



IS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE NATURE-POSITIVE?

Linguistic foreclosure and the
conditions for regenerative enterprise

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Abstract

English idioms often encode assumptions about the relationship between humans and the natural world. Sometimes our use of language make partnership, reciprocity and regenerative practice with and for nature cognitively harder to reach. This has ramifications for how we engage in the world and also on the design and framing of nature markets that seek to encourage a 'nature-positive' transition, that is, integrating biodiversity and nature into more ecologically-sensitive economies and societies. Drawing on corpus analysis of common English idioms, this paper identifies six recurring patterns through which everyday language positions nature as adversary, resource or property, alongside six regenerative counterparts already present in English. Building on established work in cognitive linguistics, philosophy of language and decision science, we argue that the absence of regenerative vocabulary is not a stylistic problem but a cognitive one. We examine how this plays out in corporate and nature-derived branding and in the working vocabulary of nature markets themselves, situating these patterns within their historical roots in industrial history. Adapting Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital to an ecological register, we propose that the capacity to speak in regenerative rather than extractive patterns is an underexamined variable in sustainability and enterprise resilience. We caution on the use of nature-negative idioms alongside a discussion of how genuine reciprocity might be fostered in nature-positive enterprise discourse, and with practical implications for language audits, procurement and policy.



Image: Fish (Amelia Merritt)

1. Nature-positive lexicon—A moment of realisation

During a conversation about biodiversity net gain (BNG) (the nature market policy that incentivises landowners and developers to deliver a mandatory 10% biodiversity uplift through the planning system), one of us (Amy) used the phrase 'kill two birds with one stone', and stopped mid-sentence.

Here was a vegetarian researcher advocating for ecological citizenship and regenerative value creation, casually using language that normalises violence against the very creatures she claims to want to protect.

The dissonance—on a professional and identity level - was physical, like a felt interruption in our position as researchers and practitioners working in an English context. It left us with a question we couldn't leave alone in our ongoing discussions, one that runs much deeper than the use of a single phrase: **how can we develop genuine partnership with nature when our everyday speech constantly enacts dominion over it?** This led to additional lines of enquiry:

- If we became more attentive to linguistic domination over nature, would it shift our relationship to place, to each other, and to nature?
- What would it take for such a cognitive and linguistic shift to happen?
- And if language is not neutral, if it actively shapes what we can imagine, plan and build, what does it mean in practice for nature markets if a lot of the language we have inherited is systematically extractive?

These are not semantic questions. They are questions about what is cognitively available to us: about what actions we can conceive of, and which ones remain structurally out of reach because we are unwittingly continuing patterns of domination and extraction through our language-in-use.

To investigate this systematically, this conversation led to an engaged reflection between the co-authors of this paper on the role of language in structuring the conditions for regenerative enterprise. We collated our own brainstormed observations on the use of English and its relationship to nature, then used AI (Claude) to assist with corpus analysis: identifying and categorising common English idioms containing references to animals, nature and environmental elements; particularly how these relate to branding, cultural and historical patterns, and more regenerative practices and worldviews. The analytical framework is also derived from four years of NERC-funded research insights, including through the Integrating Finance and Biodiversity programme examining the conditions for small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) nature-positive business models and investment (SMEFinBio).¹

2. Six patterns of linguistic domination

Grouping the results produced six systematic patterns. Each revealed insights about the mental architecture we have inherited for relating to the natural world. In terms of linguistic domination over nature, much of this is rooted in pre-industrial hunter-gatherer, agricultural and domestication and industrial practices in which nature is extracted, tamed, controlled, or desensitised as a living presence lower in the food chain.

