BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

I. SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: B10d

Challenges and barriers of integrating ecosystem services science into urban planning for preventive public health

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host:	Kate Farley	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology	katfar@ceh.ac.uk
Co-host(s):	David Fletcher Mart Verwijmeren	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment	dfletcher@ceh.ac.uk mart.verwijmeren@rivm.nl

Abstract:

You are invited to join this World Cafe session to explore reasons for the failure to integrate ecosystem services thinking and public health protection. The guided discussion will be driven and shaped by participants' experience, likely covering topics such as challenges in harmonising concepts and terminology, translation of evidence and structural barriers.

Expansion and densification of urban areas typically lead to declines in environmental conditions, a number of which constitute significant impediments to the health and wellbeing of inhabitants. Examples include air, water and noise pollution, extreme heat, flooding and a scarcity of natural green space for physical exercise and to support mental wellbeing. These environmental pressures can be particularly acute in cities, where the high spatial variation in pressures, can lead to localised impacts, with significant implications for health inequalities.

A number of important steps towards addressing these acute urban-associated threats have been made over last decade, the foremost being the establishment of the SDG framework and the New Urban Agenda, both of which explicitly recognise the pivotal role of urban planning and policy in

addressing health, wellbeing and inequality. In particular, emphasising the importance of inclusive, accessible, multi-functional green spaces in urban settings, to provide a variety of benefits, including health and well-being to residents. In this sense, natural green and blue spaces within cities can be considered Nature-Based Solutions, providing an array of Ecosystem Services to city dwellers and beyond.

Public health policy, especially preventative public health, could be improved by greater integration of ES expertise in public health decision making as it relates to travel policies, planning for green spaces for heat management, or education and leisure interventions to improve mental and physical health. However, best practices and efforts to tackle such challenges are hindered largely by a lack of understanding, collaboration, and communication between ES science and decision making. Challenges to effective integration may include competing interests, political agendas, knowledge, norms and competencies (Saarikoski, 2021). A challenge is not only the language that is used, but also how can we visualise/simplify complex results (e.g. maps of multiple interacting ES), and how can they be used to provide recommendations for nature-based solutions. Effective communication of ES knowledge and generation of data that can be easily applied to public health policies is needed.

We invite participants with an interest and experience in any dimension of the intersection of human health and ES benefits from green and blue space. Including but not limited to physical and mental health, interventions to reduce health impacts of pressures such as heat, noise, air or water pollution, and the potential of green prescribing. We particularly welcome participation from those who have worked directly in health settings or environmental, social scientists or economists or NGOs who have collaborated with health professionals.

The session will be run as a guided discussion of the challenges around this issue, shaped by the experience of participants. The session will result in a set of recommendations on how to better integrate ES science in decision making around public health. With the possibility of bolstering the findings through follow-up interviews with key stakeholders, if participants feel this would be appropriate.

Goals and objectives of the session:

This session aims to explore the challenges in bridging the translation gap between ecosystem system services research and urban public health policy, and to shape research priorities. This session will also be an opportunity for networking with a view to develop future research collaborations for ecosystem services research that can be better integrated into public health policy making. The expertise of those convening this session spans ecosystem services modelling to social sciences and health research.

Planned output / Deliverables:

- Identification of key challenges and barriers preventing the integration of ecosystem services science into public health policy making.

- We see this as the start of a process and ongoing collaboration for those interested
- Development of recommendations to resolve these barriers, and subsequent summary into a discussion paper (to be developed post-event).

Session format:

World Cafe. Session is proposed to last at least 1.5 hours.

II. SESSION PROGRAMME

Room: Expert Street 7

Date of session: 21st of November 2024

Time of session: 11:00-12:30