

Abstracts invited speaker for Alternet Session on ***Leveraging the diverse values of nature for transformative change***. Thursday 15. May (Day 3) at 10:00.

Theme 1: Integrating diverse values of nature into Policy and Governance

Speaker: **Machteld Schoonenberg** (senior policy researcher at Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL), Netherlands)

Title: Integrating Plural Values and Justice in Scenarios for a Nature-Positive Future

With the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) established and with IPBES preparing for a new global assessment, a key question is: what future pathways can help achieving the GBF targets? To move beyond current dominant perspectives, we need a broader range of voices, values, and approaches to avoid missing policy targets once again, with detrimental effects on nature and people. Recognizing the plurality of values of nature is deeply connected to justice. As are scenarios aimed at informing policy. Because, whose values are represented, which worldviews are considered, who shape policy and implementation of policies for these targets, and who are the 'winners and losers' of the envisioned transformations?

IPBES highlights that recognising the diversity of values of nature that exists in society is fundamental for deep transformations, and that justice should guide deliberate transformative change, yet many scenario studies overlook this. However, to capture a plurality of values, complementary methods from different knowledge systems are needed, specifically from social sciences and humanities disciplines as well as other knowledge systems, who have been underrepresented in most environmental science-policy interfaces. More specifically, literature on nature future pathways is scarce, especially where qualitative imaginings for the future are quantified, and existing work is often based on technocentric management paradigms.

This talk will explore strategies and reflexivity needed to incorporate different nature values into scenario development for effective nature policy. Using our current work on 'pathways for a nature positive future' as an example, we will discuss how the IPBES Nature Futures Framework, a tool to support the development of scenarios of desirable futures for people and nature, can be complemented with justice, transformative governance and visioning. This work raises new questions (and invites for very interesting discussions), and we look forward to discussing this with you, our peers at the AlterNet conference.

Theme 2: Embedding Natural Capital in Economic Systems

Speaker: Dr **Daniel Norton** (environmental and marine economist at the University of Galway, Ireland (NUIG))

Title: Challenges of valuing natural capital in economic systems for sustainable decision-making

The change required to address the global biodiversity crisis requires the integration of nature's diverse benefits. Each time, a decision maker (from fisher to CEO) makes a choice involving the natural world, a trade-off is inherent. Valuations are involved in these trade-offs and in all societal decisions about ecosystems, even if they are not explicitly stated or expressed in monetary terms. When these valuations are not made explicit or the uncertainties acknowledged, decision-making may overlook critical ecological and social impacts, leading to misallocation of resources, unintended consequences, and policies that fail to capture the true value of nature. This lack of transparency can result in the degradation of natural

capital, inequitable outcomes for communities dependent on ecosystems, and a failure to integrate long-term sustainability considerations into economic and policy frameworks. One framework that may help to address some of these concerns is the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting – Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA EA). Adopted by the United Nations Statistical Division in 2021, the SEEA EA framework offers an approach that may bring a more transparent approach to valuing and assessing changes in levels of natural capital and ecosystem services and incorporating them into broader economic measurement systems (e.g. Gross Domestic Product (GDP)). However, valuation within SEEA EA is not without its challenges particularly when it comes to incorporating certain non-market values such as existence values which may constitute a significant portion of the value of remote ecosystems such as deep-sea ecosystems and more work is needed to address these challenges.

Theme 3: Mobilizing relational values of Nature for restoration and conservation

Speaker: Dr **Eszter Kelemen** (co-founder and senior researcher at the Environmental Social Science Research Group (ESSRG), Hungary)

Title: Mobilizing relational values of nature for conservation and restoration

Nature provides us not just food, shelter, clean water or energy, but it also connects us to our inner self, as well as our community living before, during, or after our lifetime. Nature gives us the secure feeling of belonging when we become identical with the smallest ants and the greatest oaks as lying on the grass inseparable from other creatures. Relational values – the importance of desirable and often reciprocal relationships among people and between people and nature (IPBES, 2023) – are crucial for our well-being and can be a strong motivation for pro-environmental behaviour. Still, decision making is often blind to relational values, partly because exploring, forming and mobilizing them requires inherently social scientific methods and collaborative approaches. This presentation will first showcase examples from scientific literature on how relational values can become central to conservation and restoration actions. Then it will introduce some creative (participatory and arts-based) methods which proved to be effective in our empirical research to surface and mobilize relational values.

Theme 4: Empowering Indigenous and Local Knowledge

Speaker: Prof **Vera Helene Hausner** (Professor of Sustainability Science, Arctic University of Norway).

Title: Enabling desirable transformative changes through mutual learning with diverse knowledge holders

Collaborative processes that weave Indigenous and local ecological knowledge (ILK) with scientific research can significantly enhance knowledge exchange and mutual learning regarding complex biodiversity challenges. Such collaborative processes increase the potential for achieving transformative changes that benefit both nature and people. Establishing equitable partnerships throughout the various stages of collaboration is crucial for leveraging meaningful and actionable knowledge, though it can be challenging to implement effectively.

In this presentation, I reflect on my experiences working with ILK in coastal communities, the Arctic Council, and the Transformative Change Assessment within the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Numerous barriers have been identified in the different phases of collaborative research, such as diverse ways of knowing, power imbalances, lack of

understanding and recognition, mistrust, language barriers, short-term research agendas and funding, institutional and legal obstacles, and insufficient capacity building.

By presenting several examples, I aim to stimulate a discussion on best practices for overcoming these barriers and establish enduring partnerships that persist until the desired transformative changes are realized.