



Future of Ecosystem Services
Research Center
(FuturES)

Annual Report 2015



FuturES: Future of Ecosystem Services

The concept of ecosystem services—the benefits derived from human interactions with, and appropriation of, the physical structures and processes occurring in (natural and human dominated) ecosystems—has emerged as one of the most important new paradigms of the environmental and sustainability sciences in the last fifteen years. The notion of ecosystem services has the potential to act as a boundary object, capable of bringing together various scientific domains of knowledge that study the interactions and interdependencies between human society and nature. Synthesising such knowledge may provide vital and encompassing understandings, and inform sustainable management, of social-ecological systems.

FuturES, founded in 2012, brings together the diverse expertise of researchers at Leuphana University of Lüneburg across a wide range of disciplines such as communication science, ecology, economics, ethics, political science and management. FuturES seeks to foster genuinely interdisciplinary collaboration between a broad spectrum of the natural and social sciences, and the active involvement of stakeholders and policy makers in shaping research goals and methods (transdisciplinary approach) within the broader conceptual framework and societal goal of sustainability.

FuturES expands on the existing research in the field of ecosystem services by relating the (largely) descriptive concept of ecosystem services to the explicitly normative concept of sustainability. A particular emphasis is on trade-offs and conflicts between multiple services and the uncertainties inherent in the generation and appropriation of ecosystem services. In doing so FuturES seeks to develop new management and governance strategies for the management of ecosystem services with explicit regard to the goal of sustainability.

FuturES is the first research center in Germany that takes a truly encompassing and integrated approach to ecosystem services. This approach places it among a small number of institutions worldwide, seeking not simply to use the concept of ecosystem services within established research approaches, but to actively strengthen the concept as a new tool in the search for sustainability solutions.



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Highlights

The most important events and developments of the past year for the FuturES research center included the following:

- In 2015 FuturES was joined by three new team members. Vicky Temperton was appointed the professorship for Ecosystem Functioning and Ecosystem Services at Leuphana University in April 2015 and shortly after took on the position as director of FuturES in place of Henrik von Wehrden. Dave Abson left FuturES to join the project “Leverage Points for Sustainability Transformation: Institutions, People, Knowledge” as a PI and his position as coordinator of FuturES was filled by Heike Zimmermann. The third new member of FuturES in 2015 is Berta Martín-López, who successfully applied for the new professorship for Sustainability Science at Leuphana in October 2015.
- In 2015 FuturES had over 50 members including 8 professors, more than 15 postdoctoral researchers and 29 PhD students, from a diverse range of scientific fields, providing a breadth of knowledge and understanding regarding many aspects of ecosystem services.
- In 2015, FuturES members produced 61 international peer-reviewed journal articles, including publications in Trends in Ecology & Evolution, Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability, Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment, PloS one, Land Use Policy, Journal of Ecology, Diversity and Distributions, Sustainability Science and Ecosystem Services.
- During 2015, FuturES researchers worked on ecosystem services related research projects with a combined value of more than 6 million euros.
- Two members of FuturES were among five PIs from Leuphana university who successfully applied for a 1 million euro grant application on “Bridging the great divide in sustainability science: linking high-performance modelling and transition experiments to foster transformational change towards sustainability” due to start in 2016.
- In 2015, a group of FuturES members, including eight full professors and three early career researchers, made substantial progress in moving forward the proposal for a Research Training Group (DFG). A number of topic explorations during several meetings led to a common topic that is both innovative and engaging for all and would be ideal for a Research Training Group.

In this Annual Report, the various achievements of the past year are described in more detail.



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Research Projects

Basic funding for FuturES comes from Leuphana University of Lüneburg. In addition, FuturES research center members are undertaking externally funded research projects with a total value to Leuphana University of Lüneburg of approximately 5 million euros.

