

# 6<sup>th</sup> ESP Europe Conference 2026

18–22 May 2026

Prague, Czechia

Advancing Ecosystem Services Knowledge for Achieving a People and Nature Positive Europe

#esp26europe

## SESSION DESCRIPTION

**ID: T18c**

### Governing the Commons for Ecosystem Services: Insights from recent research

#### Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
<b>Host (s):</b>	Mateja Šmid Hribar	Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts	<a href="mailto:mateja.smid@zrc-sazu.si">mateja.smid@zrc-sazu.si</a>
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#### Abstract:

In recent years, ecosystem services (ES) have become a major research area. However, mainstream studies often overlook the fact that many commons regimes governing natural resources provide provisioning, regulating, and cultural services, sometimes also called Nature's Contributions to People (Fisher et al., 2009; Barnaud et al., 2018; Šmid Hribar et al., 2023; Tucker et al., 2023). Commons—resources such as forests, pastures, and fisheries that are collectively governed—represent an under-researched yet critical dimension of ES research. It is evident that these ecosystems provide a foundation for biodiversity, as well as a variety of benefits including carbon sequestration, water regulation, fire protection, recreation, and cultural identity.

The objective of this session is to examine the intersections between commons and ES, aiming to understand how community-based and collective management practices influence the provision, distribution, and perception of ES.

We invite contributions that explore:

- Empirical assessments of ES provided by commons across different spatial scales;
- Traditional and new commons management and their impact on ecosystem services across various spatial scales, from local to global, and rural to urban;
- Theoretical and methodological approaches developed to enhance our understanding of the commons-ES nexus.

By convening diverse perspectives, the session will highlight how commons provide unique insights into the governance of ecosystem services, rather than treating ES as abstract concept.

#### Goals and objectives of the session:

The session aims to foster dialogue across disciplines and case studies, offering a platform to identify common challenges and innovative approaches, and to inspire new collaborations between researchers, practitioners, and policymakers working at the interface of commons and ecosystem services.

#### Planned output / Deliverables:

Collection of case studies and conceptual contributions presented in the session into a special issue (e.g., *Ecosystem Services*, *International Journal of the Commons*). Or

Co-authored paper synthesizing insights from the presented case studies, focusing on the governance of commons and their role in sustaining ecosystem services.

**Voluntary contributions accepted:**

Yes, I allow any abstract to be submitted to my session for review

**Related to ESP Working Group:**

TWG 18 – Governance & Institutional aspects