

6th ESP Europe Conference

18-22 May 2026 | Prague, Czechia

SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: X2

Learning from the past: Historical development of ecosystem services for future resilience

Hosts:

	Name	Organisation	E-mail
Host (s):	Martijn Kuller	Utrecht University	m.kuller@uu.nl
Other organiser(s):	Nina Baltus	Utrecht University	nina.baltus@uu.nl
	Mans Schepers	Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	mans.schepers@rug.nl

Abstract:

Hydroclimatic extremes have made us aware of the limits of our landscapes in delivering certain ecosystem services such as water retention, flood protection and biodiversity. At the same time, growing rural and urban pressures create an increasing mismatch between the supply and demand of ES. While some attention has been devoted to quantifying current ES supply and demand, the historical trajectories of ESs remain comparatively underexplored. Yet, these trajectories are critical for understanding how present capacities and vulnerabilities have been shaped by long-term interactions between ecosystems and human societies.

Our research focuses on the historical transformations of the biophysical system and its role in facilitating the exchange of ES between rural and urban areas in the Netherlands. A key objective is to identify and test innovative methodological approaches and to select indicators that can capture these dynamics and inform their relevance for contemporary applications.

Goals and objectives of the session:

Therefore the goals and objectives of this session aim to:

- Discuss and compare methodologies for studying the historical development of ESs (e.g., archival (hydrological) data, land-use reconstructions, reference systems, remote sensing).
- Explore how to identify lessons from the historical development of ecosystem services that can inform landscape planning and climate adaptation by revealing path-dependencies, trade-offs, and opportunities for more resilient rural-urban futures.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Not anticipated, but if session speakers wish so a joint publication could be proposed

Session format:

Standard session, length dependent on submissions

Voluntary contributions accepted:

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

Related to ESP Working Group:

Other