

6th ESP Europe Conference

18-22 May 2026 | Prague, Czechia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: B1b

Rethinking marine governance through knowledge integration

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
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Abstract:

Marine and coastal ecosystems are critical to biodiversity, cultural heritage and human wellbeing, yet their governance often fails to reflect the diversity of knowledge systems that shape human–ocean relationships. While socio–ecological sciences offer frameworks to connect biodiversity conservation with social benefits, their effectiveness often depends on whose knowledge, values, and priorities are recognized in governance. Historically, marine conservation has been designed through a western–centric lens, overlooking Indigenous and traditional knowledge systems, and thereby reproducing environmental injustices.

This session will explore how integrating scientific, traditional, local and indigenous knowledge can strengthen equity, justice, and inclusivity in marine ecosystem services governance. We will examine case studies where local and cultural values have shaped conservation outcomes, highlighting the risks of ignoring cultural diversity and the opportunities of bridging knowledge systems. By focusing on the ecological and cultural dimensions of coastal and marine ecosystems, the session aims to identify leverage points for co–produced knowledge, assess socio–ecological trade–offs, and explore just transitions in the management of coasts and marine resources.

Goals and objectives of the session:

Participants will discuss how to:

- Recognize and integrate cultural and traditional ecological values in marine conservation.
- Ensure fair and equitable access to ecosystem benefits, particularly for marginalized and underrepresented communities.
- Build governance approaches that strengthen environmental justice and empower local actors.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Expected outcomes include practical guidance for integrating diverse knowledge systems into marine ecosystem services governance and identifying actionable pathways toward equitable and ecologically sound marine management.

Session format:

We propose a 90–minute session structured as follows:

- Short presentations (10 minutes) introducing key perspectives (science, Indigenous, policy, practice).
- A moderated panel discussion and audience engagement through guided Q&A and collaborative mapping of challenges and opportunities.

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group:

[BWG 1 – Marine systems](#)