

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: O2

Biodiversity and ecosystem services in South–East Europe: Research challenges and application issues towards a community of practice

Hosts:

	Title	Name	Organisation	E-mail
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Abstract:

"South East Europe (SEE) has the greatest richness of flora and fauna in Europe and an exceptional number of endemic and relict species. However, biodiversity in SEE is under pressure by a range of environmental threats. SEE countries also share similar problems regarding economy, society and nature. Adoption and application of environmental policies, regulations and standards is still poor in many of these countries. Furthermore, there is general lack of awareness of the values of biodiversity to society. What is needed, is an approach that ensures sustainable and equitable local–regional development while securing the conservation of biodiversity.

Ecosystem services (ES) is becoming recognized in South East Europe as a valuable concept for nature conservation and sustainable development. Universities and research centres as well as international development organisations in the region have conducted research of various size, scope and duration into ES. While some countries have incorporated ES into their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and other policies, overall adoption and implementation across sectors and covering various levels of governance remains limited. This is especially the case at lower levels of government and with management of Protected Areas (PA) at local levels. This is due to various reasons including a lack of knowledge on ES, scepticism, lack of capacities and a deficiency of case studies and show cases that illustrate the

value of the concept of ecosystem services in sustainable land use and the management of natural resources. In the meanwhile, a substantial body of knowledge, new methodologies, classification systems, etc. on ES is being developed which makes the learning curve for countries in South East Europe steeper and more challenging to confront.

The main objective of the proposed session is to bring together researchers and practitioners from the region to present their achievements and discuss how to fill knowledge gaps. One of the options to cope with the lack of capacities in the region is to develop a networking platform to facilitate transnational cooperation through a Community of Practice (CoP) in SEE. It will be a network and a platform for transnational collaboration and it will provide: knowledge transfer and capacity building through various means. The proposed CoP will contribute to the region's preparation and adoption of various EU policies such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030, the EU green deal, the EU pollination initiative, and furthermore to facilitate the achievement of Sustainable development goals (SDG).

We invite speakers to present advancements in the application of the ecosystem services concept in South-Eastern Europe in relation to:

- Application of ES concept in real-world case studies with stakeholders and end-users;
- Mapping and assessment of ES for sustainable decision making;
- Good and bad practices in the implementation of ES products in various aspects and nature conservation and biodiversity issues;
- Multiscale mapping and modeling of ES (from cities to landscape)."

Goals and objectives of the session:

"This session is organized by ESP's South-East Europe regional chapter (TWG5) and has two main goals:

- to showcase recent advancements and developments in applications of ES concept in SEE;
- to initiate a discussion on how to proceed in the development of a networking platform for transnational cooperation through a CoP."

Planned output / Deliverables:

Special issue in a referenced journal

The session will be used to further develop collaboration and a research agenda within the South East Europe regional chapter through a concept for CoP.

Session format:

Standard session (presentations)

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group/National Network:

Regional chapters: South-East Europe