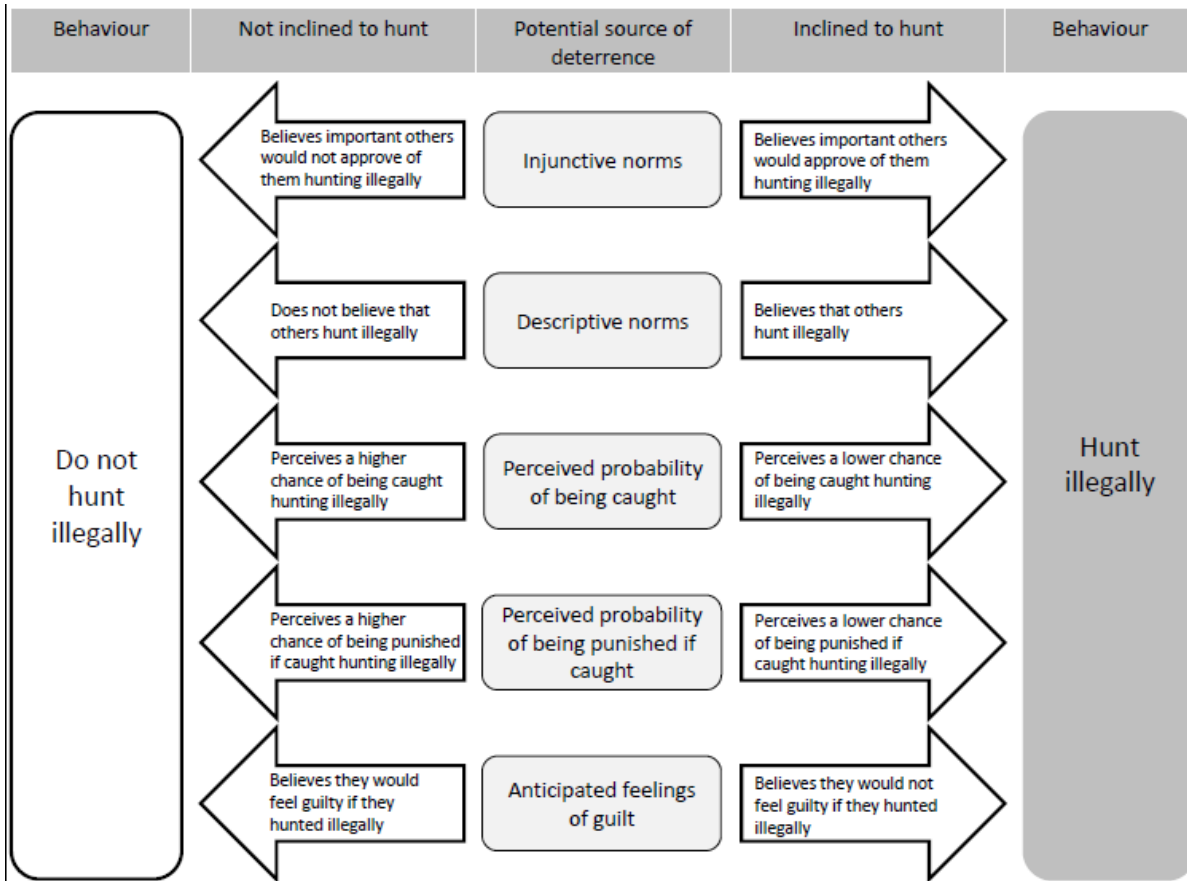
127 The behaviour of individuals is also regulated by internal feelings such as guilt, shame and
128 self-esteem. Anticipated or actual guilt may be felt by an individual when they consider
129 performing, or actually execute a behaviour that defies their morals, values or social norms
130 (Vining and Ebreo 2002). The immediate response may be felt in the form of physiological
131 discomfort, however, long-term impacts may include anxiety or depression impeding
132 personal performance (Grasmick and Bursik 1990). Whilst acts that trigger guilt may differ
133 between cultures (Scollon et al. 2004), feelings of guilt have been shown to influence a range
134 of behaviours including willingness to help others (Freedman et al. 1967), participate in
135 extra-curricular activities (Boster et al. 1999) and engage in pro-environmental behaviours
136 (Ahn et al. 2013). With respect to compliance, guilt has been found to have a stronger
137 influence on behaviour compared to the threat of capture in the case of tax fraud and drunk-
138 driving (Grasmick and Bursik 1990; Wenzel 2004). Whilst fishers have reported feeling
139 'morally uncomfortable' when breaking the law (Gezelius 2002; Sutinen and Kuperan 1999),
140 the utility of self-imposed guilt as a deterrent has not been investigated within a conservation
141 and natural resource management context.