Externally Funded Projects Completed

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Principal Investigators (at Leuphana)</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Source of funding</i>	<i>Funding for Leuphana</i>
Fostering sustainable development in Eastern Europe: A case study of ancient agricultural landscapes in Central Romania	Fischer, J.	2010-2015	Sofja-Kovalevskaja Award / Alexander von Humboldt Foundation	€1,500,000
Plant growth and demography; SP2 in the BEF-China research unit	Härdtle, W.	2011-2014	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€150,000
Population genetics meets landscape ecology in the biodiversity exploratories: a case study on genetic differentiation of ground beetle populations (PopGeneLand)	Aßmann, T.	2011 - 2014	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€206,400
Functional effects of herbivores, predators and saproxylics (Subproject 8 of DFG research group BEF China)	Aßmann, T.	2011 - 2014	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€46,800
Ecological importance and functioning of semi-open corridors	Aßmann, T. Härdtle, W.	2012-2015	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation	€350,000
Academic partnership for the conservation of biodiversity	Michelsen, G., Rieckmann, M., AdomBent, M	2011 - 2014	German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)	€113,350
			Total	ca €2,366,550

On-going Externally Funded Projects

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Principal Investigators (at Leuphana)</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Source of funding</i>	<i>Funding for Leuphana</i>
Identifying Social-Ecological System Properties Benefiting Biodiversity and Food Security	Fischer, J.	2014-2019	ERC Consolidator Grant	€1,800,000
Plant growth and demography; SP2 in the BEF-China research unit	Härdtle, W.	2014 - 2016	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€172,750
Multi-trophic plant-insect networks in a tree diversity experiment in China, SP9 in the BEF-China research unit	Abmann, T.	2014 - 2016	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€21,780.00
Mechanisms of soil erosion, soil properties and Ecoscape analysis as a function of species richness and species composition in subtropical forests; SP6 in the BEF-China research unit	Abmann, T.	2014-2016	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€24,359.00
Exploring priority effects over time for grassland restoration	Temperton, V.	2013-2016	Ciencia sem Fronteira (CNPq)	€99,000
Land-use responses of dung beetle communities and their ecosystem services	Abmann, T.	2014-2017	German Research Foundation (DFG)	€23,600
Protection of the worldwide endangered species <i>Gagea spathacea</i> (WaldGloWan)	Härdtle, W.	2013-2019	BMBF	€432,000
Critical Loads for heathland ecosystems	Härdtle, W.	2012-2016	UBA	€170,000
Multi-agri: Multifunctional agricultural land-use	Newig, J., Fischer, J.	2013-2016	RURAGRI ERA-NET (EU FP7)	€300,000
Responses of plant performance and functional diversity along a climate and land-use gradient in Mongolia	von Wehrden, H.	2014-2017	DFG	€186,120
Increasing agricultural nutrient-use efficiency by optimizing plant-soil-microorganism interactions (INPLAMINT)	Temperton, V., von Wehrden, H.	2015-2018	BMBF	€147,198
Leverage Points for Sustainability Transformation	Lang, D., Newig, J., Fischer J., von Wehrden, H.	2015-2019	Volkswagen Stiftung	€2,700,000
			Total	€6,076,807



PhD Research

In 2015 there were 29 PhD students associated with FuturES, engaging in very diverse research related to ecosystem services. The research undertaken ranges from ecosystem function through governance, economics, justice, food security and biodiversity conservation and leverage points in social-ecological systems.

PhD Theses Completed

Dorresteyn, I., The Future of birds and large carnivores in Romania, Transylvania

Gralla, F., Sustainable perspective on nuclear energy and possible challenges

Groeneveld, J. How oil plant cultivation should be designed to safeguard ecosystem services and biodiversity

Loos, J., The future of plants and butterflies in Transylvania

Li, Y., Tree growth and aboveground competition in subtropical forest ecosystem in southeast China

Milcu, A., Cultural ecosystem services and historical changes

Mikulcak, F., Fostering sustainable development in Eastern Europe

Schäckermann, S., Biodiversity and its role in the ecosystem services and dis-services concept in agricultural landscapes in Israel

PhD Theses On-going

Ahlborn, J. Biodiversity and community traits across a land use gradient in Mongolia

Bähring, A., Nitrogen (N) inputs in ecosystems endangered by eutrophication

Boutaud, E., Semi-open corridors: ground beetles

Derwort, P., Institutional change in energy systems

Dorninger, C., Biophysical human-nature connectedness

van Duijnen, R., Root properties in relation to nutrient supply

Dziedek, C., Interactive effects of nitrogen deposition and drought on forest ecosystems



