

## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

This Book of Abstracts provides a comprehensive overview of the session content and is structured into three main sections:

- I. Session Description** – an introduction to each session, including its objectives and expected outputs
- II. Session Program** – a detailed schedule for each session, including speakers and timing
- III. List of Abstracts** – a complete compilation of all accepted abstracts

### I. SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: E4

#### The Early Career Lab: Skills, Identity, and Growth for the Next Generation of Ecosystem Services Researchers

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
<b>Host (s):</b>	João David	Landscape Ecology Lab, Geography Department, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin	<a href="mailto:joao.david@geo.hu-berlin.de">joao.david@geo.hu-berlin.de</a>
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### **Abstract:**

Ecosystem services (ES) research connects directly with nature-positive futures. As global challenges intensify, the field can be strengthened with fresh perspectives, innovative applications, and stronger connections across practitioners. Early-career researchers (ECRs) stand at the forefront of this transformation, helping to shape future directions of ES science. Hence, we need to acknowledge the main difficulties, challenges and opportunities that make a researcher, build valuable skills, and increase the real-world impact of our work.

This session, organized by the Young Ecosystem Services Specialists (YESS), moves beyond the traditional focus on presenting research outputs to highlight the researchers themselves. Here, we provide a dynamic space for ECRs to explore how to approach challenges and opportunities in ES perspective by discussing new tools, approaches, collaborations, and future perspectives. As being an ECR is also a deeply personal journey, we will raise awareness into the personal growth aspects such as identifying strengths or addressing weaknesses. Additionally, we promote critical reflection around the scope and applications of ES research, exploring two complementary dimensions that might contribute for future ES research activities:

- 1) ECRs development and innovation – building core competencies for ES science. This includes: a) identifying research gaps; b) preventing redundancies; c) connecting missing links; d) exploring opportunities; e) leveraging AI for academic research.
- 2) Strategic engagement – strengthening the position of ES research. This includes: a) fostering effective networks and collaborations; b) strengthening the science–policy interface; c) improving science communication; d) sharing knowledge and expertise across disciplines.

Throughout this session, YESS seeks to amplify the voices of early-career researchers by promoting dialogue on the evolving identity of ES science, spanning both personal interests and career perspectives. We will also facilitate and encourage participants to foster new collaborations by co-planning conference sessions, organizing journal special issues, preparing project proposals, co-developing research manuscripts, and engaging in the development and participation of summer schools, workshops, and similar capacity-building initiatives.

The session will begin with a brief opening and framing by the hosts, followed by three thematic clusters. Each cluster will include two presentations by early-career researchers, which are intended to serve as inputs for discussion and reflection rather than as conventional research talks. After the two presentations in each cluster, a roundtable discussion will follow involving the presenters, invited senior researchers, and the audience. Each cluster will be moderated by the session hosts. This format is designed to promote exchange across career stages, encourage reflection on key challenges and opportunities in ecosystem services research, and create space for dialogue, learning, and future collaboration. The closing of the session will focus on fostering future collaborations, identifying shared research priorities, and strengthening connections among participants. Participants will be invited to contribute as co-authors to collaborative research paper.

### **Goals and objectives of the session:**

- Empower and motivate ECRs to shape the future of ES research
- Strengthen the YESS community through networking and new collaborations for new knowledge exchange
- Capture and synthesize the perspectives of ECRs on the primary challenges and opportunities in contemporary ES research through data collection
- Reflect on the state of ES research
- Explore strategies for science–policy interface and science communication
- Share experiences and perspectives to inspire and guide the next generation of ES researchers

### **Planned output / Deliverables:**

- An ECR shared manifesto outlining guiding principles, identified challenges and related strategies for the future of ES research
- If feasible, a perspective or opinion research manuscript synthesizing the main outcomes and insights from the session. All participants, presenters and hosts will be given the opportunity to join as co-authors

**Session format:**

In person. Duration of 1h30.

The session is organised into three clusters of two presentations each. Each cluster combines two presentations by ECR, a roundtable discussion with invited senior researchers, and time for Q&A and audience interaction.

