ESP 11 World Conference

"From global to local ecosystem services: pathways to Nature-based Solutions inspired from Down Under"

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SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: O1

Ecosystem Services Derived from Protected Areas - revealing their hidden value

Hosts:

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Abstract:

The primary purpose of protected areas is the conservation of natural and cultural resources, yet their importance extends well beyond this to include mitigating and adapting to climate change, pollinating agricultural crops, regulating water flows, ensuring connection to Country for First Nations people, and providing ecosystem services that contribute to human health, well-being, and other social and economic benefits. Whilst the protected area system is pivotal to protecting these important values, generally decisions around funding, identifying, assessing, selecting and prioritising land and resources to/in the protected area estate is narrow. For example, in Australia they are primarily based on the principles of: –

• ecosystems or species habitats that are not represented or not adequately represented in the protected area system.

• rare, endangered or threatened ecosystems or species.

• if the conservation of an ecosystem or species is less likely to be achieved elsewhere in the landscape; and

• ecosystems, habitats or species under threat of loss or degradation through competing land uses.

The principles described above are ecocentric and associated assessment metrics are focused on conserving and protecting ecosystems and species for their own sake, rather than those required for conserving and protecting ecosystems and species for people's sake (anthropocentric). Both nature and people have a right not just to survive, but thrive, from the benefits nature provides them. However, metrics focused on rare, endangered, threatened or representative species are not those required to assess for ecosystem services. As biodiversity is central to the production of ecosystem services, we do not suggest an ecosystem services

approach should replace traditional biodiversity, but rather, an ecosystem services approach should be additional to such assessments.

Beyond the protection of biodiversity for its own sake, the protection and maintenance of the broad range of ecosystem services is one of the compelling reasons to conserve natural environments and to restore and protect species, ecosystems and biodiversity. By examining the environment through the framework of ecosystem services, it becomes much easier to identify how changes in ecosystems can influence human well-being and the economy. To ensure the continuation of ecosystem services into the future that are important to communities, business and industry and local, regional and state economies, there is a need to extend assessments beyond nature assessments to include in decision making the wider range of things that people value.

This session focuses on the use of ecosystem service approaches in protected area management, specifically to determine funding and identify, assess, select and prioritise land and resources. Also, studies that showcase the types, extent and values of ecosystem services derived from protected areas. Or use ecosystem services as an approach to communicate and influence policy, planning and decision making. It aims to identify across the globe examples of ecosystem service approaches in protected area management, as well as gaps, barriers, opportunities and solutions for ecosystem services implementation. Presentations are encouraged that show how the ecosystem services derived from protected areas:

- are being optimized to provide net benefits to society and the economy.

- are raising awareness of potential social and economic implications and averting unintended negative consequences arising from decision-making.

- are being used to communicate the broader ramifications of decisions, policies, strategies and plans to the community, industry or treasury.

- are broadening the scope of environmental and social impact assessments.

- are being incorporated into conservation and protection through park management plans and hence identifying management options that optimize public benefits.

- are serving as a foundation for better collaborative, cross-jurisdictional management of protected areas.

- are being utilized to better engage local communities in nature conservation, facilitating greater local action and strengthening the connections between people and nature.

- are targeting payments for ecosystem services hence providing economic incentives for conservation in areas where none presently exist (e.g. nature refuges, private protected areas).

- are providing treasury information in a form that decision-makers can weigh alongside other social and economic information.

- are linking ecosystem services information with information on economic and other human activity (e.g. building on the System of National Accounts).

- are being used to influence investment in protected areas within government departments and treasury.

- avoiding potentially significant costs and risks arising from overlooking implications of loss or damage to ecosystem services or expose transparently the social and economic costs implicit in trade-offs.

- are being used to increase the long-term resilience of business decisions, policies and actions, sustaining economic growth.

• are being used to recognise and determine the value of the environment for health outcomes.

Goals and objectives of the session:

• To develop the business case for implementing ecosystem service approaches in protected area management/

• Through knowledge exchange, building the capacity of participants to use an ecosystem services approach to protected area management.

Planned output / Deliverables:

• Journal special issue – case studies show casing ecosystem service approaches to protected area management, with an introductory article providing the business case why an ecosystem services approach is important to protected area management, including gaps, barriers, opportunities and solutions for building on current approaches.

• Short relevant briefs for distribution to governments that present the business case for why an ecosystem services approach to protected area management is important and will add value to current approaches.

Session format:

Session Structure:

3 hours

• 30 min – Introduction to topic, participant introductions, ice breaker etc,

• 30 min – 3 x 10min presentations

• 15 min – Q/A

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• 15 min – Q/A

• 60 min – brainstorming/ workshopping/ article development

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

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