



Creating a Network of Knowledge for
biodiversity and ecosystem services
www.biodiversityknowledge.eu

1st BiodiversityKnowledge conference
Discussing the Network of Knowledge approach for Europe
and its links to international processes

May 21st-23rd, 2012
Brussels, BELSPO offices

Session 2: Experiences from different knowledge holders in supporting policy makers.

Knowledge café: Discussion experiences from different knowledge holder perspectives.

Seven tables were formed according to the scale (local/national/European) and/or the topic the participants could choose from:

Local:

1. Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy
2. Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement

National

3. Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy
4. Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement

European

5. Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy
6. Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement

7. Mapping biodiversity knowledge landscape

7. Who/ Which are the main elements in the knowledge landscape

Report back from the seven tables:

1. *Report back from Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy at local level*

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2. *Report back from Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement at local level*

Failures at local level

Lack of participation

Different interests (both at local and time scales)

Communication problem

Different motivation (connecting people to nature, valuing biodiversity)

Suggestions for improvement

Participatory process

Built trust & credibility

Acknowledgment

3. *Report back from Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy at national level*

Name of initiative	Description	Stakeholders involved	Media involved	Success	Country	Form of exchange
Calls	The French Ministry of Agriculture brings together policy makers and scientists to identify which topics should be taken up in the research calls.	Policy makers, scientists	meeting in person	Knowledge exchange on what it is policy makers want to know and what knowledge there already is.	France	Direct interaction, Collaboration
Species databank	The government pays to get old species data accessible	Policy makers, scientists	database	Increasing knowledge and datasets	Norway	Paid assignment
Books	Books which present all species descriptions in detail to a non-professional audience.	Scientists, non-professionals	books	Feeding interests and increasing common knowledge	Sweden	Passive distribution
Conference	Organisation of a joint conference of policy makers, scientists, journalists and NGO' s and a joint written ouput.	Policy makers, scientists, NGO's and journalists	meeting person, conference proceeding	Development of common knowledge and open discussion on the complex issues.	France	Direct interaction
Conference	Organisation of congres at a specific location to draw together all the knowledge about this specific region from scientists within and outside the region/country.	Scientists	meeting in person	Increasing knowledge from regions	Macedonia	Direct interaction, Collection
Meetings	The government has direct contact and meetings with scientists to discuss topics of political or community interest.	Policy makers, scientists	meeting in person	Knowledge exchange and agenda setting	France	Direct interaction, Agenda setting
Ecological Networks Estonia	Program to actively involve nature managers to provide data on species	Nature managers	database	Increasing knowledge and	Estonia	Provisioning

				bottom-up process		
Nature Paysage	Platform that facilitates information exchange		database, interactive platform	Knowledge exchange	France	Indirect interaction, Collaboration
Lifewatch Spain	Knowledge platform to facilitate data access and the exchange and integration of data of knowledge holders.	Scientists, non-professionals, NGO's	database, interactive platform	Knowledge exchange	Spain	Indirect interaction, Collaboration
Systematic Reviews	Integrative analysis of published and unpublished data. In the process potentially more data becomes accessible.	Scientists	database	Increasing knowledge	United Kingdom	Direct interaction, Collaboration
Lake Wiki	A website onto which stakeholders from individual lakes can upload their observations to share and compare with other lakes.	Non-professionals	Website, database, platform	Increasing knowledge bottom-up and knowledge exchange	Finland	Indirect interaction, Collaboration
NBN Gateway	Data sharing portal for volunteers on biodiversity (bird) recordings	Non-professionals	Website, database, platform	Increasing knowledge bottom-up and knowledge exchange	United Kingdom	Indirect interaction, Provisioning
National IUCN requests	Questions on rare species or protected areas are sent out to experts which are requested to provide reports through established protocols. The reports are subsequently open for commentary.	Scientists	Website	Open review that experts readily fulfil due to prestige status of the IUCN reports	All countries	Indirect interaction, provisioning
MEDIN	An open access data based platform that links the centres of excellence and governmental bodies concerning marine environmental data.	Scientists and governmental organisations	Database	Knowledge exchange	United Kingdom	Indirect interaction, Collaboration

