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January 2012 Newsletter

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Editorial: ESPA in 2012

By Paul van Gardingen, ESPA Director

2012 heralds a number of significant developments in the ESPA programme. Of most importance to the programme is the launch of three major ESPA research consortia working in [Africa](#), [South Asia](#) and the [Amazon Basin](#). You can read more about how these projects will contribute new knowledge on the links between ecosystem services and poverty in the features in this newsletter.

[Read more...](#)

Welcome to Caroline Howe, ESPA Research Associate

Caroline Howe joined the ESPA Directorate on the 4th of January 2012 as a Research Associate in Ecosystems and Poverty Alleviation.

Caroline is based at the Grantham Institute for Climate Change at Imperial College London.

[Read more...](#)

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ESPA Project Highlight: The ESPA Framework: a socio-ecological systems analysis of the political economy of Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation

By Genevieve Patenaude, University of Edinburgh, PI, ESPA Programme Framework Grant

As we enter the closing phase of our project, we would like to highlight the key contributions that our work makes to ESPA's research efforts.

We set out to develop a stronger conceptual and methodological basis for future research on ecosystem services and poverty alleviation. The work we have done over the last 12 months has highlighted what ESPA research can draw from various existing research themes, and consolidated these in the form of a new conceptual framework.

[Read more...](#)

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ESPA Consortium Project Highlight: Dynamic Drivers of Disease in Africa Consortium (DDDAC)

By Melissa Leach, University of Sussex, PI, ESPA Consortium Project

The Dynamic Drivers of Disease in Africa Consortium (DDDAC) is exploring the relationships between ecosystems, health and poverty with a focus on zoonotic diseases in Africa which are emerging or re-emerging as public health problems at the people-wildlife-livestock interface.

This is of crucial poverty and policy importance globally: more than 60% of emerging infectious diseases over the last few decades have been zoonotic, and while some result in global disease outbreaks (e.g. Avian influenza), many zoonoses affect disenfranchised communities, quietly decimating poor people's lives and livelihoods. Often under-measured and under-prioritised in

policy, if unchecked they create both current problems and dangerous future threats.

[Read more...](#)

ESPA Consortium Project Highlight: Managing ecosystem services for food security and the nutritional health of the rural poor at the forest-agricultural interface

By Guy Poppy, University of Southampton, PI, ESPA Consortium Project

This consortium will undertake ground-breaking interdisciplinary research on ecosystem services (ES) for poverty alleviation at the forest–agricultural interface. We will generate knowledge and evidence from a range of sources and in various formats to inform policy and behaviour which will make a difference to the lives of 2 million poor people living in our case-study regions (Colombia and Malawi), and potentially up to 550 million people living in similar environments around the world.

[Read more...](#)

ESPA Consortium Project Highlight: Assessing health, livelihoods, ecosystem services and poverty alleviation in populous deltas

By Robert Nicholls and Craig Hutton, University of Southampton, ESPA Consortium Project

The Ecosystem Services (ES) of river deltas often support high population densities, estimated at over 500 million people globally, with particular concentrations in Southern and Eastern Asia and Africa. A large proportion of delta populations experience extremes of poverty and are severely vulnerable or exposed to vulnerability from environmental and ecological stress and degradation. The Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) Delta is one of the world's most significant deltas: the Bangladesh coastal fringe of this delta, defined by the Indian border, Khulna, and the Meghna is selected as the case study. It is characterised by densely populated coastal lowlands with significant poverty, supported to a large extent by natural ecosystems such as the Sunderbahns (the largest mangrove forest in the world). There is severe development pressure due to the rapidly growing city of Khulna and indirectly due to urban expansion elsewhere (e.g. Dhaka). Rural livelihoods are inextricably linked with the natural ecosystems and low-income farmers are extremely vulnerable to changes in ES. Their health, wellbeing and financial security is under threat from many directions, e.g. unreliable supplies of clean water, increasing salinisation of soils, and arsenic contaminated groundwater. In the worst case, high rates of global sea level rise, local subsidence and sediment starvation caused by dam construction on the major rivers could result in large areas of the delta being converted to a shallow sea.

[Read more...](#)

REDD+ with a Fair Trade label: efficiency/equity trade-offs in the design of REDD+ incentives

By Lykke E. Andersen, Conservation International - Bolivia

REDD+ is the biggest potential game changer in the area of Ecosystem Services for Poverty Alleviation. While many other ecosystem services are also important, they have always been so and no major global changes in ownership or payments are imminent. REDD+, on the other hand, can potentially, almost overnight, channel billions of additional dollars to rural development in poor, forest-rich countries.

