

International Symposium

Living with Biodiversity: People, Knowledge, Politics

Naturalis, The Dutch Natural History Museum, Leiden, The Netherlands

Dates: Wednesday 22 –Thursday 23 September 2010

This symposium is supported by Naturalis and the Wageningen School of Social Studies.

Organisers:

- Esther Turnhout, Associate Professor, Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group, Wageningen University, the Netherlands
- Johannes Vogel, Program Leader UK Biodiversity, Natural History Museum, London, United Kingdom
- Claire Waterton, Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Our relationship with biodiversity, through policy, through conservation or through engagement with nature is one that involves blurred boundaries between science, politics and lay knowledge. Humans interact with biodiversity in different arenas such as politics and decision making, natural history museums and botanical gardens and the generation of biodiversity data and databases. Each of these involves scientific and other knowledge and information and each involves non-scientific publics in different ways. This conference brings together international academics on the topic 'living with biodiversity'. By focusing on interactions between knowledge, people, politics and biodiversity, this symposium aims to generate new ways of understanding involvement with nature and biodiversity and new perspectives on how to live with biodiversity.

If you are interested in attending, please register at the symposium website, which also contains abstracts and information about the speakers, theme, venue, and fees.

http://www.fnp.wur.nl/UK/newsagenda/agenda/Living_with_Biodiversity_People_Knowledge_Politics.htm.

Alternatively, you can go to www.fnp.wur.nl and click on 'Living with Biodiversity' under calendar.

Living with Biodiversity: People, Knowledge, Politics

This conference brings together international academics on the topic 'living with biodiversity'. By focusing on interactions between knowledge, people, politics and biodiversity, this symposium hopes to generate new ways of understanding public involvement with nature and biodiversity and new perspectives on how to live with biodiversity.

This topic is timely and relevant considering that 2010 is the international biodiversity year. Moreover, scientific insights show dramatic rates of species extinction and biodiversity conservation is an increasingly important topic on national and international political agendas.

Our relationship with biodiversity, through policy, through conservation or through engagement with nature is one that involves blurred boundaries between science, politics and lay knowledge. Biodiversity policy typically presents itself as evidence-based, emphasizing the importance of a strong scientific foundation for decision-making. Conservation biologists emphatically present their discipline as 'applied', 'mission oriented', or even 'post-normal', which implies an intentional and conscious blurring of the boundaries between science and policy. Biodiversity recording and natural history are to a large extent based on volunteers and amateurs and have always involved blurred boundaries between scientific and lay knowledge.

Thus, biodiversity is a topic where politicians, policy makers, scientists, and citizens meet and interact. As such, it has proven to be a fruitful topic for research within Science and Technology Studies and related fields such as geography and political ecology. Studies have criticized the predominantly technical and scientific framing of biodiversity and shown how this involves exclusion of indigenous and local voices. These criticisms are all the more pressing in light of current pleas for governance, participation and citizen engagement in policy and society as ways to ensure sustainability and conservation and current trends to treat nature as a commodity that can be (ac)counted and traded.

In this symposium, we discuss human interactions with biodiversity in different arenas such as politics and decision making, in natural history museums and botanical gardens and in the generation of biodiversity data. Each of these involves scientific and other knowledge and information and each involves non-scientific publics in different ways. By focusing on knowledge, people and politics, this symposium generates new ways of understanding public involvement with nature and biodiversity and new perspectives on how to live with biodiversity.

Speakers

- Stephen Hinchliffe: Professor of the department of Geography, University of Exeter, United Kingdom
- Anna Lawrence: Head of Social Research, the United Kingdom Forestry Commission
- Jamie Lorimer: Lecturer, department of Geography, King's College London
- Katja Neves: Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada
- Marleen Buizer: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre of Excellence for Climate Change Woodland and Forest Health, Murdoch University, Western Australia
- Rebecca Ellis: Lecturer, Department of Geography, University of Lancaster, United Kingdom
- Morgan Meyer: Postdoctoral Research Fellow, The Center for Sociology of Innovation, Mines Paris Tech, France
- Bettina van Hoven: Assistant Professor Cultural Geography, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
- Kathryn Yusoff: Lecturer, department of Geography, University of Exeter, United Kingdom
- Kezia Barker: Lecturer in Science and Environmental Studies, Birkbeck, University of London, United Kingdom
- Paul Voogt, Adjunct director Public Affairs, NCB Naturalis
- Esther Turnhout, Associate Professor, Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group, Wageningen University, the Netherlands
- Johannes Vogel, Program Leader UK Biodiversity, Natural History Museum, London, United Kingdom
- Claire Waterton, Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Symposium program

Wednesday 22 September

12.00: Lunch

13.00: **Introduction to the symposium**

- Esther Turnhout: Only what is counted counts? Representing biodiversity and its implications

13.30: **Key note lecture**

- Steve Hinchliffe: Living with Birds

14.45: Tea

15.15: **Session 1: Conservation, politics, and knowing nature**

- Jamie Lorimer: (Re)turn to the wild? The fraught biopolitics of European rewilding and cattle de-domestication
- Anna Lawrence: Habitat dynamics, policy dynamics: the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and forest removals on heathland
- Bettina van Hoven: 'Knowing' the Great Bear Rainforest: the roles of actors, values and knowledges in the management of Canada's coastal temperate rainforest
- Claire Waterton: *Title to be announced*

17.15: End of day

Thursday 23 September

08.30: Coffee

09.30: **Session 2: Archives of knowledge and representation**

- Katja Neves: The great botanical transformation - Beyond the *Erudire* Greenhouse and into the world
- Rebecca Ellis: Life forms and forms of life: breeding cryptic species and converting parataxonomists for global biodiversity
- Kathryn Yusoff: Archives of life: banal violence and exuberant presence

11.00: Coffee

11.30: **Session 3: Volunteers in biodiversity recording and conservation**

- Marleen Buizer: Public involvement in ecological restoration: volunteering for novel ecosystems or historical analogues?
- Morgan Meyer: Caring for weak ties - on the boundaries and partial connections between amateurs and professionals
- Kezia Barker: 'Does it look like Madonna's bra?': Biosecurity surveillance and the construction of biological threat

13.00: Lunch

14.00: **Session: The role of natural history museums**

- Johannes Vogel: 21st century Natural History – diverse, relevant and accessible
- Paul Voogt: *Title to be announced*

15.00: Closing of the symposium, possibility for museum visit

Venue

The symposium is held in the auditorium of the Dutch natural history museum 'Naturalis'. Naturalis is located near the railway station of Leiden. The Leiden Railway Station is well connected to Schiphol airport (20 minutes by train) and other major train stations in the Netherlands.

Adress: Darwinweg 2, 2333 CR Leiden

Tel: 071 568 76 00, Fax: 071 568 76 66

email: naturalis@naturalis.nl, website: www.naturalis.nl.

Walking from the railway station to Naturalis will take about 10 minutes. Make sure to leave the station at the back side in the direction of the UMC hospital. The route to Naturalis is marked with signs.

