

Relational values and active citizenship for nature

Key Results ALTER-Net & EKLIPSE Conference Theme 3 Workshop 2

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Key lessons learnt

- Biodiversity policies must be built on all that nature means: intrinsic values, instrumental values and relational values
- In order to acknowledge and nurture connection to nature and active citizenship, policy discourse needs to incorporate 'relational' language. It requires courage, especially from policymakers, to talk about relational values (as the economic valuation discourse is still very dominant)
- We have a fundamentally reciprocal relationship with other species. If we do not really acknowledge that we will not be able to tackle biodiversity loss

Recommendations regarding the draft key messages

- Include human-nature relationships and relational values in the key messages, as it is often relational values (such as connectedness with nature) that motivates action for nature
- Policymakers should acknowledge the importance of relational values for nature conservation, and be responsive and open towards understanding the perceptions and motivations of citizens. Although relational values are sometimes hard to capture and have low status in public discourse (especially compared to instrumental values) they are drivers for action

Knowledge gaps and urgent research questions for the post 2020 period

- What points of departure do relational values and (feelings of) ownership offer policymakers?
- Do relational values (such as connectedness) offer opportunities for involving people who are not interested in nature to tackle biodiversity loss?
- Can social media and technologies contribute to meaningful human-nature relations?
- How can we prevent generational amnesia (the shifting baseline syndrome) with regard to biodiversity (species as well as landscapes) and find new ways for creating awareness of extinction?

Positive notes from the conference

- Interactive discussions lead to fruitful discussion between scientists and policymakers
- The paradigm shift towards harmony with nature is very visible in science as well as in policy