The international REDD+ mechanism was initially imagined to be a simple and cost effective way to

quickly reduce carbon emissions. However, after about 5 years of negotiation, analysis, and trial-and-error experimentation, it has become clear that it is not going to be simple, cheap, or quick.

[Read more...](#)

Defra launch invitation to tender for work to assess the costs of meeting international biodiversity targets

Defra is seeking to commission a small number of research projects to examine the global cost of meeting the targets agreed at the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of the Parties (COP10) in Nagoya in October 2010.

[Read more...](#)

Oxford Conference on the Future of African Rainforests

By Yadvinder Malhi, Professor of Ecosystems, University of Oxford

A three-day conference, held at Oxford University from the 4th to the 6th of January 2012, explored the future of African rainforests from a variety of perspectives in the context of land-use change and climate change.

A theme that kept emerging throughout the meeting was how different African forests are from the much better-studied forests of Amazonia, in their ecology, composition and history of interaction with climate and humanity.

African forests are generally cooler, lower, have much lower tree diversity, but higher productivity and biomass than their counterparts in Amazonia.

[Read more...](#)

The Overseas Development Institute's RAPID programme: Promoting greater use of research-based evidence in development policy and programmes

By John Young, Director of Impact Assessments, Partnerships and RAPID, Overseas Development Institute

The [Overseas Development Institute's](#) (ODI) programme [Research and Policy in Development](#) (RAPID) was formally established in late 2002. It evolved gradually, based on the strong interest of Simon Maxwell (then Director) in how think tanks can help translate research-based evidence into policy change and practical action. Rebecca Sutton's 1999 working paper on [The Policy Process](#) reviewed some of the literature from political science, sociology, anthropology, international relations and management and concluded with a 21 point checklist of 'what makes policy happen'. Then when John Young joined ODI in early 2001 with a background in action-research and policy engagement to improve public services in Africa and Asia, he rapidly developed a portfolio of work on various dimensions of the research-policy interface.

[Read more...](#)

CIFOR is now recruiting a new Director General

CIFOR is looking for a Director General who shares their passion for enhancing the role of forests in human well-being and environmental conservation, and their commitment to professionalism, innovation, impact, and collaboration.

The application deadline is 29 February 2012.

[Read more...](#)

Defining the agenda for Rio+20

Camilla Toulmin, Director, International Institute for Environment and Development, gives her analysis of the UN's draft agenda for the Rio+20 Earth Summit.

[Read more...](#)

Providing ethical guidance for collaborative research in developing countries – research project requests the assistance of ESPA members and award holders

By Nina Morris, School of GeoSciences, University of Edinburgh

This project, commissioned by the ESPA Directorate, will address the ethical issues arising from collaborative research in developing countries and, in particular, research collaborations between developed and developing countries.

[Read more...](#)

Calls for Applications: Leverhulme – Royal Society Africa Award Scheme

In 2008, the Africa Awards were launched as a partnership with the Leverhulme Trust.

The original aim of the scheme was to encourage collaborative research projects between scientists based at research institutions in Ghana and Tanzania with researchers in the UK.

This next phase will provide awards of up to £180,000 over 3 years for bi-lateral collaborations. Funding will cover research costs, travel and subsistence, as well as procurement and maintenance of equipment.

This call will close on Wednesday 8th February 2012.

[Read more...](#)

Work for DFID: be part of the new graduate scheme

DFID has recently launched a new graduate scheme – a paid, 50 week development programme offering a diverse range of opportunities in areas from humanitarian response to private sector development.

[Read more...](#)

Research Uptake Manager vacancies at DFID

DFID's Research and Evidence Division (RED) is looking for candidates for two Research Uptake Manager positions within the Research Uptake Team.

[Read more...](#)

Doctoral Studentships in Innovation and Sustainability

The University of Sussex's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Centre, in collaboration with the STEPS (Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability) Centre and the Institute of Development Studies (IDS), is looking to recruit seven doctoral students to join their vibrant research community.

[Read more...](#)

Call for participation: assessment survey of the recently established Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPEBS)

We would like to bring to your attention to the establishment of the [Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#), an IPCC-like assessment body for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

IPBES will undertake assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services changes and their impacts on human well-being. Decision makers will have the best science available so that they can weigh the consequences of alternative policy options and choose the best strategy

[Read more...](#)

Events

6th World Water Forum Aims to make Water High on all Political Agendas

The Forum will be held from 12th to 17th March 2012 in [Marseille, France](#). Over 180 countries will be represented and more than 800 speakers will lead discussions and debates around [12 key priorities and targets](#). These include improving access to [integrated sanitation](#) services for all and harmonising [water and energy](#). A number of [prizes](#) will also be awarded during the event to reward positive actions in the domain of water and to raise public awareness for global water issues.

