

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: S8d

UNESCO Biosphere Reserves as key areas for new insights into Ecosystem Services assessment, valuation and management

Hosts:

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Abstract:

"Biosphere Reserves (BRs) are territories recognized by UNESCO's "Man and Biosphere" (MaB) committee for their natural and cultural heritage, emphasizing their role in promoting solutions to conserve biodiversity, restore and enhance ecosystem services (ES), and foster sustainable use and management of natural resources. On a global scale there are in total 727 Biosphere Reserves in 131 countries. These BRs cover 6% of the earth's surface and are home to 225 million people. Furthermore, BRs are identified as "learning places for sustainable development", where society, from the communities to local, regional, or national entities, acts as key-drivers for valuing and developing the territory sustainability. Therefore, the assessment of ecosystem services (ES) plays a fundamental role in the sustainability of the BR's communities and their territories, as well as in the mitigation and adaptation to climate change. With the holistic assessment provided by BRs, encompassing the ecological, economic, and social perspectives of the different ES, these can be defined as model areas to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG), focused on biodiversity and natural resources as the key providers of ES.

With this session we intend to promote the sharing of experiences and studies regarding BRs as study-cases for ES assessment in all its perspectives, encompassing accounting, monitoring, mapping, and socio-cultural and monetary valuations. We are keen to receive any ES assessment approach based on the MAES, CICES, NCP, or any innovative methods, with a special

interest in ES modelling, particularly including future scenario analysis of land–use shifts or climate change impacts in BRs. We are also interested in works related to accounting and economic valuation of ES, following different approaches such as the SEEA, TEEB or others, implemented in BRs. We are looking forward to receiving proposals that integrate the holistic perspective of the MaB program to define guidelines for the sustainable use of natural resources, nature–based solutions, and adaptation to climate change scenarios in accordance with the UN’s Agenda 2030."

Goals and objectives of the session:

- Spotlight the role of biosphere reserves as model areas for sustainable management
- Facilitate knowledge sharing amongst researchers working in, for and with biosphere reserves
- Highlight the role of ES in the sustainable management of biocultural diversity and in adaption to climate change in biosphere reserves
- Help define sustainable management guidelines/frameworks for the mitigation and adaptation to climate change scenarios, based on ES, enhancing the biocultural values of biosphere reserves
- Jointly share and develop strategies for future knowledge–based action in biosphere reserves
- Promote a network opportunity for researchers working on ES in biosphere reserves, enabling the creation of a dedicated sectorial working group"

Planned output / Deliverables:

- Special issue dedicated to ES in Biosphere Reserves
- Elaborate and develop a common protocol to guide holistic ES assessments for BRs
- Formation of a sectoral working group on ES in Biosphere Reserves

Session format:

World Café

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group/National Network:

[Sectoral Working Groups: SWG 8 – ES in Conservation](#)