**Related to ESP Working Group:**

YESS - Young Ecosystem Services Specialists

**II. SESSION PROGRAM**

**Room: A2**

**Date of session: Tuesday, 19 May 2026**

**Time of session: 17:45 – 19:15 (possible extension of 5 to 10 minutes)**

**Timetable speakers:**

<b>Time (app.)</b>	<b>First name</b>	<b>Surname</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Title of presentation</b>
17h50-18h (Cluster 1)	Iva	Boyadzhieva	Pensoft Publishers	Scholarly Communication: Lessons from the publisher's kitchen
18h-18h10 (Cluster 1)	Joeri	Morpurgo	N/A	From Researcher to Communicator: Integrating Societal Impact into a PhD Journey
18h20 -18h30 (Cluster 2)	Felipe	Campos	Centre for Ecological Research and Forestry Applications	Knowing, applying and reasoning with ecosystem services: a learning pathway for early-career researchers
18h30 – 18h40 (Cluster 2)	Ehsan	Pashanejad	Concordia University	From Margins to impact: navigating identity, networks, and influence in ecosystem service research
18h50-19h (Cluster 3)	Jaewon	Son	Institute for Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis (ITAS), Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT)	Expanding Plural Values and Governance Perspectives: Future Directions for Urban Ecosystem Services Research
19h-19h10 (Cluster 3)	Lina	Hoyos-Rojas	N/A	Dialogues Between Ecosystem Services and Landscape Ecology: Building Bridges Across Early-Career Communities

### III. LIST OF ABSTRACTS

*The first author is the presenting author unless indicated otherwise*

#### 1. From Margins to impact: navigating identity, networks, and influence in ecosystem service research

**First author:** Ehsan Pashanejad  
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Pathways into ecosystem services (ES) research are rarely linear, particularly for early-career researchers from developing-country contexts. This contribution reflects on a personal journey from the margins of global academia to active engagement in collaborative, policy-relevant ES science. After more than two years of persistently and strategically reaching out to Canadian universities and research institutions, securing a PhD position required resilience, adaptability, and learning how to navigate invisible academic barriers. A turning point came through joining an empathetic, open, and highly collaborative research culture in Canada, particularly through the NSERC ResNet network. ResNet provided not only scientific training, but also a supportive community that valued curiosity, mutual learning, and “doing science together.” These early struggles and prior experiences opened unexpected doors: working closely with leading ES researchers, engaging in informal yet formative scientific exchanges, and contributing to national and international initiatives at the science–policy interface. Participation in policy-oriented platforms such as the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI) and the IPBES Fellowship further reshaped professional identity—from technical researcher to boundary spanner connecting science, policy, and practice. This reflection highlights how networks, empathy, and strategic engagement can amplify impact, offering transferable lessons for early-career researchers navigating ES research across unequal contexts and aspiring to meaningful societal relevance.

**Keywords:** Research Identity, Academic pathways, Research network, Boundary spanning, Reflexive research practice

#### 2. From Researcher to Communicator: Integrating Societal Impact into a PhD Journey

**First author:** Joeri Morpurgo  
**Affiliation:** Leiden University; HAS Green Academy  
**Contact:** j.morpurgo@cml.leidenuniv.nl


This presentation reflects on my doctoral journey at Leiden University, focusing on the integration of science communication, leadership, and societal impact alongside academic research. Beginning my PhD with no formal background in science communication, I gradually developed the skills to translate complex scientific knowledge for non-academic audiences and engage with societal challenges related to urban biodiversity. This growth was recognized through an institutional award for science communication and through my role as Regional Lead for Europe at the Urban Biodiversity Hub. I will discuss how engaging with stakeholders, policymakers, and urban communities reshaped my understanding of the role of researchers in society, and how embedding communication and leadership within a PhD can enhance both personal development and research impact. This contribution highlights the importance of valuing societal engagement as a core element of doctoral training.

