



Photo illustration credit: Joel Fuller

Global Illegal wildlife trade presents a critical conservation and social development challenge. Inspired by other law-enforcement first responses to vexing conservation problems, many countries, conservation organizations, and conservation advocates continue to seek harsher sentencing laws and punishments for people found guilty of wildlife trafficking or poaching. Drawing on my research from over the past eight years on illegal wildlife trade in ornamental plants in a variety of international contexts, I will argue against this turn towards criminalization for perpetuating forms of conservation violence which ultimately undermines conservation goals. Instead, drawing from examples of ongoing collaborative research, I will make an argument for *socioecological harm reduction* in the illegal wildlife trade. Through examples from past research into the global illegal cactus and succulent trade, alongside ongoing research in the illegal trade in endangered succulents in South Africa and the carnivorous Venus flytrap in North Carolina, USA, I will suggest how criminalization in conservation reproduces social harms that may further perpetuate ecological harms. A socioecological harm reduction approach to the illegal wildlife trade draws our attention to the entwined struggles for social and ecological liberation.

Please join us in welcoming GES
PhD alum: Dr. Jared Margulies
Thursday, Feb 27th
4:30pm, UMBC Library Gallery
(reception to follow)
***“What we can learn about
conservation justice from the
illegal plant trade?”***



Dr. Jared Margulies (GES PhD '17)
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