142

143 Understanding the potential value of such factors as deterrents requires that they be linked to
144 reports of people's compliance behaviour. Innovative developments in the analysis of
145 randomised response data (van den Hout et al. 2007) recently applied in conservation (St.
146 John et al. 2012) support such an approach. The randomised response technique (RRT)
147 (Warner 1965) has improved estimates of rule-breaking in conservation producing higher
148 estimates of non-compliance compared to direct questions (Razafimanahaka et al. 2012;
149 Solomon et al. 2007; St. John et al. 2010a). By using a randomising device such as dice, RRT
150 provides respondents with levels of protection greater than a simple guarantee of anonymity.
151 For example, provided with a beaker and a die, respondents may be instructed to: answer a
152 sensitive question truthfully choosing 'yes' or 'no' if the die lands on one through to four
153 (probability = 0.66); select 'yes' if the die lands on five (probability = 0.167); or select 'no' if
154 the die lands on six (probability = 0.167) (St. John et al. 2010a). The result of the die is never
155 revealed to the interviewer so a truthful response can never be distinguished from a
156 prescribed one. By adapting the logistic regression model to account for answers forced by
157 the randomising device (van den Hout et al. 2007), characteristics of respondents (e.g.
158 attitudes) can be linked to behaviours of interest such as killing of protected carnivores (St.
159 John et al. 2012).

160

161 In this study we use both RRT and direct questions (DQ) to estimate the proportion of rural
162 residents in north-western Taiwan killing four species as well as asking someone else to hunt
163 a legally protected endangered species on their behalf. We then use an adapted form of
164 logistic regression (St. John et al. 2012; van den Hout et al. 2007) to investigate the potential
165 deterrent effects of the perceived probabilities of detection and punishment, injunctive and
166 descriptive norms, and self-imposed guilt on wildlife persecution reported via RRT (Figure
167 1). By linking reports of rule-breaking behaviour to potential sources of deterrence, this study
168 makes a novel contribution to the study of conservation enforcement, a neglected area of
169 research (Keane et al. 2012; Robinson et al. 2010).



171
 172 Figure 1 Conceptual framework of factors influencing an individual’s decision to hunt a
 173 legally protected species. All things held equal, the more strongly a person believes killing a
 174 protected species is disapproved of, that others do not kill protected species, that the
 175 probability of being caught and punished is high, and that they would feel guilty for engaging
 176 in such a behaviour, the more deterred they are from hunting illegally.
 177

178 **2. Methods**

179 *2.1 Case study: wildlife persecution in rural north western Taiwan*

180 Data from ecological surveys confirm the existence of leopard cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*
 181 *chinensis*) and masked palm civet (*Paguma larvata taivana*) within Miaoli County, Taiwan
 182 (Pei 2008). Before 1970 the leopard cat population was greatly reduced through habitat loss
 183 and commercial harvesting for their skin, resulting in a call for their legal protection (Ian
 184 1979; McCullough 1974). Now listed as endangered under Taiwan’s Wildlife Conservation
 185 Act (WCA) (Council of Agriculture 1989), Miaoli County is probably the only area where a
 186 viable population of this species is still found (Pei 2008). Whilst more common, the masked
 187 palm civet, long popular in game meat markets (Wang 1986) is also protected under the
 188 WCA due to intensive trapping pressure in rural areas. Article 21 of the WCA only permits
 189 the authorised killing of protected species under limited circumstances including risk to
 190 human life, damage to crops or stock and for indigenous people’s traditional ceremonies or
 191 rituals. Any unauthorised person caught killing protected wildlife may be fined between
 192 NT\$200 000 and NT\$1 000 000 (between approx. US\$6 600 and US\$33 000) and face up to

193 five years in prison. Despite these considerable sanctions, anecdotes from Miaoli County
194 suggest that leopard cat and masked palm civet are still trapped for the commercial gain of
195 professional hunters, and, with respect to leopard cat, because they are perceived by poultry
196 farmers as pest. Other species including rodents and ferret badger (*Melogale moschata*) are
197 not protected under the WCA but are included in this study so that both illegal and legal
198 behaviours could be investigated. All species are found across the study site (Pei 2008).

200 *2.2 Data collection*

201 We drafted the questionnaire (available from F.A.V.St.John) in English, it was then translated
202 to Chinese and back-translated to English to verify the translation. We then piloted it on
203 colleagues, clarifying wording where required, before a formal pilot with residents within the
204 study site. The questionnaire were administered through face-to-face interviews at the homes
205 of residents between August and October 2012 by CHM. Hakka, Taiwanese or Mandarin (all
206 dialects spoken by CHM) were used to deliver the questions; as there are no written
207 characters for Hakka and Taiwanese, Chinese characters were used throughout. The
208 sampling strategy used to identify respondents involved multiple steps. First, we identified
209 three townships in Miaoli County with the highest leopard cat densities using data from
210 camera trap surveys (Pei 2008). Second, after excluding urban areas we listed all rural
211 villages per township; the RAND function in Microsoft Excel was then used to select a
212 simple random sample (Newing 2011) of four villages per township. Lastly, using either the
213 phone book (two townships) or electoral role (one township) as a sampling frame, we
214 systematically sampled (Newing 2011) 20 households per village by selecting every *nth*
215 household on the list (the first house to be surveyed was selected using the
216 RANDBETWEEN function in Microsoft Excel) i.e. we sampled 242 households across the
217 12 villages; approximately 4% of the total households. Within households, elder members
218 were recruited as respondents as locally they were believed to have more experiences with
219 the study species. Names of villages are not revealed to protect respondents.

