

# Benjamin Black

11-07-1991, York, United Kingdom

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## PROFILE

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Highly motivated individual with demonstrable ability to engage with diverse groups particularly in a cross-cultural setting. Currently seeking to combine practical experience in project management with further academic experience. Interested in the application of geospatial technologies and modelling for evaluating and improving the effectiveness of conservation interventions and community-based natural resource management initiatives.

## EDUCATION

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- 09/2018 – 06/2020 **MSc in Environmental Sciences, Policy and Management (MESPOM) – Central European University, University of Manchester, Lund University, University of the Aegean**
- Focus:** Biodiversity and conservation; geospatial analysis; environmental modelling; adaptive management of socio-ecological systems; data analysis, open science and reproducibility.
- Thesis:** Assessing the ecological effectiveness of protected areas in Cambodia: A quasi-experimental counterfactual estimation of avoided deforestation.
- Award:** Outstanding academic achievement award (highest GPA in cohort: 4.00/4.00).
- 09/2010 – 06/2014 **BSc with 1<sup>st</sup> Class Honours in Biological Sciences – Edinburgh Napier University**
- Thesis:** Modelling the future potential of degraded Mangrove plots using field data from Kenya to provide estimates for a community REDD+ project.
- Awards:** University medal (highest average mark on degree route); Lawrence Ho student prize; Dennis Aw award.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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- 07/2019 – 08/2019 **The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) – Phnom Penh, Cambodia**
- Position:* Biodiversity and SMART Intern
- Produced protected area species inventories in line with Darwin Core standards utilising OpenRefine, R scripting and API services to expedite the collection of external data from the IUCN, EDGE ranking and CITES.
  - Assisted in the training of new community biodiversity rangers in the process of SMART data collection in the field.
- 01/2018 – 08/2018 **The School for Field Studies Center for Conservation and Development Studies in the Lower Mekong – Siem Reap, Cambodia**
- Position:* Student Affairs Manager
- Coordinated safety and risk management as well as logistics for all centre activities including multi day field trips to remote locations in Cambodia and Vietnam.

- Medical 'point person', facilitated first aid training for staff.
- Performed pastoral role: ensuring student well-being, resolving group management issues and facilitating cultural adaptation.

4/2015 – 6/2017

**Elephant Livelihood Initiatives and Environment (E.L.I.E) – Mondulkiri, Cambodia**

*Position:* Project Manager (5/2016-6/2017); Volunteer Co-ordinator (4/2015-5/2016)

- Managed a diverse team (Bunong Indigenous minority, and Khmer) of 48 staff.
- Oversaw the operation of an ecotourism project receiving 4000+ visitors a year.
- Facilitated ongoing capacity building of staff and development of the volunteer program.
- Compiled budgets for the ecotourism and elephant rehabilitation programs, handled cash flow to staff and submitted detailed financial reports.
- Produced regular reports for the board of directors and the Cambodian government.
- Collaborated and maintained positive relationships with other environmental and conservation organisations in the region.

10/2015 – 12/2015

**World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) – Mondulkiri, Cambodia**

*Position:* Independent Consultant Srae Y Community ecotourism project

- Undertook site visits to assess the status of the project and prepared a report, detailing strategies to make the project operational and sustainable.
- Planned and delivered a series of training sessions to project staff and stakeholders from other communities engaged in ecotourism.

05/2013 – 04/2015

**The Conservation Volunteers (TCV)- Scotland**

*Position:* Volunteer Development Officer (8/2014 – 4/2015); Conservation Support Assistant (5/2014 – 8/2014); Volunteer Officer (5/2013 – 11/2013)

- Planned, developed and delivered the Ochils Landscape Partnerships volunteering program and two TCV community health projects.
- Engaged with, and ensured the safety and wellbeing of a diverse cross section of volunteers, many with physical or mental disabilities as well as young adults/children.

**SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

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**Software**

- Proficient in the use of: ArcGIS (including spatial analyst and model builder); Quantum GIS; R studio; SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool); Marxan; STELLA system dynamic modelling; OpenRefine; and advanced Microsoft Excel.
- Limited experience with: Python and Github.

**Languages**

- English (native speaker), Khmer (conversational speaker).

**Other**

- Current SOLO Wilderness First Responder certification.
- Phase 1 and Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey certification.
- Safeguarding (Working with vulnerable individuals) and Child Protection level 2 (UK) certifications.

**References available upon request**