



# Overview of key findings BIOMOT: discourses and governance





# An Overview of BIOMOT Work Package 1

John O'Neill<sup>1</sup>, Ada Wossink<sup>2</sup>, Paul Knights<sup>1</sup> and Jeroen Admiraal<sup>3</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Philosophy, School of Social Sciences, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>Economics, School of Social Sciences, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PL, United Kingdom; <sup>3</sup>Conservation Biology, Institute of Environmental Sciences, Leiden University, P.O.Box 9518, 2300 RA Leiden, The Netherlands

## Introduction

Work Package 1 of BIOMOT investigated the economic environmental valuation (EEV) methods that are used to express the value of biodiversity and ecosystems in monetary terms. This research conducted both a theoretical and empirical analysis of the criticisms that this approach to bringing the value of environmental goods into decision making is subject to.

## Methods

- An extensive review of both the supportive and critical literature on the economic valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services was carried out
- Thirty-six statements from that literature representing the full range of positions were selected
- Forty participants across seven EU countries were selected, including academic, governmental and private sector economists, and representatives from NGOs critical of economic valuation
- Each ranked their agreement/disagreement with the statements via online software
- The data was subject to factor analysis, revealing the debate's 'discourses'
- These results are displayed right, with relations between the criticisms of EEV methods in the literature and the

## Criticisms of EEV in the literature

- 1) EEV methods may compromise intrinsic motivation for environmental protection
- 2) EEV methods mistakenly assume that money can be used as a neutral measuring rod of people's preferences
- 3) EEV methods misunderstand, and motivate policies which fail to respect, the way in which people value nature
- 4) EEV methods facilitate an inequitable distribution of environmental harm between the rich and the poor
- 5) EEV methods are grounded in the misguided approach of bringing market norms into environmental valuation and decision making
- 6) EEV methods are primarily concerned with bio-production and therefore fail to secure ecosystem sustainability

## Q methodology discourses

- 1) **Enthusiasm for EEV methods:** this discourse claims that a better understanding of the total economic value of biodiversity will lead to more effective environmental protection.
- 2) **Value pluralism:** this discourse claims that no single unit of measurement, such as money, can capture all the distinct dimensions of environmental value.
- 3) **Social justice concerns:** this discourse claims that if the environment is brought into a market system environmental harms will fall most severely on the poor.
- 4) **Eco-deliberation:** this discourse claims that instead of the aggregation of preferences, a participatory approach to environmental decision making should be adopted.

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# WP1: Q-study of environmental discourses

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## Q methodology discourses

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4) **Eco-deliberation:** instead of the aggregation of preferences, a participatory approach to environmental decision making should be adopted.

# Implications for governance

Policy making is currently narrowly focused on economic valuation and needs to be inclusive of a wider range of discourses:

1. Procedural justice: it is procedurally unjust that many voices are excluded
2. Quality of deliberation: non-inclusive processes will not produce well-reasoned policy
3. Policy lacks traction with individual and social motivations for environmental action.

## WP2: Intrinsic and extrinsic motivations

- Extrinsic motivations (money and regulation) work well in the **short-term to provide immediate results**
- **but** intrinsic motivations are essential to reach **long-term self-sustained nature management.**

# Intrinsic motivation

- Intrinsic motivations are fostered through a combination of three factors:
- a context of **collaboration** instead of competition (to strengthen the self-determination of each actor)
- **procedural fairness** such as procedures for the involvement of all concerned stakeholders in decision making
- opportunities for **experimentation/ learning** for each of the involved actors.

# Policy implications

Organise social learning and cooperation with economic, social justice, civil society and community actors

- The outcomes of the discourse analysis in BIOMOT confirms the importance of a broad set of discourses amongst biodiversity advocates (from university, government, media and civil society) that range beyond the ecosystems' framework.

# Policy action

- Support for organisations which can bridge between various advocacy justice, economic and community networks for nature protection.
- Support for **transdisciplinary research partnerships** with societal actors, with the view to connect research insights on biodiversity decline to the motivation of societal actors involved in transition initiatives

# Self-determination and autonomy

- The key factor to strengthen these intrinsic motivations is to respect the groups' self-determination. Policy makers can offer networks, competences, communication etc. without prescriptions that reduce group autonomy.



## Groups in action for nature “Motivations and autonomy”

An EU wide comparative research amongst 34 major and successful initiatives

Tom Dedeurwaerdere, Janneke Hagens, Jeroen Admiraal, Almut Beringer, Flavia Bonaiuto, Lavinia Cicero, Paula Fernandez-Wulff, Juha Hiedanpää, Paul Knights, Paolo Melindi, Florin Popa, Urban Šilc, Nathalie Soethe, Tina Soininen, Willem van Esch, Jose Luis Vivero

Corresponding author: tom.dedeurwaerdere@uclouvain.be

*In general: what are ‘group-level’ features that enhance the drive & energy of groups in action for biodiversity?*

*More specifically: what is the importance of external motivations (monetary/regulation) and internal motivations (enjoyment in creative learning, experimentation, enjoyment of nature) in creating long-term commitment?*



**FINDING 1 :** For the great majority, internal and external motivations work side by side

**FINDING 2 :** Intrinsic motivations to act for nature are stimulated by several factors that are *internal* to the group. The most significant are:

- strong desire to help nature,
- a clear and strong group aim,
- broad, inclusive leadership

**FINDING 3:** Most important contextual factor fostering intrinsic motivations for groups to work for nature is the groups’ level of self-determination

### Discussion : From self-sustained committed action to larger-scale innovation

#### 1. The 34 major successful initiatives have a strong anchorage in the local economy



*Importance of local economic benefits derived from the project, according to participants: 3.5 on scale 5-0, visualized by ↑ (average over the 34 initiatives)*

2. Involving people in **bottom-up innovation** is key to creating committed action for nature, and for sustainability in general.

#### 3. Policy options for expansion of self-committed biodiversity actions



Supporting biodiversity and nature protection actions in **partnerships with societal actors**



**Involvement of public authorities** at all levels (local, regional, national, EU) in **bottom-up social innovation**.

# Climate science, economics and civil society

- Liberate the science from the economics, finance and astrology, stand by the conclusions however uncomfortable... In an increasingly interconnected world where the whole — the system — is often far removed from the sum of its parts, we need to be less afraid of making academic judgements. Not unsubstantiated opinions and prejudice, but applying a mix of academic rigour, courage and humility to bring new and interdisciplinary insights into the emerging era. Leave the market economists to fight among themselves over the right price of carbon — let them relive their groundhog day if they wish. The world is moving on and we need to have the audacity to think differently and conceive of alternative futures. Civil society needs scientists to do science free of the constraints of failed economics.
- Anderson and Bows 'A new paradigm for climate change' *Nature: Climate Change* 2012