- Eggers, J., Fragmentation effect and traffic intensity on populations flightless beetle species
- Ehlers, D., Semi-open corridors: spiders and stenotopoic vertebrates
- Hess, C., Quantification of forests dynamics based on TLS (Terrestrial Laser Scanning)
- Hülsmann, M., Faeces decomposition, biodiversity and ecosystem resilience
- Jahn, S., Role of social sciences in inter- and transdisciplinary sustainability research (MONA)
- John, B., Learning for transitions in urban areas
- Laws, N., Tangible Sustainability Policy: Possibilities and constraints of the establishment of biodiversity as a cross-cutting issue on the German federal level
- Lutz, L., Energy transition in Germany and the role of regions for the implementation of renewable energy
- Manlosa, A., Livelihood strategies and food security of different social groups in Ethiopia
- Marcus, T., The effects of land use type and intensity on genetic diversity of ground beetles
- Mausolf, K., Ecological continuity
- Oyundari, C., Sustainable use of oases in the Gobi desert
- Rau, A-L, Temporal aspects of Ecosystem services
- Rodrigues, P., Human-wildlife interactions and sources of conflict
- Röllig, R., European Wood-pastures
- Senbeto, T., Governance of food security and biodiversity in South Western Ethiopia
- Shumi, G., Effects of land use changes (food production) on biodiversity and ecosystem services
- Travers, E., Importance of semi-open corridors for habitat cross-linking
- Weidlich, E., Exploring priority effects over time for grassland restoration
- Zumstein, P., Decomposers and predators in the CSPs of BEF China

Publications

Research results of FuturES have been published in a wide range of books and academic journals – 64 publications altogether, including 61 articles in international peer-reviewed journals. Many interdisciplinary publications have been written with co-authors from other academic disciplines and institutions.

International Peer-reviewed Journal Publications

1. Austin K., Boutaud E., Buse J., Chikatunov V., Drees C., Felix R.F.F.L., Friedman A.L.L., Khoury F., Renan I., Schmidt C., Wrase D.W., Aßmann T., & Marcus T. (2015) The ground beetle supertribe Zuphiitae in the southern Levant. *Spixiana*, 38, 237–262.
2. Azhar B., Saadun N., Puan C., Kamarudin N., Aziz N., Nurhidayu S., & Fischer J. (2015) Promoting landscape heterogeneity to improve the biodiversity benefits of certified palm oil production: evidence from Peninsular Malaysia. *Global Ecology and Conservation*, 3, 553–561.
3. Bennett E., Cramer W., Begossi A., Cundill G., Díaz S., Egoh B., Geijzendorffer I., Krug C., Lavorel S., Lazos E., Lebel L., Martín-López B., Meyfroidt P., Mooney H., Nel J., Pacual U., Payet K., Pérez Harguindeguy N., Peterson G., Prieur-Richard A.-H., Reyers B., Roebeling P., Seppelt R., Solan M., Tschakert P., Tschardt T., Turner II B., & Verburg P. (2015) Linking biodiversity, ecosystem services, and human well-being: three challenges for designing research for sustainability. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 14, 76–85.
4. Calvo-Fernández J., Marcos E., Calvo L., & Härdtle W. (2015) Allocation patterns of airborne nitrogen in mountainous heathlands—A 15 N tracer study in the Cantabrian Mountains (NW Spain). *Ecological Engineering*, 84, 128–135.
5. Castro A.J., Martín-López B., López E., Plieninger T., Alcaraz-Segura D., Vaughn C.C., & Cabello J. (2015) Do protected areas networks ensure the supply of ecosystem services? Spatial patterns of two nature reserve systems in semi-arid Spain. *Applied Geography*, 60, 1–9.
6. Corney H., Ives C.D., & Bekessy S. (2015) Amenity and ecological management: A framework for policy and practice. *Ecological Management & Restoration*, 16, 199–205.
7. Díaz S., Demissew S., & Carabias J. (2015) The IPBES Conceptual Framework—connecting nature and people. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 14, 1–16.
8. Dorresteijn I., Schultner J., Nimmo D.G., Fischer J., Hanspach J., Kuemmerle T., Kehoe L., & Ritchie E.G. (2015a) Incorporating anthropogenic effects into trophic ecology: predator–prey interactions in a human-dominated landscape. *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*, 282, 20151602.
9. Dorresteijn I., Teixeira L., von Wehrden H., Loos J., Hanspach J., Stein J.A.R., & Fischer J. (2015b) Impact of land cover homogenization on the Corncrake (*Crex crex*) in traditional farmland. *Landscape Ecology*, 30, 1483–1495.
10. Drazkiewicz A., Challies E., & Newig J. (2015) Public participation and local environmental planning: Testing

factors influencing decision quality and implementation in four case studies from Germany. *Land Use Policy*, 46, 211–222.