1. **Violence normalised as efficiency.** Idioms such as 'kill two birds with one stone' encode harm to animal life as a marker of resourcefulness.
2. **Hierarchy naturalised as inevitable.** 'Pecking order' borrows from observed animal behaviour to present human hierarchy as a fact of nature rather than a social arrangement open to question.
3. **Extraction treated as the default mode of interaction.** Phrases such as 'harvest data' and 'mine for insight' position information and ideas as raw material to be taken rather than knowledge to be built collaboratively.
4. **Control framed as the goal.** 'Tame the beast' casts any complex or unpredictable system, ecological, organisational or personal, as something to be subdued rather than understood or worked with.
5. **Living beings reduced to meat.** 'Dead meat' and 'mincemeat' collapse the distinction between a living creature and a commodity, so routine in everyday speech that it can be invisible.
6. **Nature cast as adversary.** 'Battle the elements' and 'conquer nature' frame the natural world as an opponent to be defeated, foreclosing vocabulary of accommodation or partnership.

The use of these idioms and their roots is intertwined with our cultural and economic evolution (discussed in Section 7). We are not advocating everyone becomes a vegetarian or vegan. We are not negating the vital role agriculture plays in feeding us all or the role that

¹ SME FinBio refers to the operation of entrepreneurial finance markets supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in nature-positive, biodiversity-related activities. See www.cusp.ac.uk/SME-Finbio/

food brings in sharing collective experience and cultural value. Nor are we seeking to challenge how vital natural products are in enabling us to live and our economies to evolve.

We are pointing to the need to pause and notice our use of language, what this means when we collectively use such phrases in our everyday speech. Noticing when we reach for these phrases, and why, is itself a useful discipline and could reveal important insights on our role as ecological citizens, consumers and carriers of patterns of domination and extraction over nature as individuals, businesses, investors or policy-makers.

Pattern	Example idioms	What this embeds	What it forecloses
Violence is normalised	Kill two birds with one stone; beat a dead horse; like shooting fish in a barrel	Animal death is trivial; efficiency justifies harm; bodies are disposable	A felt sense of kinship where conservation feels personal
Hierarchy is naturalised	Top dog; pecking order; alpha male; underdog	Dominance hierarchies are presented as inevitable	Horizontal, reciprocal relationships with the more-than-human world
Extraction is default mode	Mine for information; drill down; harvest data; cherry pick	Even in digital contexts, every interaction is framed as taking or capturing rather than reciprocity	The capacity to imagine giving back; regenerative exchange; mutualism as a design principle
Control is the goal	Break a horse; tame the beast; rein it in; bring to heel	Wild equals dangerous; control equals civilisation	Humility before complexity; learning from wildness rather than subduing it
Bodies become meat	Meat on the bones; fresh meat; meat market; make mincemeat of	Living beings are reduced to consumable flesh; subjects become objects	Recognition of intrinsic value in non-human life; life of nature beyond utility
Nature is adversary	Weather the storm; battle the elements; conquer nature; man vs wild	Oppositional framing makes partnership and co-adaptation difficult to conceive	Attunement, co-adaptation, learning from ecological systems rather than defeating them

Table 1: Patterns of domination in the English language



Image: Stag Beetle (Amelia Merritt)

3. The cognitive access layer: beyond semantics

There is a body of research that makes this more than a concern about sensitivity to certain phrases. Lakoff and Johnson (1980) established that conceptual systems are fundamentally metaphorical: the metaphors we use do not merely describe reality but structure which actions become available. They also constrain the cognitive landscape and the strategies available to us.

When a founder, planner or investor operates within a conflict or domination metaphor, an at-war-with-nature frame in which nature is adversary, a raw material to be extracted, or a territory to be captured, partnership with ecological systems becomes structurally foreclosed. Even where these are throwaway phrases, if used adjacent to a wider attempt to 'become nature-positive', or well-meaning Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) or Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitments, the business leaders, their workforce and the investors who fund them are working from a lexicon of domination; genuine nature-positive pathways can become cognitively inaccessible. The action cannot be imagined because the language does not make space for it.