221 To verify respondents' familiarity with species included in the questionnaire we showed
222 respondents photos of study species (rodents, ferret badger, masked palm civet and leopard
223 cat) and non-study species (domestic cat and pangolin). Those familiar with each of the study
224 species completed the questionnaire which included sections on rule-breaking (RRT and
225 DQ), demographics and three potential sources of deterrence. Using the Morakot '88' flood
226 of 2009 as a historic reference, RRT and DQ questions referred to the last three years (e.g. for
227 DQ: '*Since the 88 Flood which was 3 years ago, did you kill any leopard cats?*'). This time
228 period was chosen as it was considered long enough to have allowed the behaviours under
229 investigation to have occurred whilst not being too long ago for people to remember.

231 *2.3 Estimating the proportion of people killing wildlife*

232 We used the 'forced response' randomised response technique (Warner 1965) to question
233 respondents about their involvement in the killing of wildlife and whether they had requested
234 another to hunt a leopard cat on their behalf. Respondents were given a set of instruction and
235 question cards, including one example question, a pair of dice and a non-transparent beaker.

236 RRT was first explained to respondents using the example question: ‘*Since 88 Flood*’ which
237 was three years ago, did you ever ride a motorbike without a helmet?’ Roles of interviewer
238 and respondent were reversed when required and the interviewer did not proceed with RRT
239 questions until it was clear that the respondent understood the method. Before each RRT
240 question, respondents shook the dice in the beaker and added the value of the dice together. If
241 the sum of the two dice came to five through to ten (probability = 3/4), respondents were
242 asked to answer the sensitive question honestly by saying ‘yes’ or ‘no’ out loud to the
243 interviewer. If the dice summed two, three or four (probability 1/6) respondents were
244 instructed to give a fixed answer ‘yes’. Finally, if the dice summed 11 or 12 (probability
245 1/12), respondents were instructed to give the fixed answer ‘no’. Respondents never revealed
246 their dice roll to the interviewer therefore the interviewer could not tell if a respondent was
247 saying ‘yes’ because they have performed the sensitive behaviour, or because they were
248 providing a prescribed response. However, by knowing the probability of respondents
249 instructed to answer honestly, and the probability of respondents instructed to provide the
250 prescribed response of ‘yes’, the prevalence of the sensitive characteristic could be estimated.
251 To maximise respondents’ compliance with RRT instructions we used the analogy of playing
252 a game encouraging respondents to follow RRT instructions just as they would follow the
253 rules of a game. Literacy and numeracy are high in Taiwan so are not believed to limit
254 respondents’ understanding or use of RRT.

255

256 In order to test the utility of RRT, we asked respondents the same wildlife killing questions
257 directly at the end of the questionnaire. The wording of DQ and RRT questions was identical.
258 Respondents answered DQs by placing a tick in either a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ box.

259

260 *2.4 Perceived probabilities of detection and punishment as deterrents*

261 Economic models of enforcement focus on the probabilities of rule-breaking being detected
262 and punished, with non-compliance occurring when the benefits outweigh the costs (Becker
263 1968). To investigate how the perceived probability of being caught relates to behaviour
264 (measured via RRT) we asked respondents to indicate how frequently they believed the
265 authorities would catch them if they killed each of the four species. Respondents also
266 reported their perceived likelihood of receiving a penalty for killing each animal if they were
267 caught (eight statements in total). Answers were given using a five-point Likert scale (from
268 ‘never’ through to ‘always’) coded so that lower scores corresponded to lower deterrence.

269

270 *2.5 Social norms as deterrents*

271 To understand the relationship between social pressures and behaviour reported via RRT we
272 investigated two different types of social norms: injunctive norms, which measure what
273 friends, family or peers typically approve or disapprove of; and descriptive norms which
274 capture respondents’ perceptions of how other people typically behave (Cialdini 2003). To
275 measure injunctive norms we asked respondents to indicate on a five point Likert scale (from
276 ‘highly disapprove’ through to ‘highly approve’) the degree to which they thought their
277 family and friends would approve or disapprove of them for killing each of the four species
278 (four statements in total). We measured descriptive norms by asking respondents to state
279 whether or not they thought people that they know, had killed each of the species in the last

280 three years. Response options were ‘yes’ and ‘no’. The coding of answers for injunctive and
281 descriptive norms means that lower scores suggest weaker social deterrence for wildlife
282 persecution.

283

284 *2.6 Self-imposed guilt as a deterrent*

285 To investigate the relationship between anticipated guilt and behaviour reported via RRT, we
286 asked respondents to indicate, using a five point Likert scale (from ‘strongly agree’ through
287 to ‘strongly disagree’) how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement ‘*I would feel*
288 *guilty if I killed x*’. This statement was repeated for each of the four species. Higher scores
289 were indicative of stronger feelings of guilt, which is suggestive of stronger self-imposed
290 deterrence for killing wildlife.

