The « Ecosystem Approach » is considered an innovative approach to natural resource governance capturing ecosystem interactions and societal interdependencies. But, does it live up to its promise?

This conference brings together a group of international scholars to debate this very question.

Some of these researchers are strong advocates of the Ecosystem Approach. Others have studied its implementation in a variety of different contexts.

Together they will consider whether this approach is living up to its promise - and the consequences this holds for societal responses to global change.
08h30 - 09h00 Coffee/Tea

9h00 - 9h15 Welcoming remarks
Caitríona Carter, ETBX, Irstea; ECOGOV Project Coordinator (LabEx COTE, University of Bordeaux)

9h15 - 10h30 Keynote
Looking back: why the need for the Ecosystem Approach?
Philippe Cury, IRD France.

Philippe Cury, a leading researcher in ecosystem sciences, bears witness to the emergence and evolution of the Ecosystem Approach. How was the new ‘ecosystem science’ expected to be coupled to an ‘ecosystem politics’ grasping interactions between animals, humans and non-living environments at different scales? Must scientists invent new types of recommendations to support the ecosystem approach or should management procedures be changed (or both)?

10h30 – 11h00 Coffee/Tea

11h00 - 12h30 Marine versus estuarine versus forestry ‘ecosystem approaches’: lessons from New Aquitaine

Are ecosystems in New Aquitaine being governed through the Ecosystem Approach? If not, then why does this matter?

Presenting the results of the project ECOGOV, this session introduces the idea that there is not one Ecosystem Approach, but several. These different ‘ecosystem approaches’ are: i) in tension in the governing of marine ecosystems; ii) contested in the governing of estuarine ecosystems; iii) nearly absent in the governing of forest ecosystems. In each case, they affect the coupling of science and politics in diverse ways and with a variety of consequences for territorial adaptation to global change.

ECOGOV project joint presentation:
How science-politics coupling practices shape ecosystem approaches as well as ‘winners and losers’ governing ecosystems in New Aquitaine

ECOGOVMAR: Caitriona Carter, Josephine Lugand, Arnaud Thomas, (Irstea ETBX); Nathalie Caill-Milly, Gilles Morandeau, Isabelle Auby, Hélène Oger Jeannere (Ifremer Anglet & Arcachon)
ECOGOVVEST: Gabrielle Bouleau, Denis Salles (Irstea ETBX); Philippe Böet (Irstea EABX); Isabelle Auby, Hélène Oger Jeannere (Ifremer, Arcachon)
ECOGOVFOR: Arnaud Sergent, Paul Conchon, Ariane Carreira (Irstea, ETBX), Jean-Michel Carnus (Inra Pierroton)

12h30 – 14h00 Lunch
14h00 – 15h30 Ecosystem approaches in conservation and restoration

Presenting contrasting country case studies, this session will consider the implementation of ecosystem approaches in conservation and restoration projects. How do ecosystem approaches shape the way in which conservation and restoration programmes are both conceived and executed? How do they contribute to the elaboration of shared compensation strategies?

Kerry Waylen, James Hutton Institute, Scotland:
Attempting to implement the Ecosystem Approach in the UK: innovative change or hopelessly constrained?

Anna Wesselink, IHE Delft Institute for Water Education:
Can ecosystem restauration save deltas? Systemic assessments of the Netherlands and other cases

15h30 – 15h45 Tea/Coffee

15h45 – 17h30 Ecosystem approaches in sector and inter-sector management

In the context of global change, ecosystem approaches are presented as new tools catalysing socio-ecological transitions of sectors (e.g. forestry, fisheries).

They are also upheld as providing innovative measures for mitigating inter-sectoral conflicts over environmental and ecosystem services (e.g. for reducing conflicts over water resources). Yet, in practice, do ecosystem approaches bring about the expected integration of changing ecological systems and socio-economic models of production? Do they result in ‘win-win’ outcomes? Which new scientific modelling methods are required for anticipating possible socio-ecological transitions and what are the challenges for bringing these about?

Susanne Raum, Imperial College London:
The ecosystem approach and established forestry policy approaches in the UK

Judith Van Leeuwen, Wageningen University, the Netherlands:
Conceptualizing trade-offs for inclusive cooperation and integration in marine governance

Hilaire Drouineau, EABX, Irstea Bordeaux.
Implementation of the ecosystem approach to fisheries: a need for a protean fisheries science?

17h30 – 19h00 Conference Reception
Ecosystem approaches recognise the importance of making changes to the institutional rules of the game governing natural resources. To these ends, they have advocated participatory democracy as a legitimate form of socio-ecosystem governance. But how has this been defined in practice? This session examines whether the implementation of ecosystem approaches in different contexts has indeed opened up governance to new groups of public and private actors thereby increasing the range of stakeholders involved in the making of decisions? How are these actors contributing to new definitions of public problems shaping societal responses to global change? To what extent can we observe transformative governance and changing power relations between scientists, public and collective private actors?

Juliette Young, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Scotland
Participatory approaches to environmental challenges: ‘fit for purpose’ with the ecosystem approach?

Carsten Mann, HNE Eberswalde, Germany
Strategies for sustainable policy design: constructive assessment of biodiversity offsets and credit trading

Leena Kopperoinen, Finnish Environment Institute, SYKE
Operationalizing the concepts of green infrastructure and ecosystem services: implications for environmental justice

10h45 - 11h00 Coffee/Tea

11h00 - 12h00 Looking forward: The continued importance of ecosystem approaches?

Tim Forsyth, London School of Economics
Heidi Wittmer, UFZ

In the final session Tim Forsyth and Heidi Wittmer will debate the Conclusions of the conference around its central theme. They will discuss whether the ‘Ecosystem Approach’ is still relevant as a governing response for societies adapting to global change? What are the alternatives?

12h00 - 13h00 lunch

13h00 - 17h30 A combined “Cité du Vin” and Bordeaux river cruise, with wine tasting, is organised for conference participants.