This is what we mean by linguistic foreclosure: the use of language can mean that a different mental infrastructure for alternative ways of relating to the world has not been built, cognitively and collectively.*

For Wittgenstein (2009), meaning is use: words acquire sense through a language-game embedded within a wider form of life. An idiom like 'harvest data' is not merely a poor word choice; it is a move within a language-game whose rules, extraction, ownership, yield, are inherited from a particular form of life. A regenerative vocabulary is not simply a list of alternative words. It requires a different language-game, in which reciprocity, attunement and patience are purposeful moves in this game.

Tversky and Kahneman (1981) established that linguistically equivalent descriptions of the same situation can produce systematically different decisions depending on how they are framed. The same ecological challenge, framed as 'battling the elements' versus 'reading the conditions', opens different strategic options. Austin (1962) went further: some language does not describe reality at all but creates it. When planning documents speak of 'natural capital' and 'ecosystem services', they are not neutrally describing nature. When nature is spoken of in terms of 'natural capital' and 'ecosystem services', this is not neutrally describing nature.

Vygotsky (1934/1962) established that thinking develops through language, not before it. You cannot strategise about something you cannot articulate (see Wilder, forthcoming). If the vocabulary for genuine reciprocity with natural systems does not exist in our working language, if it feels poetic, niche or impractical, then the strategic actions that reciprocity requires remain inaccessible, not just culturally but cognitively. This is consistent with work in ecolinguistics more broadly: Milstein et al. (2011) show how community can constitute nature as a space for relationships rather than an entity separate from human life (i.e. the more-than-human). Different cultures and languages have different frames of reference for the same object or phenomena, including nature: Lomas (2019) catalogues cross-cultural vocabularies of ecological connection for which English has no direct equivalent.

Saussure's (1916) foundational insight was that the relationship between a word and the concept it carries is arbitrary. That matters here because it means our inherited vocabulary was built by convention, and the convention can be rebuilt. However, Latin and other root languages are carriers of a shared cognitive load and this historical legacy, as a carrier of structured thinking in relation to the world, is also valid. Communities had a felt, affective tie to an object that shaped the language they used to name it: how we feel and experience a phenomenon will shape the words we use to frame it. Barthes (1957) took this further, arguing that dominant cultural ideologies work by presenting themselves as natural rather than constructed. 'Nature as resource' and 'nature as adversary' function this way, as naturalised myths of human-nature relations that obscure the choices embedded in them. Plumwood (1993) traces this same logic further back, arguing that Western thought has long constructed nature, alongside the feminine and the colonised, as a subordinate other whose mastery is treated as an instrumental goal in its own right.

Every time we use nature-negative idioms in ordinary speech, we take something of nature's expressive power to make our own language vivid, while contributing nothing back. This is the argument we want to make: the use of nature-dominant thinking in everyday lexicon is not merely a communication problem. At scale, this becomes a governance problem, a policy problem, and an investment problem that affects the design, governance and transactions that happen in nature markets and beyond.

4. Naming without reciprocity: corporate nature branding

The pattern of nature-dominant framing is not confined to everyday speech. It recurs, in a more visible form, wherever an organisation borrows from the natural world to name itself. Across sectors, from technology and finance to consumer goods and logistics, borrowing from nature has become a standard resource in brand construction, because it works: nature-derived names carry a cultural warmth, associated with growth, resilience, and abundance. What distinguishes this from ordinary metaphor is the direction of the transaction.

This asymmetry is often one-directional: a name lends cultural and emotional resonance to an organisation, but the organisation's environmental record is rarely required to justify or repay this back to nature. Nature functions here as an unpaid contributor to brands, and in many cases, this may be done relatively unconsciously. Saussure's account of phrasing as arbitrary, and Barthes' account of how dominant framings present themselves as natural rather than constructed, together explain why this borrowing tends to go unnoticed when its use has been established. Within a generation of use they become naturalised, treated as simply as a name, which often allows the underlying asymmetry to persist. This is the same mechanism identified in Section 3 operating at brand scale rather than idiom scale.

