

6th ESP Europe Conference

18-22 May 2026 | Prague, Czechia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: T8d

Linking ecosystem services and nature conservation narratives

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host (s):	Jakub Kronenberg	Social-Ecological Systems Analysis Lab, University of Lodz, Poland	jakub.kronenberg@uni.lodz.pl
Co-host(s):	Erik Andersson	University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland / Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University, Stockholm, Sweden	erik.andersson@helsinki.fi olya.ivlieva@gmail.com
	María Viota	University of the Basque Country, Spain + Université Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne, Paris, France	viota.maria@gmail.com

Abstract:

The concept of ecosystem services emerged out of the necessity to expand, enhance and broaden nature conservation narratives. How has it evolved since then, and how has it changed the way conservation is framed? Has it proven effective in the context of nature conservation, or is it diluting the original focus on non-human needs?

Ecosystem services may be seen as a reincarnation of the distinction between beneficial and harmful parts of nature that characterised the earliest attempts at selecting what deserved protection. Over time, it evolved into an analytical and complex system focusing on the biophysical processes linking nature to human well-being. While the ambition is to broaden the appreciation of value, the early emphasis on putting monetary values on the human reliance on nature and functioning ecosystems is still visible in the narratives used by many conservation organisations.

How have ecosystem services and arguments changed nature conservation narratives? Has the concept of ecosystem services, or its siblings, helped open up for diverse and pluralistic valuation methods for ecosystem services? And has this worked as a lever for extended conservation efforts?

This session links to the broad theme of the economics of ecosystem services. One of the examples of the work to be presented is a study based on the different narratives and value-based arguments used to promote bird conservation by conservation organisations from around the world. In this context, the session will link to the findings of the BirdEcon project ("A bird's-eye view of how the natural environment fits into economics: Searching for alternative paradigms by analysing bird conservation narratives"). However, the session is not limited to the BirdEcon project research and is open to submissions from others.

Goals and objectives of the session:

To discuss the uptake of ecosystem services in conservation narratives.

To present and discuss ongoing research on which arguments and narratives are used for nature conservation and their effectiveness in achieving different conservation outcomes.

To discuss the pros and cons of the use of ecosystem services and different value frames in nature conservation.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Hopefully, the discussions during this session and drawing on the presented papers will lead to a new joint discussion paper linking ecosystem services and nature conservation narratives and future collaborations around new narratives for conservation.

Session format:

This session is planned as a standard conference session with a line of presentations of ongoing and completed research.

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group:

[TWG 8 – Cultural services & Values](#)