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Università di Salerno   Yours sincerely,

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Dear Editor,

Since the publication of Grey (1984) it has been drawn to my attention that my survey of earlier work in the area omitted the paper of Mendelssohn (1976), a work of which I was not aware at the time. Mendelssohn considers a Leslie matrix model in which the object of harvesting is to maximise the total expected harvest over a finite planning horizon, which is then allowed to recede to ∞. The main results are that the ultimate optimal policy is to maximise the present rate of growth (λ say, which is greater than 1) of the population, in which case the present value of an individual grows geometrically with rate λ as the horizon recedes to infinity.

The harvesting problem which I consider in Section 3 of my paper has a rather different objective, namely to maximise the value of the individuals which are *not* harvested. The function of harvesting in this case is merely to avoid as far as possible the undesirable density-dependent effect of mortality on individuals of relatively fertile ages; the harvested individuals are not considered to have any value in their own right. Nevertheless, qualitatively the results are similar: the ultimate optimal policy is to maximise the present rate of growth (λ say, which is now less than 1), in which case the present value of an individual decays geometrically with rate λ as the horizon recedes to ∞.

I acknowledge that had I been aware of Mendelssohn's paper at the time of writing my own, due account would have been taken of his earlier results.

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