291

292 *2.8 Data analysis*

293 We analysed data using R version 2.15.0 (R Development Core Team 2012). The proportion
294 of respondents admitting via RRT to killing each species was estimated using the following
295 equation (Hox and Lensvelt-Mulders 2004):

296

$$\pi = \frac{\lambda - \theta}{s}$$

297

298 where π is the estimated proportion of the sample admitting to the behaviour, λ is the
299 proportion of all answers that are ‘yes’, θ is the probability of the answer being a prescribed
300 ‘yes’, and s is the probability of being asked to answer the question truthfully. Ninety-five per
301 cent confidence intervals for RRT and DQ data were estimated from 10,000 bootstrap
302 samples (St. John et al. 2012). A significant difference between RRT and DQ estimates was
303 concluded when the 95% confidence intervals for the mean difference did not include zero
304 (St. John et al. 2010a).

305

306 Before modelling, we used Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Cortina 1993) to check each set of
307 four species-specific statements measuring the probability of being caught, probability of
308 receiving a penalty, injunctive norm and self-imposed guilt for internal consistency.
309 Categories within predictor variables measuring probabilities of detection and punishment
310 were collapsed from five to two representing ‘never caught’ and ‘sometimes caught’.
311 Categories measuring injunctive norms and anticipated guilt were collapsed from five to three
312 corresponding to low, neutral and high levels of social approval and guilt.

313

314 Following St. John et al. (2012), we used generalised linear mixed models (GLMMs) with a
315 binary response and binomial error to investigate relationships between behaviour reported
316 via RRT and each predictor variable. GLMMs were fitted by penalised-quasi-likelihood using
317 the glmmPQL function from the MASS package. Because of the forced ‘yes’ responses
318 contained within randomised response data, simple logistic regression is not appropriate
319 therefore models were fitted using a customised link function able to incorporate the known
320 probabilities of the prescribed RRT responses (St. John et al. 2012; van den Hout et al. 2007)
321 (supplementary material). To account for the grouping structure of the data whereby each

322 respondent answered multiple questions on each species, we included respondent ID as a
323 random effect. Species, probability of detection, likelihood of punishment, injunctive and
324 descriptive norms and anticipated guilt were all independently considered as potential fixed
325 effects in GLMMs. We generated predictive scenarios illustrative of respondents reporting
326 polar opposites of opinions from fitted GLMMs.

327

328 **3. Results**

329 Two hundred and forty two residents completed the questionnaire. Most respondents were
330 male (64.5%, $n = 242$) which reflects the underlying population (Miaoli County Government
331 Household Registration Service 2014) and the mean age was 62 years (s.e. = 0.84, $n = 242$).
332 Because our sampling strategy targeted elder members of households, the sample does not
333 perfectly represent the underlying population in terms of age (people above and below 55
334 years of age were over and under sampled respectively) (Miaoli County Government
335 Household Registration Service 2014). The primary occupation of most interviewees was
336 agriculture, forestry or fish-farming (60.7%, $n = 147$), whilst some worked in industry,
337 commerce, or the service sector (19.8%, $n = 48$), were unemployed (16.9% $n = 41$), or
338 engaged in other occupations (2.5%, $n = 6$). Nearly all respondents were farming some type
339 of crop (91.3%, $n = 221$), and 47.9% ($n = 116$) were keeping poultry. Over eighty percent of
340 respondents (80.2%, $n = 194$) were aware that there was no penalty for killing rodents whilst
341 43% ($n = 104$) knew there was no penalty for killing ferret badgers. Less than one-quarter
342 (24.0%, $n = 58$) of the sample reported being aware that there is a penalty for killing leopard
343 cats; fewer (13.6%, $n = 33$) reported being aware that penalties exist for killing masked palm
344 civet. Few respondents (4%, $n = 10$) reported thinking that leopard cats were a pest; these ten
345 respondents stocked fewer head of poultry (43.2, s.e. = 17.5) compared to the sample mean
346 (274.9, s.e. = 180.9, $n = 116$).

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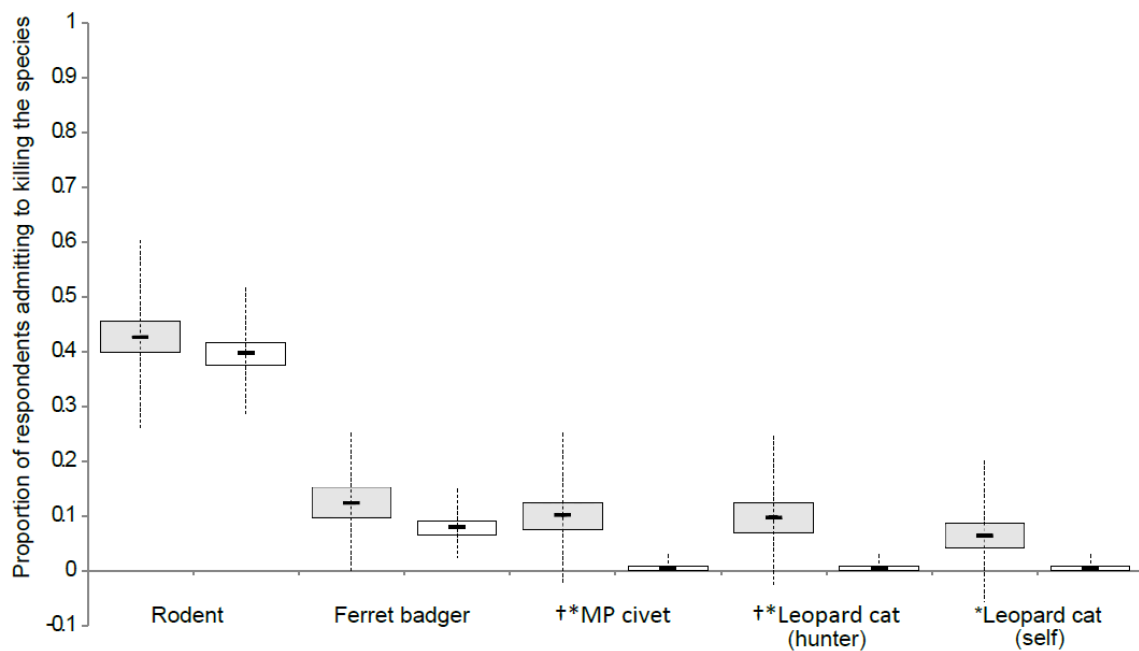
348 Cronbach's alpha was high for each set of four species-specific statements measuring the
349 probability of detection (0.75, $n = 242$), receiving a punishment (0.74, $n = 242$), injunctive
350 norms (0.77, $n = 242$), and anticipated guilt (0.79, $n = 242$) indicating high interval
351 consistency.

