

Summary of discussion following DAGMAR SCHRÖTER's talk on *Ecosystem services and global change - The environmental dimension of human vulnerability*, 14 September 2009 (summary by Zlatko Petrin)

Carina: How can cultural/social ecosystem services (ES) and benefits be quantified?

Dagmar: No clear answer seems to exist. In any case, cultural/social ES cannot be quantified in monetary units. How to talk about this type of ES remains unclear. It has been attempted in novels and poems. Perhaps this is the way to go.

Brooke: Some problems are externalized, e.g. through the import of timber in China meaning that the problem (provisioning ES) is exported from China into another country. How can regional studies be conducted accounting for impacts outside of the study region? How can the time perspective be considered? E.g., what can be done following a couple of years without grain once subsidies are cut (Grain-to-Green Project)?

Dagmar: The ATEAM vision of data for managers was meant for adaptation to climate change, but is mainly used for mitigation. The relatively fine-scale data are apparently not detailed enough in many instances. Looking at local scales, e.g. investigating where a particular product comes from, finding and researching the details ... is a hard/very complex task and does not help in understanding the big picture.

Catherine: How can we speak of success when non-human well-being is not accounted for? E.g. when biodiversity loss remains unconsidered?

Dagmar: Different people have different values. It is hard to monitor actual success in detail. Success relates to humans and their economy, not to ecosystems. Actions have to be constructive despite existing problems and differences in values between humans.

Diana: Many difficulties are transported with the language. Do you prefer talking about 'failures'? Perhaps it would be better not to talk about successes and failures. Perhaps it would be better to talk about what was achieved, what good was done.

Dagmar: There are no people who do not care about the environment. You have to stay in communication with all people. Success is relative. And you have to open up people for non-technical solutions. You might tell a story to change people's minds, the way they think about the world. You have to confront them with the unexpected.

Carlos: You have to look at actual decisions rather than ideals/concerns/words.

Martin: We are they. They are no different from us.

Sandra: People try to be politically correct. If you want to find out their actual opinions you will have to interview them anonymously.

Diana: Sybille talked to representatives of oil-producing companies confronting them with the fact that what they are doing damages the environment. On the one hand, these people need to earn money for their companies. That is their job. But at the same time, they are human-beings. They have quite split personalities given that they find themselves in a real dilemma.

Carina: I travelled around the world to attend the summer school. But I also travel around the world for recreation leaving a large carbon footprint. Nevertheless, academic travel actually is quite damaging to the environment.

Brooke: Criticizing people for what they are doing is easy. People are inconsistent, and that is part of human nature. We should only apply standards to people that we can meet ourselves.

Allan: You have simply got to try to talk to people (e.g. from oil companies). The point is to try.

Anne: How did the ATEAM project define its indicators? What kind of reactions did you get?

Dagmar: We are always restricted by what can be done and explored various indicators including yields and revenues, pests ... However, many stakeholders, e.g. farmers, just wanted to receive additional knowledge that they did not have themselves, for instance how much land there will be in the future to farm.

Supriya: ES are differently valued in India. For people in India, ES directly relate to people's lives, which is easy to understand for watershed services, but more difficult for biodiversity related issues. Invisible things have no value for these people.

Espen: You say there are no people who do not care about nature. Why is then biodiversity suffering? Some people actually do not care.

Brooke, Carina, Martin: One problem might be the decoupling of people from the environment/nature. They do not know how their actions impact on biodiversity. There might be a lack of feedback. Many people from urban centres show a disconnect between action and thought. They are constrained by society and may face a lack of freedom of choice.

Catherine: Save your logo initiative: paying for the use of animal logos to preserve biodiversity.

Dagmar: You can always ask people to look deeply into what they are doing and try to do harder. You want to bring people back to nature to allow them to dare to do what they actually/really WANT to do. You have to open up people. It is important to be true to your beliefs, but I believe there is always a way to be non-confrontational.