

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

Submitted by: Sabine E Apitz

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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 2015 Sessions held:

- From ecosystem services to risk assessment for aquatic and terrestrial plants
- Sustainability of Mediterranean Olive Oil Production

There will be a broad inclusion of ES concepts in several sessions for Annual Meeting of SNA in Salt Lank City but the AG did not sponsor a standalone session for the meeting.

Outputs from SETAC/ESA Workshop; Ecosystem Services, Environmental Stressors and Decision Making. West Virginia, USA; 28 Sept – 3 Oct 2014

- Summary paper published: Olander and Maltby 2014. Mainstreaming ecosystem services into decision making. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 12: 539–539.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1890/1540-9295-12.10.539>
- 4 papers submitted to IEAM; in review

Future Plans

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

- The soil ecosystem and its services influenced by bio-based production

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, the Swiss Chocolate Production session in Basel, and the Mediterranean Olive Oil session in Barcelona, a session on the sustainability of Champagne and Wine has been proposed for Nantes.

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; these papers are now in review at IEAM.

As an AG addressing issues outside the “core business” of SETAC, we have faced challenges getting sessions scheduled at meetings; often if there are two relevant sessions, they are scheduled at the same time, in the last session of the last day, limiting attendance and making post-session interactions a challenge. Given the recent White House Executive order requesting the incorporation of Ecosystem Services into Federal Decision Making, SETAC, and this AG, have the potential to contribute to that dialogue. A number of ES-related workshops on the use of ES in decision making have been held, leading to publications in IEAM, Science of the Total Environment and Frontiers in Ecology. The ES-AG is exploring opportunities for international and cross-sectoral exchange in support of the White House Initiative, as well as to build bridges between ES-based risk assessment, ES valuation and ES decision making.



October 7, 2015

M-16-01

MEMORANDUM FOR EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: Shaun Donovan, Director
Office of Management and Budget
Christina Goldfuss, Managing Director
Council on Environmental Quality
John Holden, Director
Office of Science and Technology Policy

SUBJECT: Incorporating Ecosystem Services into Federal Decision Making

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 channels of communication are through the SETAC website and email, as well as AG meetings at SETAC Europe meetings. Response is rather low in general, and attendance at the ES-AG meetings is low compared to the membership. However, most members who are asked say they 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 meeting in Barcelona, but this also was schedules in conflict with the AGM, which might have limited attendance.*

Total membership: *133 (checked October 2015)*