11. Felipe-Lucia M.R., Martín-López B., Lavorel S., Berraquero-Díaz L., Escalera-Reyes J., & Comín F.A. (2015) Ecosystem Services Flows: Why Stakeholders' Power Relationships Matter. *PloS one*, 10, e0132232.
12. Fichtner A., Forrester D., Härdtle W., Sturm K., & Oheimb G. (2015) Facilitative-Competitive Interactions in an Old-Growth Forest: The Importance of Large-Diameter Trees as Benefactors and Stimulators for Forest Community. *PloS one*, 10, e0120335, 24.03.2015.
13. Fischer J., Gardner T., & Bennett E. (2015) Advancing sustainability through mainstreaming a social–ecological systems perspective. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 14, 144–149.
14. García-Llorente M., Iniesta-Arandia I., Willaarts B., Harrison P., Berry P., del Mar Bayo M., Castro A., Montes C., & Martín-López B. (2015) Biophysical and sociocultural factors underlying spatial trade-offs of ecosystem services in semiarid watersheds. *Ecology and Society*, 20, 39.
15. García-Nieto A.P., Quintas-Soriano C., García-Llorente M., Palomo I., Montes C., & Martín-López B. (2015) Collaborative mapping of ecosystem services: The role of stakeholders' profiles. *Ecosystem Services*, 13, 141–152.
16. Geijzendorffer I.R., Martín-López B., & Roche P.K. (2015) Improving the identification of mismatches in ecosystem services assessments. *Ecological Indicators*, 52, 320–331.
17. Glamann J., Hanspach J., Abson D., & Fischer J. (2015) The intersection of food security and biodiversity conservation: a review. *Regional Environmental Change*, 1–11.
18. Goebes P., Bruelheide H., Härdtle W., Kröber W., Kuehn P., Li Y., Seitz S., von Oheimb G., & Scholten T. (2015) Species-specific effects on throughfall kinetic energy in subtropical forest plantations are related to leaf traits and tree architecture. *PloS one*, 10, e0128084.
19. Gralla F., Abson D., Møller A.P., Lang D.J., Vilsmaier U., Sovacool B.K., & von Wehrden H. (2015) Nuclear accidents call for transdisciplinary nuclear energy research. *Sustainability Science*, 10, 179–183.
20. Guiz J., Hillebrand H., Borer E., Abbas M., Ebeling A., Weigelt A., Oelmann Y., Fornara D., Wilcke W., Temperton V.M., & Weisser W.W. (2015) Long-term effects of plant diversity and composition on plant stoichiometry. *Oikos*, .
21. Hirsch H., Wypior C., Wehrden H. von, Wesche K., Renison D., & Hensen I. (2015) Comparison of the germination performance of native and invasive Siberian elm populations. *BioRisk*, .
22. Hülsmann M., von Wehrden H., Klein A.-M., & Leonhardt S.D. (2015) Plant diversity and composition compensate for negative effects of urbanization on foraging bumble bees. *Apidologie*, 46, 760–770.
23. Iniesta-Arandia I., García Del Amo D., García-Nieto A.P., Piñeiro C., Montes C., & Martín-López B. (2015) Factors influencing local ecological knowledge maintenance in Mediterranean watersheds: Insights for environmental policies. *Ambio*, 44, 285–96.
24. Ives C.D. & Bekessy S.A. (2015) The ethics of offsetting nature. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*,

13, 568–573.

