EKLIPSE

Knowledge & Learning Mechanism
on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services

Developing a mechanism
for supporting better
decisions on our
environment
based on the best
available knowledge.

EKLIPSE is developing a European Mechanism to answer requests from policy makers and other societal actors on biodiversity related issues

More information on the processes and the EKLIPSE project funded by the EU in H2020 is available at
www.eklipse-mechanism.eu

TOPIC:

What approaches can environmental regulators use to enhance environmental sustainability and improve outcomes for biodiversity of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food and drink sector of Europe and what are the advantages and disadvantages?

1 Invitation to share knowledge for informed decision-making

This request was submitted by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

Context: Government organisations and regulators have a key role in helping small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operate competitively yet in a more environmentally sustainable way. SEPA is working to implement their new regulatory strategy 'One Planet Prosperity', which summarises the agency's vision for ways they can work with Scottish businesses to enhance environmental sustainability. SEPA would like to find out which approaches and tools they and other regulatory agencies in Europe could adopt when working with SMEs to achieve this vision, from compliance with mandatory environmental standards, to going beyond compliance, and encouraging and promoting voluntary participation. The aim is to understand and evaluate how effective these various approaches, techniques and incentives are in changing employee behaviour and company culture as well as customer behaviour and mind-set, and ultimately improving biodiversity outcomes of business operations.

Focusing on SMEs in the food and drink sector, which can have important implications on land and water management, this request aims to review literature, collect case studies and lessons learnt to identify available approaches that can help foster environmental sustainability. This will include an analysis of what and why has worked well or not worked from an SME perspective.

EKLIPSE is inviting scientists, policy makers, practitioners and other societal actors to share their knowledge on this specific selected request to explore available resources and evaluate if the request requires a structured knowledge gap analysis and consultation on research priorities.

Completed or ongoing knowledge generation or synthesis particularly on the following aspects are relevant:

1. Identify and review literature on the range and effectiveness (both social and environmental) of current approaches, from environmental compliance to voluntary agreements, available to increase the sustainability of SMEs in the food and drink sector in Europe;
2. Identify how these approaches were implemented: e.g. tools and practices used in the dialogue phase between businesses and regulators on the example of case studies;
3. Identify conditions needed to have effective outcomes.

The final framing of the request is being developed through an interactive dialogue between the EKLIPSE scientists and the requester (Scottish Environment Protection Agency, SEPA), and will be further discussed with stakeholders to ensure relevance for policy making regarding biodiversity and ecosystem services.

We want to explore the amount of knowledge that exists in this area, who the main knowledge holders are and, if after scoping we decide to answer this request, we want to identify the most suitable methodology for answering it.

Please contribute your comments and knowledge/references in the online KNOCK forum.

How to contribute to the Call for Knowledge

All knowledge collected through this call for knowledge will be collected and discussed on the KNOCK Forum. To upload documents and participate in the discussion, please register at our quick and easy 'Keep me Posted' page. Then, please click on the relevant thread to upload your information. Each thread already contains documents that are potentially relevant to the request. We invite you to add any information that you think is relevant for this request, and justify its inclusion (e.g. additional information from countries, scales or disciplinary perspectives not covered sufficiently etc…). Relevant information should be grouped under the following headings: **1) literature reviews, 2) empirical studies/practical experiences, 3) modelling studies and 4) conceptual papers** and can include:

- Links to open access papers.
- Links to published and unpublished grey literature or case studies.
- Description of on-going research projects, or knowledge compilations, expected to deliver results within the next year.
- Your on-the-ground experiences in this field.

2   Objective of the call and request to be addressed by this call

EKLIPSE coordinates innovative and transparent approaches for science, policy and societal actors to jointly provide the best available evidence leading to better informed decision-making and to identify current and future research priorities. A request on supporting businesses to improve the outcomes of their operations for biodiversity was proposed by the [Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA)](#) to the EKLIPSE call for Request (CfR.1/2016). The objective of this call for knowledge is to launch an initial scoping process on the request meant to identify available assessments, existing studies and other resources.

3   Background on EKLIPSE

EKLIPSE is an EU-funded project that started in February 2016. With support from the European Commission and a high level Strategic Advisory Board (SAB), the project aims to establish a robust and flexible long-term mechanism for policy support on biodiversity and ecosystem services, communicating and engaging a wide set of knowledge holders and ensuring tailor-made outreach of results to knowledge requesters and society more broadly.

The success of EKLIPSE and its resulting mechanism is in everyone's hands:

- the 'requesters' from policy and society who need to know what knowledge is out there to answer their policy or societal needs;
- the knowledge holders (be they scientists or other citizens) who want their knowledge to mean something; and
- the extensive networks working on biodiversity and ecosystem services who have the enthusiasm and knowledge to make the mechanism work in the long term.

4   The process: how EKLIPSE answers requests

The EKLIPSE process consists of several steps (see figure below): After the Call for request (step 1), the second step is the Call for Knowledge that supports further Scoping and Framing the request (step2). Based on the findings of the Call for Knowledge, EKLIPSE and the requester discuss how to proceed with the request (step 3). If already sufficient knowledge on the request is available or other reasons exist for not continuing with the request, the request will not be taken further, and the outcome is the collection of knowledge identified in second step. If EKLIPSE and the requester agree on continuing, the request will be framed and finalised jointly with relevant science, policy and societal actors. EKLIPSE then organizes a Call for Experts inviting experts to form an expert working group on the request (step 3a).

The selected expert group will, together with the Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB) and the requester, agree on the methodological approach to be taken for the knowledge synthesis. This will be compiled in a protocol, made publicly available and peer reviewed (step 3b). During the process of gathering, integrating and synthesizing the best available evidence, communication between all relevant actors will be key. Finally, the results of the co-generated evidence will be peer reviewed before being communicated in targeted ways to the requester (e.g., as a report or brief or other output to be discussed with the requester), as well as relevant decision-makers, the knowledge community and the general public (steps 3 c and step 4).

5 Next steps: How EKLIPSE will continue with this request

If EKLIPSE decides to carry out a new knowledge synthesis based on the responses to this call for knowledge, it will invite experts on the topic to express their interest in joining the Expert Working Group. The expert working group will cover diverse and complementary skills (including multidisciplinary skills and a broad geographical coverage) and will interact with relevant stakeholders to ensure appropriate methodological choices and uptake of outputs.

The Call for Experts will be widely publicized on the EKLIPSE website, on the Forum and other dissemination channels to ensure a broad coverage of disciplines and geography. The selected group will be supported financially by the EKLIPSE project for travel expenses and in certain cases through honorary contracts.