We identified three types of common corporate identity borrowing from nature: **literal borrowing**, in which a firm takes the name of a species, a landscape feature, or an ecosystem in their branding; **processual borrowing**, in which the language of ecological or agricultural practice, harvest, cultivate, grow, seed, is applied to products, teams, or strategic functions; and **gestural borrowing**, in which qualifiers such as natural, organic, wild, or pure are attached to a brand.²

² Also reflected in debates about 'shades of green', such as Bhatnagar et al., 2025.

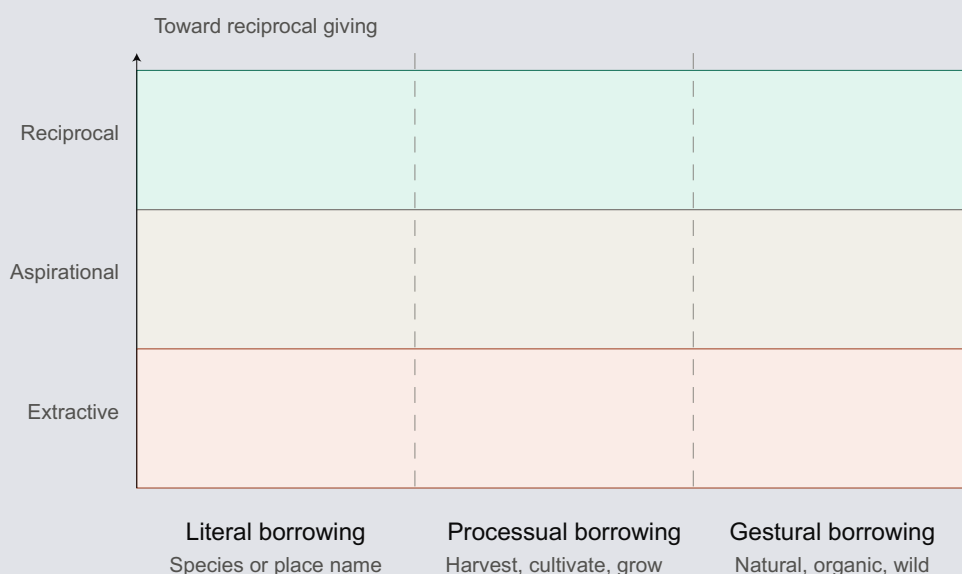


Figure 1: The different types of corporate identity: borrowing from nature and nature-positive degree

This suggests a useful distinction for policy and procurement purposes, between naming that is **extractive**³ (borrowed with no corresponding practice to be nature-positive) and therefore a type of greenwashing (see Mazzucato, 2018); naming that is **aspirational** (borrowed ahead of practice, with a credible and disclosed transition underway towards nature-positive endeavours); and naming that is **reciprocal**, where the environmental association becomes core to how the brand operates. For instance, when nature's power and functions are recognised beyond mere instrumental value (such as nature being on the board, the 'empty chair' to represent nature in decision-making and nature rights recognising nature as a living stakeholder).

³ Keystone Brand Builder is one applied approach: a platform that works with the operating metaphor beneath a founder's brand and supports the development of a personalised brand lexicon, mitigating the extractive defaults that general-purpose AI writing tools tend to reproduce, opening strategic options a combative default would foreclose. Keystone Brand Builder is currently in BETA mode: <https://keystone.eco/brand-builder>



Figure 2: An example of a reciprocal branding by Able and Cole (Photo: Amy Burnett)

The naming pattern examined here is the same transaction at organisational scale, formalised, monetised, and embedded in brand strategy. We have discussed the individual and cultural side of this pattern; corporate naming is where linguistic capital becomes balance-sheet relevant: brand equity derived from nature is a form of unearned equity, currently uncosted and unreciprocated in almost every sustainability and enterprise framework in use. Making this distinction is not about penalising the use of nature-derived names, which would be both impractical and an unnecessary distraction in the move toward a more nature-positive enterprise. It's about making the gap between name and practice visible and verifiable.

