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Is law the missing link between science and policy?

Unlocking the transformative power of law for biodiversity

In the European Union, following the adoption of the Nature Restoration Law in 2024, much hope now rests on the national plans and legislation that will implement this groundbreaking regulation. But are these expectations well-founded?

This presentation will explore the legislative strategies, tools, and measures needed to translate sound scientific knowledge into fair and effective biodiversity policies.

Traditionally, law is seen either as a brake or an accelerator in the transition toward sustainability. From the perspective of an accelerator, law can drive transformative change through various mechanisms. It may have directive effects, by establishing legal deadlines, thresholds, or indicators. It can also have normative effects, by defining legal rights and wrongs, duties, and burdens. It can as well have performative effects, by altering the legal status or condition of natural elements.

In this context, civil society, scientists, and “scientivists” (scientist-activists) can and should influence lawmaking—both directly and indirectly—through citizen initiatives, public consultation, participation, petitions, advocacy, and strategic litigation.