**Keywords:** societal impact; education; social media; communication

#### 3. Knowing, applying and reasoning with ecosystem services: a learning pathway for early-career researchers

**First author:** Felipe Campos  
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In this contribution, I use my trajectory as an Ecosystem Services (ES) researcher to show how ES can support the development of early-career researchers. I work between biodiversity, ES assessment and



nature-based solutions, drawing on projects in Europe, Latin America and Asia where ES outputs inform conservation planning, land-use decisions and risk reduction with agencies and stakeholders. I present examples where I combine taxonomic, functional and phylogenetic diversity with ES mapping and economic valuation. These include GIS-based indicators that help Natura 2000 and forest managers prioritise areas, national assessments that highlight service-rich landscapes and guide conservation, and applications of ecosystem-based disaster risk reduction (eco-DRR). In these studies, I assess how vegetation structure and ecosystem condition can be included in landslide and hazard models, and how this supports nature-based solutions in risk management. Across these cases, ES tools act as boundary objects that help scientists, planners and communities discuss priorities and trade-offs. I frame the session around three cognitive domains: knowing, applying and reasoning with ES. Knowing focuses on key concepts, indicators, spatial models and reproducible workflows. Applying uses ES evidence in planning and management, from conservation portfolios to assessing the performance of ecosystem modelling tools and biodiversity indicators. Reasoning covers interpreting ES maps and indicators, exploring trade-offs and working with stakeholders to co-produce options that connect evidence with planning and policy. For each domain, I share tools that participants can adapt in their own contexts. I relate these domains to the upcoming ESP Summer School 2026, where I work with early-career researchers on ES modelling and collaborative learning. This links my research to a pathway for building skills and impact in the next generation of researchers working with ecosystem services.

**Keywords:** Ecosystem services; early-career researchers; biodiversity indicators; spatial modelling; nature-based solutions; science-policy interface

#### 4. Scholarly Communication: Lessons from the publisher's kitchen

**First author:** Iva Boyadzhieva  
**Affiliation:** Pensoft Publishers  
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Scholarly communication is often equated with scholarly publications: research and review articles, methodological papers, and conference proceedings, whose jargon-heavy content typically belongs in peer-reviewed journals.

While ensuring that content published in its journals is optimised for accessibility, discoverability, reusability, and - ultimately - citations and recognition, is the primary responsibility of the publisher, truly effective and efficient communication of scientific outcomes goes far beyond this.

On one hand, to make both scientific literature and research data discoverable and publicly available through indexing in widely used databases is essential for the long-term preservation of scholarly knowledge. Similarly, high-quality, standardised data publication underpins replicability and, by extension, research integrity. It goes without saying that accessibility and convenience improve the likelihood that other scientists read, reuse, and cite one's research work.

Yet before venturing into the forest to check whether a tree may or may not have fallen, one must first make sure that a forest exists at all.

In this talk, we will focus on the signature approaches developed and integrated into the highly automated publication process at Pensoft's journals. Stepping beyond the academic sphere, we will also draw on real-life examples and case studies from our environmental journals to demonstrate how publishers and authors can team up to transform scholarly publications into scientific knowledge that is accessible to everyone, everywhere, regardless of professional background or expertise.

We will explore the range of formats, mediums, and platforms available to researchers and publishers who seek to ensure that a discovery reaches not only fellow scientists, but also lawyers, shopkeepers and hairdressers, and to the politicians and constituents who hold our planet's future in their hands.

By the end of this session, participants will gain insights into how thoughtful communication strategies can amplify the impact of their research far beyond the traditional academic audience.

**Keywords:** scholarly communication, science communication, academic writing, scholarly journal, scholarly publishing

## 5. Expanding Plural Values and Governance Perspectives: Future Directions for Urban Ecosystem Services Research

**First author:** Jaewon Son

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Ecosystem services (ES) research increasingly emphasizes plural values to inform governance and decision-making, yet operationalizing these values in practice remains challenging. Building on my recent experience applying the Nature Futures Framework (NFF) to urban green space governance in Korea and Germany, this contribution reflects on lessons learned and explores practical directions for strengthening ES research and collaboration among early-career researchers.