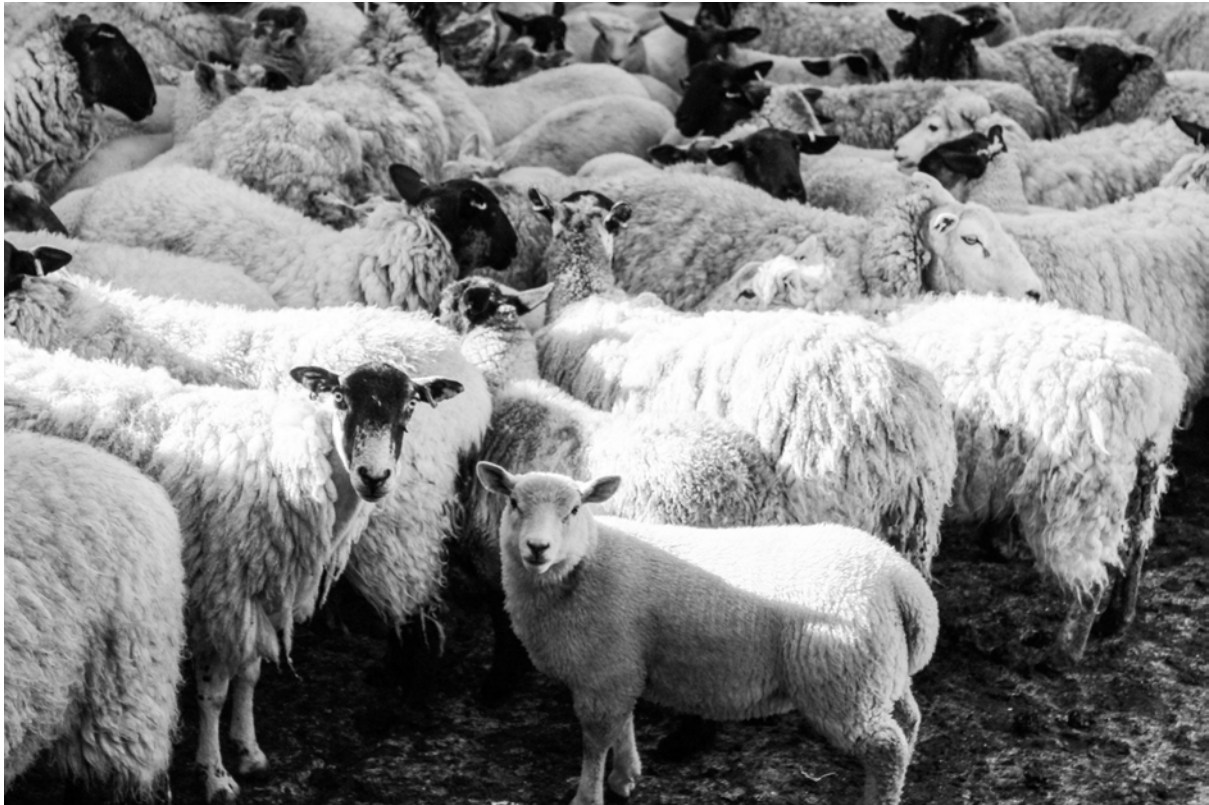


Image: Sheep (Amelia Merritt)

5. Six patterns of linguistic regeneration

The domination patterns identified in Section 2 do not constitute the whole of the English language corpus. There is also a smaller but genuine cluster of idioms that model reciprocity, patience and partnership rather than control (within the regenerative register). Co-author Robyn Owen prompted this extension of the analysis, observing that a purely diagnostic account of negative phrasing risks reinforcing the very desensitisation it critiques. We applied the same corpus method used in Section 2, checking each example against standard idiom dictionaries, to identify positive counterparts.

Six regenerative patterns emerged, each broadly countering the domination patterns above.

