SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: T18b

Title of session:
Key Policy Messages to Help Deliver the Sustainable Development Goals

Hosts:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host:</th>
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Abstract:

The core idea of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) is that human wellbeing is tightly linked to the condition of ecosystems and provision of ecosystem services (ES). Therefore, the loss or degradation of ES will have negative consequences for human wellbeing, offering the potential for ecosystem management to play a part in development strategies aimed at poverty alleviation. This idea has formed the basis of research frameworks and funding programmes, including the Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation (ESPA) programme among others, and culminating in the launch of the 2015 Framework for the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

Although seemingly offering a win–win for both the environment and development, there is an ‘implementation gap’ whereby few research findings and recommendations have been taken up into policy and management. With the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs), which also recognise the need to understand the inter–connected pathways between the natural world and human well–being, it seems timely to review our progress in this field and to ask how our recent research can help guide policy decisions in this area.

Goals and objectives of the session:

The main aim of the session is to bring together natural and social scientists with key decision–makers to summarise the key policy messages derived from recent ES research. This will be achieved via three objectives:

Objective 1. To produce one page policy briefs summarising recent ES research.
Objective 2. To deliver ‘elevator pitch’ summaries to stakeholders inside and outside research.
Objective 3. To encourage networking between scientific and non–scientific communities.

Planned output / Deliverables:

Governments are looking ahead as to how they will meet their obligations under the IPBES and SDGs. 2015 saw the launch of the Framework for IPBES as well as the SDGs. This signaled a step–change in how governments,
policy makers and communities across Africa target the twin goals of environmental protection and poverty alleviation, under the dynamic forces of demographic and environmental change.

To build upon this momentum, and to help reduce the ‘implementation gap’ between ES research and policy, each talk in this session will produce a one-page policy brief. Following short presentations, scientists, practitioners and policy makers will be encouraged to enter further discussion, whereby the policy briefs will be delivered to interested parties. The overarching policy messages expressed during the session will be synthesized and published in a peer-reviewed journal (e.g. ESP’s *One Ecosystem*) to ensure dissemination beyond the ESP Africa conference.

**Voluntary contributions accepted:** YES