

# What if The World without Bees?

## -Combine Speculative Design and Collaborative Creativity to Protect Endangered Animals

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**ABSTRACT**-What if the world without bees? Biologist thinks 50% of the species will be facing extinction by the end of the century.<sup>[1]</sup>As the topic of sustainable development draws more attention, ecological sustainability has become a hot topic. Protecting endangered animals seems to be an urgent issue. This essay is going to analyze how speculative design could be used within my specialism - collaborative creativity in order to protect endangered animals. There are several case studies that reflect on the speculative design's effect on protecting endangered animals.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Protecting endangered animals is a mission that is never endless and exploring the design ways to help people change their behavior unconsciously would be more effective. This essay will discuss several design cases and the possibilities of raise up human conscious to protect endangered animals by using speculation ways. And how to combining speculative design and collaborative creativity and apply them to protect endangered animals.

### 2.WHAT IS SPECULATIVE DESIGN, COLLABORATIVE CREATIVITY AND ABOUT ENDANGERED ANIMALS

Speculative design is an advanced way for designers to imagine the possible future, motivating people to rethink about current living conditions of human beings, which Dunne and Raby mentioned in their book.<sup>[2]</sup>The preferable future<sup>[3]</sup>might be part of our imagination. Perhaps there will be two applications that inspired by speculative design. The first one is to test potential products and services before they occur to judge the attitudes of industry and mainstream customers. The second is to use future technology but combining different ideas and configurations to guide the development of current products.<sup>[4]</sup>This might be considered to guide humanity to think about the problems of the current state of life through a possible future.

Collaborative creativity is a curriculum that needs to understand the importance of interdisciplinary. “The importance of analyzing creativity in this more holistic sense is readily apparent when one considers that most

creative pursuits in industry involve interdisciplinary teams working together to develop a product that cannot be created by a single individual alone,” said Lena and Ernest. Studying collaboration with diverse knowledge might be useful to recreate a preferable future. Designers could combine these thoughts and consider how to protect endangered animals.

Have you ever imagined a world without bees? Bee is the most important pollinator of food crops in the world. Two-thirds of the food that people consume each day mainly relies on pollination by bees.<sup>[5]</sup> It’s no exaggeration to say people cannot survive without bees. There are many different animal species that are facing extinction because of human activities. People tend to consider continuously gaining from existing resources instead of the survival of other species. They yearn for ivories to become their artworks while dreaming of crocodiles’ skin to be part of their bags or shoes. When it comes to human rights or gender relations, people are always rejected to be 'commodities', 'products', or 'someone's accessory'. Therefore designers should not treat animals as the materials to create a product. However, nowadays the perspective of most consumers has fallen into a huge misunderstanding - the rarer material is, the more valuable the product is. This caused the normal animal species to become endangered and extinct later on. So what if changing people's inherent ideas?

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### 3. ACCORDING TO THE CASE STUDIES TO RELATE THE SPECULATIVE DESIGN, COLLABORATIVE CREATIVITY AND PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED ANIMALS.

Pandas used to be considered an endangered species, and this is partially why WWF (World Wildlife Fund) has been using it as a logo (See Figure 1) since 1996. During that time people realized the issue of what if the panda had been completely extinct in the next two decades and humans would have lost this adorable, large-scale carnivore with black and white fur. So designers created the logo with pandas to attract people's attention. However, these years, pandas are no longer endangered because of human protection. Therefore, some graphic designers want to redesign a logo that symbolizes the endangered species.<sup>[6]</sup> ( See Figure 2) They tried to use polar bears to replace pandas because iceberg melts caused by global warming, causing their decline of them. Designers started to think about what kind of animals might be endangered in the possible future and took this to warn humans to take good care of them. The combination between the graphic designers' ideas and the zoologists' research could mean the beginning of the animals' protection speculatively.



Figure 1 WWF logo  
<https://www.wwf.org.uk/>



Figure 2 New WWF logo  
<https://www.creativeblog.com/features/designers-react-to-grey-londons-speculative-wwf-rebrand>

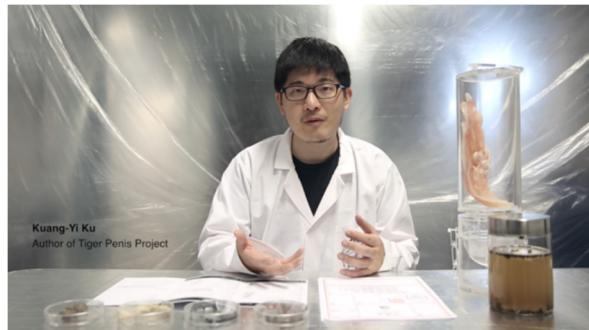


Figure 3 Tiger Penis Project, Screenshot  
<https://www.baltanlaboratories.org/library/report-speculative-future-clinic-of-chinese-medicine>