Fishery Directorate of Norwegian Fish Stocks	Data sharing portal for data on fish stocks and non-commercial stock species from fisheries, government and NGO's.	Fishery sector, government, NGO's	Database, video's	Knowledge exchange	Norway	Indirect interaction, Collaboration
Mountains	A group of volunteers (alpinists and hikers) trained and encouraged to adept and collect biodiversity monitoring data.	Scientists and non-professionals	Database, photo' s	Bottom-up knowledge collection	Italy	Indirect interaction, Collection
Spipoll	Social network where volunteers can place photo' s of insects pollinating flowers. The network is provided with a database for identification.	Scientists and non-professionals	Database, social network, photo' s	Bottom-up knowledge collection	France	Indirect interaction, Collection
National Red data book	Books which present all the red species in plants, mammals and insects to inform the wider public. Published once every 10 years	Scientists and non-professionals	books	Knowledge exchange	Ukraine	Passive distribution
Facebook species Biodiversa	Social network where scientists can upload and share photo's	Scientists	Social network, photo' s	Capturing interest	All countries	Passive distribution
MEDIMUNT	Provides an itinerary of little pathways and their biodiversity throughout the Mediterranean areas.	Scientists and non-professionals		Capturing interest	Italy, France and Spain	Passive distribution
Science Education Cooperation	Scientists provide educational biodiversity excursions to students to enable connection with the fragments of local ecological areas and to refresh common communication skills for the scientists.	Scientists and students	Meetings in person	Capturing interest and capacity building	Austria	Direct interaction
Conference	Actively searching and attracting new audiences to conferences to provide knowledge and training for volunteers.	Scientists and non-professionals	Meetings in person	Capacity building	Ukraine	Direct interaction, capacity building
Obligatory Ecological assessments	To receive a construction permit are required	Local governmental bodies,	Assessment reports	Fulfillment of obligations	Ukraine	No interaction

		consultancies				
HCMR ELNAIS	Search engine for an alien species database	Policy makers, scientists, non-professionals	Database	Knowledge exchange and collection	Greek	Indirect interaction, Collection

4. Report back from Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement at national level

- Ukraine: There is no coordination at national level; every region has its own programme, different scales and approaches. Data collected in one region are not available for other regions.
- Belgium: They have created a national resources database to get regions together and facilitate the exchange of information. There is a standard data form to collect data and the system has open access. The money comes from BELSPO. They have published a data paper and included the data in GBIF. The main problem is to update the database, because scientists do not have the will and/or the time to update it.
- Macedonia: They identified that there was a need to create a national database and applied for a UNEP-GEF project to design it. The project was approved and the database was created, but when the project finished the database got stuck in the Ministry, people do not know how to use it and it is not accessible any more.
- Spain: Research policy is focused on teaching and publishing and there is no time left for other things.
- Austria: There is a biodiversity platform funded by 2 agencies. This is tricky; every year the platform has to lobby to get the money.
- Norway: all databases on socio-economic issues are open to everybody. It does not happen with the biodiversity field. Why? A solution might be that they funding agencies require the projects to make the data available.
- Baltic Sea: there are enough data and they know what needs to be done, but the costs are too high and there is no cooperation and agreement from all the countries.

General problems:

- There is no reward (or not big enough) for scientists to provide their data.
- Scientists do not have time to put data in databases.
- Aggregated data cannot be published because they are not peer-reviewed.
- There is a knowledge bias; data collection focuses mainly on vertebrates (birds, butterflies, some mammals) and other taxonomic groups are ignored.
- We need more research to understand what kind of research we need.
- Monitoring is different from research and it is very important too.
- There are different types of failure: failure to find information, failure to find data, failure to publish the data...
- Funding! For the secretariat, for updating the data, for the infrastructure.
- Point of access to the data and hierarchy issues: scientists might provide data to global processes but not to colleagues or neighbour countries.
- If data are obtained in the framework of a commercial contract with a company, the company can require not to make them available.

- The science-mafia interface.
- Transnational problems and lack of cooperation from all the countries.
- Lack of commitment and agreement from all stakeholders.
- Science is away from policy-makers and both are away from civil society.
- Problem of communication: need of knowledge brokers with and intermediate function.

5. *Report back from Best practices and experiences of interactions with policy at European level*

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6. *Report back from Failures of interactions with policy and solutions for improvement at European level*

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7. *Report back from the table on Mapping biodiversity knowledge landscape: Who/ Which are the main elements in the knowledge landscape?*

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