25. Ives C.D., Biggs D., Hardy M.J., Lechner A.M., Wolnicki M., & Raymond C.M. (2015) Using social data in strategic environmental assessment to conserve biodiversity. *Land Use Policy*, 47, 332–341.
26. Jew E., Loos J., Dougill A., Andrew J., Sallu S.M., & Benton T.G. (2015) Butterfly communities in miombo woodland: Biodiversity declines with increasing woodland utilisation. *Biological Conservation*, 192, 436–444.
27. Juerges N. & Newig J. (2015) How interest groups adapt to the changing forest governance landscape in the EU: A case study from Germany. *Forest Policy and Economics*, 50, 228–235.
28. Jürges N. & Newig J. (2015) What role for frames in scalar conflicts? *Land Use Policy*, 49, 426–434.
29. Loos J., Horcea-Milcu A., Kirkland P., Hartel T., Osváth-Ferencz M., & Fischer J. (2015a) Challenges for biodiversity monitoring using citizen science in transitioning social–ecological systems. *Journal for Nature Conservation*, 26, 45–48.
30. Loos J., Kuussaari M., Ekroos J., Hanspach J., Fust P., Jackson L., & Fischer J. (2015b) Changes in butterfly movements along a gradient of land use in farmlands of Transylvania (Romania). *Landscape Ecology*, 30, 625–635.
31. Loos J., Turtureanu P., von Wehrden H., Hanspach J., Dorresteijn I., Frink J.P., & Fischer J. (2015c) Plant diversity in a changing agricultural landscape mosaic in Southern Transylvania (Romania). *Agriculture, Ecosystems & Environment*, 199, 350–357.
32. Luederitz C., Brink E., Gralla F., Rau A.-L., Abson D., Lang D.J., & von Wehrden H. (2015) A review of urban ecosystem services: six key challenges for future research. *Ecosystem Services*, 14, 98–112.
33. Luederitz C., Meyer M., Abson D., Rau A.L., & von Wehrden H. (2016) Systematic student-driven literature reviews in sustainability science—an effective way to merge research and teaching. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 119, 229–235.
34. Martín-López B. & Montes C. (2014) Restoring the human capacity for conserving biodiversity: a social–ecological approach. *Sustainability Science*, 10, 699–706.
35. Meyer-Grünefeldt M., Friedrich U., Klotz M., Oheimb G., & Härdtle W. (2015) Nitrogen deposition and drought events have non-additive effects on plant growth – Evidence from greenhouse experiments. *Plant Biosystems*, 149, 424–432.
36. Meyer-Grünefeldt M., Calvo L., Marcos E., Von Oheimb G., & Härdtle W. (2015) Impacts of drought and nitrogen addition on *Calluna* heathlands differ with plant life-history stage. *Journal of Ecology*, 103, 1141–1152.
37. Mikulcak, Friederike Haider J.L., Abson D., Newig J., & Fischer J. (2015) Applying a capitals approach to understand rural development traps: A case study from post-socialist Romania. *Land Use Policy*, 43, 248–258.
38. Milne E., Banwart, Steven A Noellemeyer E., Abson D., Ballabio C., Bampa, Francesca Bationo A., Batjes N.H., Bernoux, Martial Bhattacharyya, Tapas Black, Helaina Buschiazzi D.E., Cai Z., Cerri, Carlos Eduardo Cheng K.,

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39. Nabel M., Temperton V., Poorter H., Lücke A., & Jablonowski N. (2016) Energizing marginal soils—The establishment of the energy crop *Sida hermaphrodita* as dependent on digestate fertilization, NPK, and legume intercropping. *Biomass and Bioenergy*, 87, 9–16.
40. Oliver T.H., Heard M.S., Isaac N.J.B., Roy D.B., Procter D., Eigenbrod F., Freckleton R., Hector A., Orme C.D.L., Petchey O.L., Proença V., Raffaelli D., Suttle K.B., Mace G.M., Martín-López B., Woodcock B.A., & Bullock J.M. (2015) Biodiversity and Resilience of Ecosystem Functions. *Trends in Ecology & Evolution*, 30, 673–684.
41. Oteros-Rozas E., Martín-López B., Daw T.M., Bohensky E.L., Butler J.R.A., Hill R., Martin-Ortega J., Quinlan A., Ravera F., Ruiz-Mallén I., Thyresson M., Mistry J., Palomo I., Peterson G.D., Plieninger T., Waylen K.A., Beach D.M., Bohnet I.C., Hamann M., Hanspach J., Hubacek K., Lavorel S., & Vilarly S.P. (2015) Participatory scenario planning in place-based social-ecological research: insights and experiences from 23 case studies. *Ecology and Society*, 20, art32.
42. Partelow S., Wehrden H. von, & Horn O. (2015) Pollution exposure on marine protected areas: a global assessment. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 100, 352–358.
43. Plieninger T., Hartel T., Martín-López B., Beaufoy G., Bergmeier E., Kirby K., Montero M.J., Moreno G., Oteros-Rozas E., & Van Uytvanck J. (2015) Wood-pastures of Europe: Geographic coverage, social–ecological values, conservation management, and policy implications. *Biological Conservation*, 190, 70–79.
44. Plückers C., Temperton V., Erler A., Putz A., Schaar H., & Rascher U. (2015) Moving Towards Measuring Multifunctionality in Ecosystems: FieldScreen—A Mobile Positioning System for Non-Invasive Measurement of Plant Traits in Field. *Nova Acta Leopoldina*, 114, 221–238.
45. Raymond C.M., Bieling C., Fagerholm N., Martin-Lopez B., & Plieninger T. (2015) The farmer as a landscape steward: Comparing local understandings of landscape stewardship, landscape values, and land management actions. *Ambio*, 45, 173–84.
46. Roellig M., Sutcliffe L.M.E., Sammul M., von Wehrden H., Newig J., & Fischer J. (2016) Reviving wood-pastures for biodiversity and people: A case study from western Estonia. *Ambio*, 45, 185–95.
47. Saavedra-Díaz L.M., Rosenberg A.A., & Martín-López B. (2015) Social perceptions of Colombian small-scale marine fisheries conflicts: Insights for management. *Marine Policy*, 56, 61–70.
48. Schäckermann J., Mandelik Y., Weiss N., von Wehrden H., & Klein A.M. (2015) Natural habitat does not mediate vertebrate seed predation as an ecosystem dis-service to agriculture. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 52, 291–299.
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Other Publications