1. **Cultivation in place of extraction.** Where 'harvest data' and 'mine for insight' treat information as raw material, 'sow the seeds of', 'cultivate an idea' and 'nurture talent' treat it as something tended over time, implying an ongoing relationship between the cultivator and what is grown rather than a one-off act of taking.
2. **Accompaniment in place of control.** Where 'tame the beast' frames complexity as something to be subdued, 'go with the flow', 'ride the wave' and 'let nature take its course' frame it as a process to be joined rather than mastered.
3. **Patience in place of efficiency.** Where 'kill two birds with one stone' prizes speed and yield, 'good things come to those who wait' and 'it will bear fruit in time' recast value as something that accrues on nature's own timescale rather than one imposed on it.

- 4. **Interdependence in place of hierarchy.** Where 'pecking order' naturalises rank, 'a rising tide lifts all boats', 'it takes a village' and 'strength in numbers' naturalise mutual benefit and collective capacity instead.
- 5. **Kinship in place of commodification.** Where 'dead meat' and 'mincemeat' reduce animals to product, 'man's best friend' and 'birds of a feather' recognise companionship and shared disposition.
- 6. **Wisdom in place of adversary.** Where 'battle the elements' and 'conquer nature' cast the natural world as opponent, 'nature knows best' and 'learn from the land' cast it as a source of knowledge

Below we summarise how the six domination patterns can be mirrored by their regenerative counterpart, which conscious effort.

Domination pattern	Example idiom	Regenerative counterpart	Example idiom
Violence as efficiency	Kill two birds with one stone	Patience	Bear Fruit in Time
Hierarchy as inevitable	Pecking order	Interdependence	A Rising Tide Lifts All Boats
Extraction as default	Harvest data, mine for insight	Cultivation	Sow the Seeds Of
Control as the goal	Tame the beast	Accompaniment	Go With the Flow
Meat, not kin	Dead meat, mincemeat	Kinship	Man's Best Friend
Nature as adversary	Battle the elements	Wisdom	Nature Knows Best

Table 2: Domination patterns and their regenerative counterparts

These patterns are not novel inventions; they already exist in English. What they show, and the limits of what they show, is discussed in Section 6.

6. Tensions in nature-positive framing

Positive framing is not, on its own, evidence of non-instrumental use. 'Every cloud has a silver lining' treats an adverse weather condition as an obstacle to be cognitively reframed, not always as a subject with standing in its own right.⁴ Most idioms on both sides of this analysis, negative and positive, are not really about nature at all. They use nature as a vehicle for talking about human resilience, patience, hierarchy or cooperation. The more demanding change is building a vocabulary in which nature appears as a partner rather than a prop.

The distinction drawn in Section 5, between positive and negative framing and emotional value (valence) and instrumentality, points to a broader tension in how 'nature-positive' framing is used across policy and practice. A term can carry positive associations: nature recovery, nature-based solutions, nature-positive finance itself, while the underlying grammar of accounting, credit, offset, uplift, remains transactional or extractive.

This is also consistent with a body of work in environmental policy and political ecology that has scrutinised the specific vocabulary of nature markets. Coffey (2016) shows how economic metaphors such as natural capital and ecological debt do ideological work in environmental policy discourse, narrowing rather than expanding the terms of debate. Gómez-Baggethun and Ruiz-Pérez (2011) trace how the language of ecosystem services, introduced initially as a communicative strategy, has itself driven a shift toward commodification and market exchange. Robertson (2012) makes this argument in relation to biodiversity banking specifically: turning a habitat into a measurable, bankable unit is not a neutral technical step but one that enacts a particular, alienated relationship to the thing measured. Victor (2020), writing within the CUSP research programme, reaches a related conclusion: monetary valuation of nature rests on conceptual and measurement problems serious enough that the exercise can obscure more than it reveals. Read together, this literature suggests the extractive grammar identified in nature markets is not incidental to how those markets were designed. Nature-positive finance, on this reading, attempts to build new financial infrastructure atop a linguistic infrastructure built for the opposite purpose.

