



**VALUING  
NATURE**

# **Elaborating rapid context diagnostic methods on organizational and political dimensions of ES valuation**

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VN Placements Warm up meeting

25<sup>th</sup> January 2016

# Personal background

## *Past work*

- PhD with MNHM (CESCO lab), AgroParisTech, Suez (2012-2016):
  - Action-research on the role of environmental sector firms in natural capital conservation and new business models
  - Accounting innovations for the collective management of ecosystems
- Work on India national ES assessment/green GDP (GIST, 2011)
- ES assessment study (InVEST) in Bordeaux with multiple stakeholders, France (2012-2014) (Feger et al., 2015)

## *Motivation and current interests*

- Develop new frameworks and tools to improve long-term collective action for ecosystem conservation in multiple contexts
- Discuss and enrich theoretical and practical perspectives opened with the PhD with ES management researchers and practitioners

# Supporting organisations

- Host: Dr Bhaskar Vira, Director of the University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute (UCCRI)
- Other supporting organisation: Emily McKenzie, Natural Capital Project and WWF-UK/US

# Placement's research question and objectives

**Key issue:** Increase in the production and use of ES valuation tools but:

- Relatively poor connection with the organizational/political dimensions of their use in decision and action
- No guarantee of positive influence on decision-making/action favourable to ES conservation
- Underlying ES valuation's theory of action increasingly questioned

**Working hypothesis:** One first step is to improve the conceptual and methodological equipment for analysing the various contexts in which ES assessments are produced and used

**Placement's goal:** Develop rapid context diagnostic methods to quickly collect and structure information on organizational, political and social issues that influence the uptake, application and use of ES knowledge in various decision/action contexts (before, during, after a project)

# Example: Expanding analysis of the “enabling conditions” for change

*In a given project:*

*“Strong leadership”*

What are the relevant patterns of leadership?

What are their actual respective strength?

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*“Clearly defined authorities/decision-making pathways”*

How to clarify who holds authority on what? What decisions exactly do they make?

How to decompose and refine decision-making/negotiation processes?

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*“Demonstrated interest in using ESK in decisions”*

What strategic use of information? Informing whom, on what, at what moment of the process?

To reach what objective and to obtain what specific change?

How does this change contribute to the overall biodiversity conservation objective?

(from Rucklesaush et al., 2015, p. 12)

# Anticipated activities

- Discuss and learn from Dr Vira and other UCCRI specialists' interdisciplinary expertise (i.e *Natures, Cultures, Knowledges* research group)
- Draw from various social sciences perspectives to elaborate an analytical framework (political ecology, political economy, strategy, management, science and technology study, etc.)
- In-depth interviews with ES assessment tools practitioners (TESSA; InVEST users) and possible mobilization of TESSA database for survey
- Preparation and facilitation of a workshop at the Natural Capital Symposium in Stanford (March, 2016)
- Analysis of survey, interviews and workshop materials
- Write-up of Rapid context diagnostic preliminary report (description of key questions/visual tools, illustrative case studies, etc.)

# Contributions to Valuing Nature Program and ES valuation community

- Final report with proposed rapid context diagnostic methods to be shared among TESSA/InVEST practitioners and the Valuing Nature Community
- Contribution to efforts to bridge the gap between supply and demand for valuation evidence (see Valuing Nature Network BRIDGE project)
- Development of a shared academic and professional culture of context evaluation among ES practitioners (shared vocabulary, lists of questions, field methods, theoretical resources, etc.)
- Perspective to set up a longer term project on this basis to expand this work and:
  - Test the methods elaborated in real conservation/development projects that involves ES valuation
  - Develop training programs and materials, MOOCs, guidance documents, simulation games, and case studies