I also consider that rebuilding the parts of rare species by technic might play an important role in protecting endangered species. 'Tiger Penis Project' (See Figure 3) generated by Kuang YiKu is a worth-learning speculative design example.<sup>[7]</sup> In this project, his main purpose was trying to create organs (used to be the parts of real animals) through synthetic biology that can replace the animal products as traditional Chinese medicine. As Kuang claimed, "Eating animal parts is a common practice in traditional Chinese medicine. Eating tiger penis for male virility enhancement is called 'yi xing bu xing'." This case probably makes people imagine what it will be like when medicines, food, or products made from animal parts turn out to be biosynthetic substances. Same as mentioned above, the potential products might be tested by the patient's attitude which could verify its possibility and this is part of the application in speculative design. This creative experiment protects the rare species who are hurt by the traditional medical culture or food culture while at the same time avoiding cultural conflict. Associating with science and design, Kuang YiKu, a social designer, initiates a new plan for protecting animals.



Figure 4 Atlantic Bluefin tuna, Screenshot  
<https://www.businessinsider.com/why-bluefin-tuna-expensive-fish-japan-sushi-maguro-2018-11?r=US&IR=T>

Compared with the medicinal value of the previous case, the edibleness of the rare species in the next case is more general for the public. A great number of species extinction are caused by people's greedy appetite, such as Atlantic Bluefin tuna (See Figure 4). The good taste of this kind of fish is considered extremely delicious. Therefore, humans' overfishing led to a sharp decline in their numbers. International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) already put it on the red list,

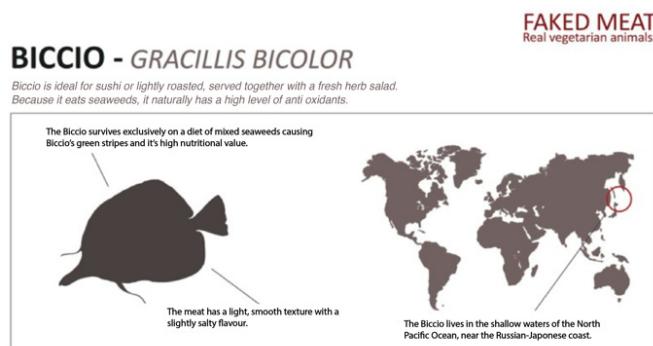
marking it as “Endangered”. [8] Although food are important resource for humanbeing, for the meat eaters, pay more attention to animals even its not endangered, might be a kind of protaction.

And what if designers create some ‘new creatures’ based on people’s favorite flavors? Marije Vogelzang, an eating designer who created a project named ‘faked meat’ (See Figure 5). It is an attractive project because she invented some new creatures with shapeless soy protein. She indicated that “The fantasy animals I invented have a habitat, lifestyle, and diet and these factors decide on the design and taste of the meat.” [9] (See Figure 6). Also, the taste of the faked meat caters to the general public. Her

main purpose in this project is mainly for vegetarians. It makes me think of the previous part about use of future technology but combining different ideas and configurations to guide the development of current products. Could people accept these faked creatures created by the food designers to substitute for the good taste of endangered animals? Is it possible to cultivate people's understanding of the value of endangered species? People might be interested in these new creatures, for example, Biccio (See Figure 7), and curious about the taste. If the taste could evoke their interest, the animals such as Atlantic Bluefin tuna could probably survive in the future.



**Figure 5** Faked Meat, Herbast <[https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio\\_page/faked-meat/](https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio_page/faked-meat/)>



**Figure 6** Faked Meat, Fantasy animal Biccio  
<[https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio\\_page/faked-meat/](https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio_page/faked-meat/)>



**Figure 7** Faked Meat, Fantasy animal Biccio  
<[https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio\\_page/faked-meat/](https://marijevogelzang.nl/portfolio_page/faked-meat/)>

## 4. CONCLUSION

Speculative design is a discipline which could provide designers an exploratory and researchable way. When the extinction animals come into people's sight, combine any field knowledge could be the collaborative creativity for building their safe area.

In these case studies, the designers applied speculative design and a variety of disciplines (such as graphic design and zoology, medicine and science, food design and nutriology) to create a possible future while using these to shift people's sight on endangered animals' value. When the medicine, food or product are unique and can replace the animals as material, human activities might not hurt them and their amount might rise up.

Presenting the possibilities of the future might let people reflect on the current attitude towards animals. When people awareness that protecting endangered animals are important and go into action, the ecological sustainability could be developed. Our next-generation might experience the diversity of animal species by themselves.

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