352

353 *3.1 estimating the proportion of people killing wildlife*

354 The proportion of respondents estimated by RRT and DQ to have killed each of the four
355 species, or asked a hunter to kill a leopard cat in the last three years is shown in Figure 2.
356 RRT produced higher estimates than DQ for each of the five behaviours (significantly higher
357 for masked palm civet and asking a hunter to kill a leopard cat). Over 40% (42.7%) (mean
358 difference between RRT and DQ estimates 3.05%) and 12.4% (mean difference between
359 RRT and DQ 4.63%) of respondents admitted to killing legally unprotected rodents and ferret
360 badgers respectively in the three years preceding the study. More than 10% (10.2%) of
361 respondents admitted to killing the protected masked palm civet (mean difference between
362 RRT and DQ 9.82%). A greater proportion of respondents admitted to asking a hunter to kill
363 leopard cat (9.7%) compared to admitting to killing this species themselves (6.0%) (mean
364 difference between RRT and DQ 9.32% and 5.91% respectively). Elder members of
365 households were selected as respondents because locally they are reported to have more

366 experiences with the study species. However, this may have introduced bias to our results.
 367 Estimates of reported levels of killing should therefore be considered conservative.
 368



369 Figure 2 The proportion of respondents admitting to killing each of the species, or asking a
 370 hunter to kill leopard cats on their behalf in the three years preceding the study estimated
 371 using the randomised response technique (grey bars) and direct questions (white bars). Bold
 372 lines represent the median, the lower and upper edges of the boxes represent the first and
 373 third quartiles, and whiskers denote the maximum and minimum values. . Asterisks indicate
 374 species protected under the Wildlife Conservation Act of 1989. †denotes RRT estimates are
 375 significantly different compared to DQ.
 376

377
 378

379 3.3 Deterrence

380 The perceived probability of detection by the authorities for killing wildlife was not modelled
 381 as most of our respondents perceived no chance of capture for any of the species. The
 382 likelihood of admitting to killing wildlife was negatively related to the perceived probability
 383 of being punished if caught ($t = -1.324$, d.f. = 722, $p = 0.186$), however, this result was not
 384 significant.

385

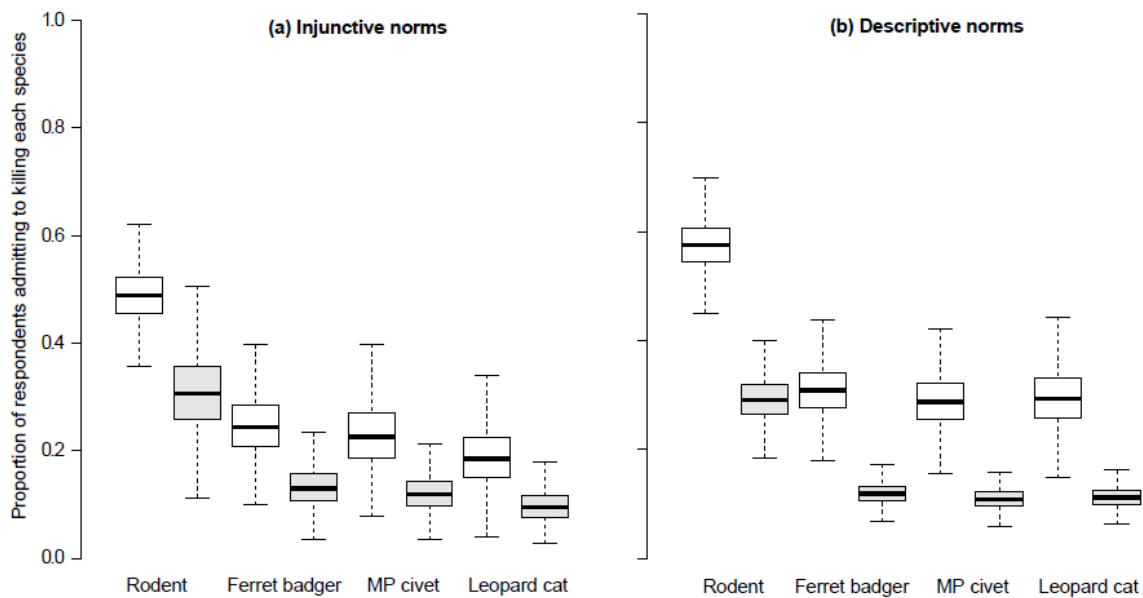
386 The likelihood of admitting to killing any of the four species was negatively and significantly
 387 related to both injunctive ($t = -2.294$, d.f. = 722, $p = 0.022$) and descriptive norms ($t = -5.709$,
 388 d.f. = 722, $p = <0.001$). Scenarios simulated from each of our fitted GLMMs predict that
 389 respondents reporting the injunctive norm that their family or friends would disapprove of
 390 them killing leopard cat were 9% less likely to have killed this species compared to those
 391 reporting that their friends and family would approve of such behaviour (Figure 3a).
 392 Respondents reporting the descriptive norm that they knew someone who had killed leopard
 393 cat in the last three years were 18.3% more likely to have admitted to killing this species

