

AG/Committee Name: Ecosystem Services Advisory Group (ES-AG)

Submitted by: Sabine E Apitz

Date: 20/11/2014

Council/Board Liaison: Tim Canfield

Executive Summary

Ecosystem Services (ES) are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems (see images for examples); their sustainability is dependent on functioning ecosystems. Ecosystem functions and services are most sustainable when organisms are diverse. The ES concept is gaining increasing prominence in environmental policy and decision making. However, the underlying science required to use ES effectively still in its infancy. Much attention has been given to ES valuation; less to ES assessment and sustainable management. This provides an excellent opportunity for SETAC to influence and facilitate the development of this area of environmental science and policy.

The ES-AG was established in 2010 with the primary aim of creating a platform for the exchange of information and ideas for the use of the ecosystem services concept for more sustainable, risk-based assessment, valuation, regulation and management of terrestrial and aquatic systems.

Organization

There are no changes to the organization structure, but the steering committee has rotated in some new members, and has a new chair.

Activities Summary

SETAC Europe Meeting 2014 Sessions held:

- Ecosystem Services and Valuation in ERA
- Sustainability of Swiss Chocolate

There was a broad inclusion of ES in several sessions for Annual Meeting of SNA in Vancouver but there was not an accepted standalone session for the meeting.

SETAC/ESA Workshop Co-organized:

- Ecosystem Services, Environmental Stressors and Decision Making. West Virginia, USA; 28 Sept – 3 Oct 2014 (workshop papers and other outputs in preparation)

Future Plans

For the SETAC Europe meeting in Barcelona one purely ecosystem services session is included in the call for abstracts:

- From ecosystem services to risk assessment for aquatic and terrestrial plants

under the main theme LETES - Landscape ecotoxicology and management, ecosystem services.

The ES-AG and the Sustainability Advisory Group believe that concepts such as ecosystem services and sustainability may be best demonstrated by discussing case studies. Based on the success of the Whisky session in Glasgow and the Swiss Chocolate Production in Basel, a session on the sustainability of Mediterranean Olive Oil Production has been proposed for Barcelona.

The ES-AG is involved in the production of papers and other outputs from the joint SETAC - ESA workshop on Ecosystem Services, held in autumn 2014.

Business and Planning Meetings

Whilst the SC of the ES-AG is active and the membership of the group is stable, it remains difficult to attract more active people from the SETAC membership. For that reason the group did not hold business and planning meetings. The foundation is and seems to remain stable but rather small, probably due to the integrative character of the topic. A future objective is to expand membership from other GUs. A first step was taken by adding a steering committee member from Mexico.

Membership Communications

The main channel of communication is through the SETAC website. Response is rather low in general, also attendance at the ES-AG meetings is low compared to the membership. It seems that most members are interested in what is going on.

Issues/Problems

The ES-AG appreciates support from SWC, GU boards and associated committees.

Current Steering Committee

Members, affiliation and year started in the SC:

- Sabine E Apitz (chair), SEA Environmental Decisions, Ltd, UK (Bus, 2014)
- Joke van Wensem (chair), Soil Protection Technical Committee (TCB), Netherlands (Gov, 2010)
- Lorraine Maltby, University Sheffield, UK (Ac, 2010)
- Tim Canfield, US-EPA (Gov, 2010)
- Peter Campbell, Syngenta, UK (Bus, 2010)
- Elisabeth Huber-Sannwald, Instituto Potosino de Investigacion Cientifica y Tecnologica, Mexico (Ac, 2014)
- Katrina von Stackelberg, E Risk Sciences, USA (Bus, 2012)
- Ralf Schäfer, University of Koblenz-Landau, Germany (Ac, 2014)
- Marlea Wagelmans, Bioclear, Netherlands (Bus, 2014)

No. active members: *ca 25, based on attendance at meetings.*

Total membership: *127 (checked October 2014)*