7. Towards linguistic capital

Historians and philosophers of science have traced the 'conquest of nature' framing to the scientific and economic rhetoric of the early modern period, and its consolidation through nineteenth-century industrialisation, when land, labour and nature were reorganised together as inputs to production. Merchant (1980) traces the intellectual origins of the domination framing to the scientific and economic rhetoric of the early modern period, when the scientific revolution reconceived nature as a passive, mechanical resource rather than a living organism. This framing consolidated further through nineteenth-century

⁴ While it may be a British tradition to talk about the weather, with a changing climate we are becoming more acclimatised of the need for balanced weather conditions.

industrialisation, when land, labour and nature were reorganised together as inputs to production (Clayre, 1983).

We borrow the term linguistic capital from Bourdieu (1991), while adapting it for a different purpose. Bourdieu used the term to describe how command of a society's language confers social power within a given field, a matter of class and education as much as vocabulary. Our use is narrower and differently oriented: not the social prestige of a speaker's language, but the cognitive availability of a regenerative rather than extractive vocabulary, regardless of who is speaking. We propose linguistic capital, in this ecological sense, as a form of capital largely overlooked in sustainability and innovation frameworks: the capacity to speak in regenerative rather than extractive patterns as a precondition for creating value across every other dimension (see also Burnett, 2025).

Existing frameworks, whether the Taskforce for Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), the Doughnut Economy, or social return on investment models, measure what organisations do. They rarely examine how those organisations speak about what they are doing, or whether that language itself constitutes a form of value creation or value extraction.

Wilder (forthcoming) develops a parallel argument in the context of SME resilience: the specific metaphorical base a founder operates within shapes which strategic actions are cognitively available under pressure, and that language capacity functions as an underexamined variable in why early-stage enterprises succeed or fail. Where a founder's working vocabulary is limited to extraction, competition and control, their strategic repertoire narrows accordingly; where it extends to mutualism, reciprocity and adaptive response, a wider range of options becomes conceivable. This is consistent with the argument advanced here: linguistic capital is one of the mechanisms by which such resilience is built, or foreclosed.

Extractive language also impacts on the cultural exchange and measurement infrastructure underpinning nature markets (see Burnett et al., forthcoming). Without ways to measure, reward and steward the regenerative value dimensions, there is a risk that England's implementation of biodiversity net gain and other nature markets, will operate through a disconnected-unit accounting logic that falls short of genuine reciprocity. When landowners describe biodiversity net gain in the language of compliance and cost rather than stewardship, even in cooperative models such as the Environmental Farmers Group (see Burnett and Lyon, 2024), ways to surface reciprocal, relational arrangements will be at odds with a policy framework built from transactional ones.

8. Practical regenerative language: a starting point

Our inherited lexicon gave us a particular cognitive architecture, and most of us are simply using what we were given. Rather than asking whether organisations should start banning words and phrases, a more useful question is if I used words differently, what new ways of understanding and relating could this open up? That is a question of access to new mental

frames of understanding, not compliance to agreed measurement and policy frameworks: a quiet choice to pay attention to the words we utter and the impact they have on the world.

Instead of	Consider	What it opens
Kill two birds with one stone	Accomplish two things at once	Patience
Mine for insights	Surface understanding	Interdependence
Harvest data	Learn from information	Cultivation
Tame the beast	Work with the challenge	Accompaniment
Weather the storm	Move through a difficult period	Kinship
Top dog / pecking order	Lead coordinator / collaborative structure	Wisdom
Animal instincts	Embodied wisdom	Recognising intelligence in non-human knowing

Table 3: Rethinking nature-positive lexicon

9. Implications for policy and practice

For those working at the intersection of nature markets, devolution, sustainability and place-based innovation, linguistic capital has practical implications that extend well beyond individual speech habits. Below, we suggest some starting points for ideas about encouraging genuine nature-positive language in policy and practice from the insights discussed in this paper.⁵