394 when asked via RRT, compared to someone reporting that they did not know anybody that
395 had killed leopard cat (Figure 3b).

396

397 Self-imposed deterrence, measured as the level of guilt respondents associated with the
398 killing of each species, was not related to behaviour reported via RRT ($t = 0.078$, d.f. = 722, p
399 = 0.938).

400



401

402 Figure 3 Simulations from fitted generalised linear mixed models illustrating the relationships
403 between human persecution of wildlife and (a) injunctive norms – perceived social approval
404 and (b) descriptive norms – perceived typical behaviour of others. In Scenario 1 (white bars)
405 the norm is set to its minimum value indicative of a weaker norm. In scenario 2 (grey bars)
406 the norm is set to its maximum value indicative of a stronger social norm. Bold lines
407 represent the median, the lower and upper edges of the boxes represent the first and third
408 quartiles, and whiskers denote the maximum and minimum values.

409

410

411 4. Discussion

412 Investigating illegal resource use presents methodological challenges (Gavin et al. 2010) with
413 data subject to unquantifiable biases, consequently much of our understanding of the
414 determinants of compliance stem from modelling studies (Keane et al. 2008). For example
415 bio-economic and agent-based models underpinned by rational actor assumptions have been
416 used to explore the influence of sanctions on poacher behaviour (Keane et al. 2012; Milner-
417 Gulland and Leader-Williams 1992). However, rule-breakers do not simply compare
418 marginal benefits with marginal costs, but respond to sociological norms internalised
419 throughout their lifetime (Garoupa 1997). Recent developments in the application and
420 analysis of specialised questioning techniques (techniques that add stochastic noise to
421 respondents' answers preventing individually incriminating information from being revealed
422 whilst allowing population-level estimates to be calculated) including RRT (St. John et al.

423 2012) and the unmatched count technique (Nuno et al. 2013), facilitate linking reports of
424 rule-breaking behaviour to a range of characteristics, including potential sources of
425 compliance, thus contributing to a greater understanding of factors driving behaviour.

426

427 Validation studies where the actual status of individuals is known (e.g. police or medical
428 records) provide evidence that RRT stimulates more honest answers to sensitive questions
429 compared to conventional survey techniques (Lensvelt-Mulders et al. 2005). This suggests
430 that whilst anonymity may increase response rates and reduce social-desirability bias (Ong
431 and Weiss 2000), other mechanisms that offer respondents added protection further increase
432 the validity of sensitive data. Studies comparing survey methods (including one study in
433 Taiwan (Chi et al. 1972)) have reported that RRT returned higher estimates than DQ when
434 the questions were sensitive; these higher estimates have been interpreted as evidence of
435 more honest reporting (Chi et al. 1972; Lensvelt-Mulders et al. 2005; Solomon et al. 2007).
436 There is growing evidence that RRT produces more accurate reports of involvement in illegal
437 natural resource extraction compared to conventional direct questions: Twelve per cent of the
438 population surveyed near Andasibe-Mantadia protected area, Madagascar reported eating
439 sifaka (*Propithecus diadema*) when asked using RRT, compared to 3% using DQ
440 (Razafimanahaka et al. 2012); RRT estimates of the proportion of people illegally extracting
441 six types of natural resources from Kibale National Park, Uganda exceeded DQ estimates
442 across all resource types (Solomon et al. 2007); and compared to DQ, RRT estimated that a
443 significantly higher proportion of fishers fished without permits in North Wales, UK (St.
444 John et al. 2010a). However, even when using questioning techniques designed specifically
445 for asking sensitive questions it is impossible to rule out untruthful reporting (Landsheer et al.
446 1999). To maximise compliance with RRT instructions we used a symmetrical RRT design
447 (meaning that prescribed responses were set as both yes (dice sum two, three or four), *and* no
448 (dice sum 11 or 12), rather than as *either* yes or no) which has been shown to increase the
449 extent to which people follow RRT instructions (Ostapczuk and Musch 2011). Further, the
450 analogy of 'playing a game' was used when describing RRT to respondents (Chi et al. 1972).
451 One principle disadvantage of RRT is that, because noise is added to the data by forced
452 responses, the method demands a large sample size in order to achieve estimates with an
453 acceptable margin of error; further, the random noise complicates analyses of associations
454 (e.g. between behaviour and norms) (Lensvelt-Mulders et al. 2005; Moshagen et al. 2013).

