

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: O6

Local food as a carrier of ecosystem services: from local to global flows

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
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Abstract:

The concept of local food is deeply intertwined with the provision of ecosystem services, offering a broad range of benefits. These include food provision, supporting local agrobiodiversity, regulating climate, preserving cultural heritage, and fostering social connections within communities. However, the very "localness" of food makes this term inherently contradictory: as local food often requires larger markets to remain economically viable, it becomes increasingly detached from its original area of production. Moreover, as global interest in local food grows, the term—being a social construct—has become more blurred, nuanced, and challenging to define.

This session aims to share experiences from research on local food within the ecosystem services framework. We seek to explore the boundaries of the local food concept and examine the gradients of natural-social conditions that co-produce diverse ecosystem services which carry local food. Additionally, we will investigate the evolving role of local food in promoting sustainable food systems.

Food for thought:

- Which ecosystem services ensure the localness of local food?
- How do natural and social conditions of food production co-produce ecosystem services?
- How does local food contribute to the global flow of ecosystem services, and what challenges arise when scaling its benefits beyond local contexts?
- How local food systems can be integrated into global food supply chains in a sustainable way?
- The sustainability of local food: when is local food sustainable and when is it not?

Goals and objectives of the session:

To share experiences on local food research within the framework of ecosystem services.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Proposing a joint paper on understanding local food through the lens of the ecosystem services concept.

Session format:

We need 1 hour per 5 presentations. We will divide this time between short presentations (7 minutes each) and an extended discussion.

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

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