

ESP 11 World Conference

“From global to local ecosystem services: pathways to Nature-based Solutions inspired from Down Under”

23-27 June 2025 | Darwin, Australia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: T14

Nature's Benefits: Learn to play an ecosystem services card game

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host:	Marc Russell	US Environmental Protection Agency	russell.marc@epa.gov
Co-host(s):	Maya Kocian	Earth Economics	mkocian@eartheconomics.org
	Simone Maynard	Griffith University (Australian Rivers Institute) and National Parks Association of Queensland	maynardsimone@gmail.com

Abstract:

This workshop will demonstrate how to play the Nature's Benefits card game developed by the US EPA. Attendees will learn how and why the game was developed, what tools the game was based on and what materials are available for hosting a game. The game can be played competitively or cooperatively. Attendees will learn by playing one or two games in small teams. A limited amount of decks will be given out as prizes at the workshop.

Nature's Benefits: The Card Game is a fun way to teach important lessons about ecosystems. These lessons are based on the concepts that: humans receive benefits from nature (also known as ecosystem services) and good stewardship is required to conserve natural resources.

Players explore how people benefit from nature, how our actions impact the benefits we receive, and how working together can sustain benefits for everyone!

In the game, participants role play as different decision makers and try to score points by connecting People to the Natural Resources they use. Players learn how those same Natural Resources are also connected to the Ecosystems that, in turn, provide Natural Resources (<https://www.epa.gov/eco-research/natures-benefits-card-game>)

Goals and objectives of the session:

This session will introduce a card game designed to teach that humans receive benefits from nature (i.e. ecosystem services) and that good ecosystem management is required to conserve flows of natural resources that people benefit from. We will gather feedback from the international community on what expansions or modifications the game might need to resonate outside of the US

Planned output / Deliverables:

We hope this workshop will teach the teachers of an expanded set of players/learners so that the concepts of ecosystem services, and the value of good land stewardship and cooperative management become more integrated into decision making.

Session format:

This session will use multiple tables where small groups of 4–8 people can learn and play the card game. Giving some background on the game, introducing resources, and learning to play during several rounds of play will take around 2 hours, but can be reduced to 1 hour if needed.

Voluntary contributions accepted:

No, I only want to include abstracts from my own invited speakers

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