455

456 Our estimates that within the last three years nearly 10% of residents asked someone to hunt
457 leopard cat, whilst 6% admitted to killing them in person require serious consideration,
458 particularly given the recent confirmed extinction of the clouded leopard (*Neofelis nebulosa*)
459 in Taiwan, a loss partially attributed to human encroachment and hunting (Chiang 2007;
460 Taipei Times 2013). Whilst there may be some overlap in the two estimates (i.e. some people
461 admitting to killing the species themselves may be the hunters reported by other respondents)
462 the number of killings every year may be detrimental to the population which numbers no
463 more than several hundred individuals (Pei 2008). Leopard cats are nocturnal lowland forest
464 edge species with home ranges of ca. 5-6 km² as such it is inevitable that their home ranges
465 will overlap with rural residences and agriculture lands (Pei 2008). Conflicts between humans
466 and carnivores often stem from threats to human lives or livelihoods (Treves and Karanth

467 2003). This small carnivore (weighing 3-5kg; Francis 2008) poses neither threat within
468 human-managed landscapes in Taiwan, with faecal analysis confirming that livestock do not
469 constitute a major part of leopard cat diet. Nearly 60% of their diet constituted mammalian
470 species (mainly rodents), the remainder being passerine birds, reptiles and invertebrates.
471 Evidence of gallinaceous birds was found in just two out of 74 faecal samples (Chuang
472 2012). Contrary to anecdotal evidence, poultry farmers (those owning thousands of poultry)
473 did not report thinking that the leopard cat was a pest. The ten respondents perceiving leopard
474 cat to be a pest owned less poultry (quantities below the mean), so any loss to predators
475 represent a greater proportion of their property. Ten per cent of respondents also admitted to
476 killing masked palm civets, the other protected species included in this study. Just three
477 respondents reported perceiving this small omnivorous mammals, which feed mainly on
478 fruits, other plant parts and occasionally invertebrates (Hwang 2008; Wang and Fuller 2003),
479 as a pest. Further, masked palm civets have never been reported to injure or kill livestock
480 such as chickens in Taiwan.

481

482 A number of studies have used rational choice models to explore how economic incentives of
483 illegal resource extraction should influence people's behaviour (Keane et al. 2012; Milner-
484 Gulland and Leader-Williams 1992; Sumaila et al. 2006), but none have investigated
485 relationships between peoples' perceived threat of sanctions and their actual non-compliant
486 behaviour. Deterrence is created by the threats of detection and punishment being
487 communicated to individuals who then mediate these threats before they influence behaviour;
488 perceived deterrence may therefore be a more informative way of understanding how
489 enforcement influences behaviour (Grasmick and Green 1980). Across all species few
490 respondents in our study perceived any threat of capture, precluding this variable from
491 modelling. However, evidence that violators adjust their rule-breaking behaviour in response
492 to patrol frequency (Milner-Gulland and Clayton 2002) suggests that this factor warrants
493 further attention. Incorporating the perceived probability of receiving a penalty into our
494 GLMM allowed us to investigate how the probability of being punished relates to rule-
495 breaking behaviour. Results suggest that respondents perceiving lower chances of being
496 punished once caught, were marginally more likely to have admitted (via RRT) to killing
497 wildlife in the three years preceding the study. Research on perceived deterrence indicates
498 that the influence of penalties on behaviour strengthens as the perceived probability of
499 capture increases. For example across eight illegal acts Grasmick and Bryjak (1980) reported
500 a strengthening relationship between behaviour and severity of penalties as the perceived
501 certainty of capture increased. The zero chance of capture perceived by most of our
502 respondents prevented us from exploring any interaction effects between perceived
503 probabilities of detection and punishment.

504

505 Social norms established by informal institutions have long contributed towards the
506 management of natural resources (Berkes et al. 2000) and continue to exert influence. For
507 example social norms influenced re-enrolment to China's grain-to-green payment for
508 ecosystem services scheme (Chen et al. 2009) and decisions by foresters to conserve habitat
509 (Primmer and Karppinen 2010). In this study we measured two types of social norm in order
510 to explore their potential deterrent effects. Results from our fitted GLMMs indicate that

511 social approval (injunctive norms) is related to behaviour. Respondents reporting that their
512 family and friends would disapprove of them killing wildlife were less likely to have
513 admitted (via RRT) to killing each species as compared to respondents reporting that their
514 friends and family would approve of such behaviours. Our findings suggest that perceptions
515 of how others behave (descriptive norms) have a stronger influence on behaviour compared
516 to social approval. In our model there was a negative relationship between the descriptive
517 norm reported for each species and RRT response; people reporting that they did not know
518 others who had killed each animal, were less likely to have admitted killing it. The stronger
519 association between behaviour and descriptive, compared to injunctive norms may be an
520 artifice of the ‘false consensus’ effect (Ross et al. 1977) whereby people bias their reports of
521 others’ behaviour in accordance with their own. This phenomenon has previously been
522 suggested as a proxy indicator of involvement in illicit acts (Petróczi et al. 2008; St. John et
523 al. 2012). However, relationships in our data between behaviour and both injunctive and
524 descriptive norms, whereby behaviours typically disapproved of and not thought to be
525 conducted by others are deterred, support the findings of others. For example, messages of
526 social disapproval reduced environmental theft and littering (Cialdini 2003); and estimates of
527 the number of friends’ performing illegal behaviours was positively related to respondents’
528 rule-breaking behaviour (Cross et al. 2013; Grasmick and Green 1980; Petróczi et al. 2008).