Future work could broaden stakeholder engagement to include youth and immigrant communities, integrate mixed methods such as public questionnaires and expert interviews, and examine how digitalization and emerging technologies influence ES governance. These approaches can help address key questions: How can governance manage trade-offs between ecosystem services and socio-ecological resilience? How do perceptions and global urban governance trends shape decision-making processes?

In the World Café, we aim to discuss strategies for inclusive stakeholder engagement, responsible use of digital tools, and collaborative approaches to knowledge sharing. Expected outcomes include contributions to a shared manifesto and practical recommendations for combining conceptual frameworks with participatory and technology-informed methods.

**Keywords:** Nature Futures Framework, Plural Values, Urban Governance, Digitalization, Resilience Trade-offs

## 6. Dialogues Between Ecosystem Services and Landscape Ecology: Building Bridges Across Early-Career Communities

**First author:** Lina Hoyos-Rojas

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Landscape ecology and ecosystem services (ES) research share a long history of conceptual and methodological exchange. Both fields embrace interdisciplinary thinking, integrate social-ecological perspectives, and aim to support nature-positive futures. ES, as a framework highlighting the multiple benefits that nature provides to humans, has been increasingly integrated into landscape ecology research, enriching its holistic understanding of how people shape—and are shaped by—their environments. At the same time, landscape ecology contributes spatial thinking, multi-scale analysis, and systems-based approaches that strengthen ES applications.

Within the European Association for Landscape Ecology (IALE-Europe), the Early Career (EC) Working Group has been actively engaging with themes highly relevant to ES research, while also reflecting on the challenges, skills, and identities that shape early-career stages. For example, recent initiatives have addressed topics such as remote sensing and technological applications in landscape ecology, urban biodiversity, cultural ecosystem services and place attachment, landscape values and tourism, and participatory mapping, as well as broader career-related dimensions including academic CV and interview preparation, parenting during early-career stages, and work-life balance. These activities illustrate the group's commitment to fostering a supportive and interdisciplinary space for EC researchers.

Through this session, this communication aims to open a dialogue on the future of ES research through the lens of landscape ecology, as studies in spatial planning have shown the value of using landscape units when assessing ES. This dialogue seeks to identify shared knowledge gaps, strengthen interdisciplinary competencies, and exchange experiences that support both scientific innovation and academic development. By aligning interests, co-developing activities, and continuing the long-standing



positive relationship between IALE and ESP, early-career networks can collectively support the next generation of researchers working at the landscape–ecosystem services interface.

**Keywords:** IALE, YESS, Community, Synergies, Working groups

## 7. Mapping the next generation of ecosystem services research: insights from early-career researchers

**First author:** Milena Sokolova

**Other author(s):** Vince van 't Hoff, Carlotta Quagliolo, Luiz Filho, Rahul Yadav, Ina M. Sieber, Kien Pham, Victoria Yavorskaya, João David

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Early-career researchers are shaping the future of ecosystem services research, yet their perspectives on challenges, capacity needs, and strategic priorities remain largely undocumented. As the field aims to evolve by adopting new tools, engaging more directly with policy and practice, and addressing global sustainability challenges, understanding early-career perceptions is essential for building a resilient and innovative research community.

In this talk, we begin by sharing a small set of collaboration examples led by early-career researchers, including summer school initiatives, conference working groups, and multi-author outputs. We then present headline insights from a structured questionnaire capturing experiences across key dimensions: career motivations and challenges, priority skills and capacity needs, perceived routes to impact across academia and beyond, and future visions for ecosystem services research. The questionnaire highlights where ECRs most want support, the main bottlenecks that slow progress, and the gap between research aspirations and real-world impact pathways. It also captures how ECRs define innovation and relevance in contemporary ecosystem services work. These insights provide a structured snapshot of capacity needs that can guide community action.

These findings ground a discussion on practical next steps: which supports are most valuable, how networks like YESS can bridge identified gaps, and what concrete actions the community can take to strengthen the next generation of ES researchers.

**Keywords:** Survey; Research culture; Community building; Career pathways; Young Ecosystem Services Specialists