1. Abson D., Sherren K., & Fischer J. (2015) The resilience of agricultural landscapes characterized by land sparing versus land sharing. *Agriculture Resilience: perspectives from ecology and economics* (ed. by S. Gardner, R. Hails, and S. Ramsden), Cambridge University Press.
2. Hines J., van der Putten W.H., De Deyn G.B., Waggk C., Voigt W., Mulder C., Weisser W.W., Engel J., Melian C., Scheu S., Birkhofer K., Ebeling A., Scherberkk C., & Eisenhauer N. (2015) Towards an Integration of Biodiversity–Ecosystem Functioning and Food Web Theory to Evaluate Relationships between Multiple Ecosystem Services. *Advances in Ecological Research* (ed. by G. Woodward and D.A. Bohan), pp. 161–199. Academic Press, Oxford, UK.
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Services to the Scientific Community

Editorial Services

FuturES members edited, or were associate or subject editors for, the following international peer-reviewed journals:

- Conservation Letters (Fischer, J.)
- Diversity and Distributions (Fischer, J.)
- Environmental Policy and Governance (Newig, J.)
- Ecology and Society (Fischer, J. & Martín-López, B.)
- Frontiers in Plant Science (Temperton, V.)
- Restoration Ecology (Temperton, V.)
- Tuexenia (Härdtle, W.)
- ZooKeys (Aßmann, T.)

Advisory Services

FuturES members sat on the following scientific steering committees, advisory boards, etc:

- Härdtle, W., Beirat des Vereins Naturschutzpark Lüneburg Heide (VNP)
- Martín-López, B., ipbes review editor (3a chapter 5)
- Temperton, B., on the advisory board of the South Korean National Institute of Ecology
- Zimmermann, H., Steuerungsgruppe "ÖSL in Lehre und Umweltbildung" Innovationsnetzwerk Ökosystemleistungen Deutschland



Looking ahead

Our application for a Graduate School at the DFG (Research Training Group) has gained momentum. A group of FuturES members, including eight full professors and two early career researchers, are engaged to move forward the proposal on a common topic, approaching it from various disciplinary perspectives. The focus of a DFG Research Training Group is the supervision and training of PhD students on a novel topic within an interdisciplinary setting. To that end, Ecosystem Services present the perfect framework for an interdisciplinary setting and our group of applicants cover a broad range of disciplines. A kick-off workshop is planned with potential Mercator Fellows in summer 2016 to further gather and frame ideas on our Research Training Group. The Mercator Fellows will strengthen the international component of the group as well as contribute to gender balance.

In line with our Research Training group, FuturES is a member of steering committee "Teaching and Education" in the Ecosystem Service Partnership network Germany (ESP-DE) since November 2015. The aim of this network is to connect scientist working on the Ecosystem Service concept and to move the concept further into society. The steering committee "Teaching and Education" aims to be a knowledge hub for students and scholars on existing study programmes on Ecosystem Services, but will also initiate workshops and summer schools on Ecosystem Services as well as distribute training material.

The main strategic goal for 2016 will be to submit our proposal for the Research Training Group at the DFG. Therefore our main aim for the future of FuturES will be to move from a Research Centre into a Research Training Group.



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