⁵ See Valuing Community: "Speaking in a nature-friendly way: noticing words and phrases and what this means for organisations—a checklist for organisations and everyone". Online at: <https://valuingcommunity.co.uk/news/speaking-in-a-nature-friendly-way/>

- **Language audits in environmental policy.** Before implementing 'nature-positive' strategies, analyse the language of the documents themselves. What metaphors dominate? Do they enact partnership or extraction? Who has a voice in how nature is described?
- **Regenerative procurement standards.** Linguistic criteria could be added to public procurement: does the bidder's language reveal extractive logic, or partnership? Is nature positioned as subject or object?
- **Community linguistic agency.** Communities need tools to recognise extractive language patterns in planning processes, to develop regenerative alternatives, and to challenge corporate appropriation of nature terminology in their localities. What is in place to enable and surface this?
- **Corporate name accountability.** Where companies use nature-derived branding, public disclosure of the relationship between that branding and the company's measurable environmental record are required. What would make the gap between symbol and substance visible and challengeable?
- **Positive-vocabulary building alongside audits.** In addition to a language audit, work towards applying reciprocal frames where these feel genuine and appropriate to your work and understanding. Can you notice a shift in how and when you use these phrases, and do you have governance and a culture to support and accompany this?

This has a direct parallel in the governance of AI-enabled tools in community and environmental data systems more broadly, where the operating principle is that such tools should support human judgement about value and relationships (including with the non-human) rather than substitute an algorithmic proxy for it. Applied here, the same principle suggests that any AI system used to assess, monitor or price nature, in biodiversity metric calculators, natural capital dashboards, habitat banking platforms, inherits whatever grammar its designers gave it. An extractive vocabulary at the design stage becomes an extractive default at scale. Language audits of the kind proposed above should extend to the tools doing the measuring, not only the policy documents describing them.

10. Conclusion: speaking regenerative futures into being

The regenerative transition is often framed as a question of technology, finance or policy. But underneath all of them is a question of consciousness, and consciousness is primarily shaped, held and transmitted through language. We cannot build what we cannot imagine. What we can imagine is partly constrained by the language we have available to think with. The cognitive architecture that inherited language provides is not neutral, it has a positive or negative value. It was built in a particular historical moment, for particular purposes, and it often reflects those purposes still.

There is a more fundamental question this paper cannot resolve: whether extractive language is a habit that regenerative practice can displace, or a pattern that keeps reasserting itself across historical periods for reasons beyond this paper's scope. We take a more hopeful view. Language is not fixed. It responds to practice, to attention, to the deliberate introduction of new frames, and new frames do not just change what we say. They change what we can think, which changes what we can plan, build, advocate for and deliver.

The regenerative patterns in Section 5, cultivation, accompaniment, patience, interdependence, kinship and wisdom already exist in English, waiting to be used more deliberately. Language is where that practice begins, not because words are the whole answer, but because they are the cognitive infrastructure through which every other answer either becomes available or stays out of reach. If we want different outcomes, we need a different language, and we build it word by carefully chosen word.



Figure 3: A new lens on place, nature and responsibility? A definition of Ecological Citizenship from the heart (Burnett, 2026) ⁶

⁶ This definition was written by one of the authors in response to a question 'What does Ecological Citizenship mean to you?'. It serves as a scaffold for a wider research agenda as a Local Policy Innovation Partnership (LPIP) Place Fellow, offering a renewed lens on place stewardship and sustainable innovation as part of research led by City-REDI at the University of Birmingham. Find out more: <https://lpiphub.bham.ac.uk>

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Notes

* We use 'linguistic foreclosure' in a sense distinct from its earlier use in French linguistics and psychoanalysis. Damourette and Pichon described a proposition as foreclosed when it is excluded from the field of possibilities available to a speaker; Lacan (2006) later developed the term within a specifically psychoanalytic account of psychosis. Our usage refers only to the cognitive unavailability of ecological partnership produced by extractive, everyday vocabulary.

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