

ESP10 Hannover, Germany, 21–25 October, 2019

SESSION DESCRIPTION

Title of session:

Ecosystem Service Research Application in Corporate Action: Increasing Impact, Unlocking Opportunity and Driving Innovation via the ESP business track

Hosts:

	Title	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host:		Matt Smith	JNCC	Matt.Smith@jncc.gov.uk
Host:		Martine van Weelden	ESP	Martine.vanweelden@fsd.nl
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Abstract:

Building on the success of the success of the ESP Business Track Sessions held at the MENA, EU and LAC regional Conferences, this session will explore sector specific cases where businesses are adopting the ecosystem services concept in their operations.

As demand for resources grows, and our natural systems continue to be degraded, businesses globally are becoming increasingly aware of the value that natural capital and ecosystem services provides to their bottom line. Environmental impacts and dependencies are presenting ever increasing risks (and opportunities) to the private sector¹.

For many businesses identifying the environmental consequences of their operations is challenging, often due the intangible characteristics of the goods and services ecosystems provide to the value chain. An increasing number of frontrunner businesses are using frameworks such as the Natural Capital Protocol² to help business managers generate trusted, credible and actionable information that enables organisations to make more informed decisions about how they interact with nature. Such frameworks provide a generalised approach that can be adapted for individual requirements and help businesses:

- become familiar with the concept of natural capital and ecosystem services and identify how they relate to business operations;
- assess ecosystem services dependencies and impacts within company's value creation boundaries.
- consider value perspectives and other technical issues (i.e. baselines, scenarios, spatial boundaries, and time horizons);
- prioritise ecosystem services within the area of influence (i.e. what is relevant to the business and can be managed);
- gather only the relevant ecosystem services data and knowledge;
- map activities against impact drivers and/or dependencies and define how to monitor these factors.
- assess future scenarios of change in delivery of ecosystem services (i.e. water availability); and
- manage and improve natural capital to ensure long-term service delivery,

¹ World Resources Institute (2010). Corporate Ecosystem Services Review. Available at: <http://www.wri.org/blog/2010/08/over-200-companies-now-use-corporate-ecosystem-services-review>

² Natural Capital Coalition. <http://naturalcapitalcoalition.org/protocol/>

Businesses drive the global economy under which most of us live, supporting the prosperity and well-being of the global population. They are run by, and dependent upon, global citizens; who are a critical component in driving the value creation systems through which they operate. To improve the long-term sustainability of our global economic models, it is imperative that all elements of society collaborate to address the business-critical questions and challenges (such as those outlined here).

At previous ESP Conferences, the science community recognised that better engagement with the private sector could help advance the application of existing research and generate innovative ideas through cross-sectoral dialogue. This session aims to pave the way for future science-business collaborations

Goals and objectives of the session:

The overarching goal of this business track is to stimulate the application of the ecosystem services concept in business activity by encouraging dialogue between business representatives and researchers. This session, will further develop the ESP conference business tracks that were initiated in 2018 by serving as a vehicle for practitioners to meet, showcase and build on previous experiences where ecosystem services are used in business decision making.

The objective of this session(s) is:

1. Showcase business cases which relate to natural capital and ecosystem services, and understand encountered hurdles within these cases in implementing ecosystem services concept (to be presented by business representatives);
2. showcase of projects of how some researchers have been partnering with the private sector;
3. provide solutions which solve the challenges businesses addressed within their presentation based on natural capital and ecosystem services research;
4. come up with ideas how to scale up science-business collaboration by identifying concrete projects, unlock opportunities and drive innovation; and
5. discuss how the ESP community would like to shape the business track and future role of Sectoral Working Group 6: Ecosystem Services in Business for the benefit of researchers and the private sector users of knowledge.

Format

1. Three distinct sessions throughout the day (3x1.5 hrs slot if possible) focussing on different business sector, likely to be: a) food & beverages, b) extraction industry, c) financial industry. The final 1.5hour slot will be a facilitated discussion that will scope future science-business collaboration and identify the role SWG6 could play in facilitating action.
2. Keynote presentations will set the scene from both a business and academic perspective. Both business representatives and scientists will present back to back. Presenters will be invited by the hosts to present their cases.
3. Discuss how to advance science-business collaboration.
4. Wrap-up of ideas and summary of next steps as to how SW6 can facilitate better science-business collaboration throughout the ESP community and beyond.
5. Research pitches: researchers are asked during the break to present their work in 2 minutes and indicate how their research positively impacts society and the economy.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Business track report: This will capture the content of the business track sessions. The content will help ESP reflect on how the Partnership can increase business engagement moving forward.

ESP business / research matchmaking service: Business track sessions will begin to scope the potential for a market place facility where businesses can bring challenges to the academic community to identify where mutually beneficial collaboration can be strengthened and uptake of results can be made easier for businesses.

Connecting research community with business user requirements: Explore ways in which business relevant research can be showcased to potential users (i.e. tools for the NCP toolkit <http://naturalcapitalcoalition.org/protocol/protocol-toolkit/>).

Collate business user requirements: Depending on the level of audience participation, there is scope to capture outputs to create a practice note for researchers on how to engage private sector interest in ecosystem service research.

Work towards joint project: Prior to and following the conference, identify key opportunities for collaborative science-business community projects. Future opportunities and ideas can be discussed during the plenary session.



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