529

530 The anticipation of guilt has been shown to influence decisions to perform pro-environmental
531 behaviours (Ahn et al. 2013) and break the law (Grasmick and Bursik 1990). In Taiwan three
532 types of guilt have been described: *Nei jiu* associated with failure to fulfil obligations to
533 others; *Zui e gan* associated with moral transgressions and; *Fan zui gan* linked to breaking
534 rules or laws that apply to everyone (Bedford 2004). Whilst *fan zui gan* may be experienced
535 when breaking rules (actual or perceived), if a rule is not accepted or known, guilt may not be
536 associated with transgression (Bamberg and Möser 2007; Bedford 2004). The limited
537 knowledge of wildlife laws observed in our sample may explain why we did not find any
538 association between guilt and respondents’ wildlife-killing behaviour (reported using RRT).
539 However, clear relationships between explanatory factors and behaviour may fail to become
540 apparent due to mismatches between information gathered and the behaviour of interest (St.
541 John et al. 2010b), or because questions posed fail to capture the construct of interest
542 (Robinson et al. 1991). Our statements aiming to measure guilt may have lost some of their
543 meaning through delivery or translation although we believe our survey-delivery training and
544 translation-back-translation procedure minimized such errors. Whilst there is considerable
545 evidence that internalised values (e.g. attitude and social norms) influence behaviour
546 (Armitage and Conner 2001), personal values do not always accord with the law. Therefore
547 some people may engage in illegal acts because they do not perceive them to be wrong
548 (Tyler 2006). As such it is possible that guilt is not always associated with rule-breaking
549 behaviour.

550

551 Few respondents were aware that law protects leopard cat and masked palm civet and that
552 they could be penalised if caught killing either species. This suggests that knowledge of
553 wildlife laws is insufficient. However, whilst rules are only likely to be effective when they
554 are known by the people whose behaviour they are designed to regulate, currently the extent

555 to which changes in awareness of rules translate into changes in compliance is unclear
556 (Keane et al. 2011). There is evidence that environmental campaigns that solely provide
557 information can be ineffective at bringing about behaviour change (Kollmuss and Agyeman
558 2002). Consequently, providing residents of Miaoli County with information on the
559 characteristics and legal status of Taiwan's protected species alone may not reduce illegal
560 hunting. However, social marketing campaigns, which apply commercial marketing concepts
561 to promote behaviour change have had considerable success in reducing undesirable
562 behaviours (e.g. tobacco use) and promoting desirable ones (e.g. using mosquito nets to
563 prevent malaria) (Lee and Kotler 2011). A social marketing campaign promoting the existing
564 social norm that killing protected species is generally disapproved of, may be an effective
565 way of influencing the behaviour of the small minority who currently hunt illegally or seek
566 the services of professional hunters. This information will be fed into the strategy of the
567 Miaoli Leopard Cat Conservation Action Plan run by the Taiwan Forestry Bureau (Pei et al.
568 2014) which is already undertaking protection activities including establishing the Miaoli
569 Leopard Cat Important Habitat. However, as any behaviour-change intervention takes time,
570 conservation law enforcement will remain important. This study has drawn upon rational
571 choice theories of crime and research in social psychology exploring the influence of social
572 norms and guilt on people's behaviour. Other internal and external factors undoubtedly
573 influence how people behave in complex social-ecological systems, however, a single
574 study investigating all potential factors would most probably lose its practicality and meaning
575 (Kollmuss and Agyeman 2002).

576

577 **Conclusion**

578 Investigating sensitive topics, such as the persecution of protected species, requires the use of
579 specialised questioning techniques that provide respondents with additional assurances of
580 confidentiality. In this study we investigated relationships between past rule-breaking
581 behaviour, reported via RRT, and current perceptions of three potential sources of deterrence:
582 probabilities of detection and punishment, social norms and self-imposed guilt. Our results
583 provide evidence that social pressures influence rule-breaking behaviour even when the
584 perceived threat of state-imposed sanctions is low. We found that two types of social norms
585 deter wildlife persecution: perceptions of what others typically approve or disapprove of; and
586 perceptions of how others typically behave. Whilst conventional enforcement is likely to
587 remain an essential part of any compliance regime, harnessing social norms that encourage
588 compliance offers potential for reducing the persecution of protected species whose survival
589 is threatened. Critically, at a time when conservation law enforcement is receiving increased
590 attention and adopting new technologies (often associated with war zones), care must be
591 taken not to breakdown existing norms that encourage compliance.

592

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