[Read more...](#)

Recent ESPA Blogs

In case you missed any of the [recent ESPA blogs](#), please visit the ESPA website to catch up. Recent posts have included [a blog by Dr Richard Munang](#), Policy Advisor and Programme Coordinator for the Climate Change Adaptation and Development Programme within the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Dr Munang's blog discusses placing ecosystem management within the discourse of addressing world problems. [A more comprehensive article on this topic by Dr Munang can also be seen in the December 2011 ESPA Newsletter](#). ESPA Director, Paul van Gardingen, posted [an update on a recent visit to Brazil as a guest of the ISCU Global Land Project \(GLP\)](#). Paul was attending a workshop marking the transition of their International Programme Office from Denmark to the Brazilian [National Institute for Space Research](#) (INPE). The theme of the workshop was Land Use Transitions in South America. Paul took the opportunity to share ESPA's approach with researchers involved in the GLP. [See more on this in the December 2011 ESPA Newsletter](#). In the most recent blog, ESPA Researcher, Maeve Regan, discusses [the importance of southern leadership in ESPA research](#).

Articles of interest to the ESPA community

- [: New Agriculturist: focus on Ecosystem Services](#)
 - [: Seeing Forests for the Trees and the Carbon: Mapping the World's Forests in Three Dimensions](#)
 - [: Beyond 'Markets': why terminology matters](#)
 - [: What might the Rio+20 summit deliver?](#)
 - [: Putting Ecosystem Management in the Vision of Africa's Development](#)
 - [: Green Economy in a Blue World](#)
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Other News and Information of Interest to ESPA

- [: Seeding Labs: New call for applications for their 2012 Equipment Transfer Program](#)
- [: Launch of Water Research and Innovation Framework](#)
- [: See some recent news from the Natural Capital Initiative](#)

[Read more...](#)

Useful ESPA Documents

Many useful [ESPA related documents](#) are held on the ESPA website. Of particular interest to current ESPA researchers are the [ESPA Knowledge Strategy & Research Framework](#), the ESPA [Impact Framework](#) and the ESPA [Communications Strategy](#) documents. The [ESPA Knowledge Strategy & Research Framework](#) document is intended to provide a starting point to conceptualise ESPA's research. It builds upon the figure presented in the 2010 Announcement of Opportunity, which was modified following feedback from the ESPA research community during early workshops in support of the call. The ESPA [Impact Framework](#) offers our researchers advice on how to design their 'Pathway to Impact', to ensure that their research delivers real pro-poor benefits. It describes how to conceptualise useful impact, how to create that impact and how to communicate work to different audiences. The ESPA [Communications Strategy](#) provides an opportunity for the ESPA Directorate and the

ESPA community of stakeholders to add value to the work of the ESPA programme in poverty alleviation through ecosystems services. The key challenges for ESPA are to ensure it can deliver robust, innovative and ground breaking scientific research and a body of new knowledge. It is as equally important to ensure that the findings from this research can be used to inform policy decisions and further research development as well as provide practical lessons for alleviating poverty across the globe and that this growing body of new knowledge remains accessible and can be built on. The ESPA communications strategy supports these challenges by telling the ESPA story and supporting ESPA beneficiaries to do the same.

Videos on the ESPA website

[Please visit the ESPA website to see an archive of videos which might be of interest to ESPA readers.](#)

Currently available to view on the website are the following videos:

1. [UNEP: Branching out for a Green Economy](#)
2. [UNEP: Forests - Nature at Your Service](#)
3. [TEEB: Your Invoice](#)
4. [Ecosystem services and human well-being](#)
5. [How science can not only predict but also mitigate the effects of natural disasters](#)

If you have any videos of interest that we can share on the ESPA website please send details to Ruth Swanney (admin@espa.ac.uk) for consideration.

ESPA Adverts from Projects

This section of our Newsletter will be devoted to adverts and requests from ESPA projects (e.g. adverts from projects requesting data or information on a particular topic or a simple request for some specific help/advice from the ESPA global community).

If you would like to post an advert or a request please let the ESPA Directorate Administrator, [Ruth Swanney](#), know and it will feature in a future Newsletter.

In the meantime, please post a link to the ESPA website on your website: our web link is www.espa.ac.uk

ESPA contact details

For general ESPA enquiries, please contact the ESPA Directorate at info@espa.ac.uk.

**Join the debate at: www.espa.ac.uk
Please follow the ESPA Directorate on [Twitter!](#)**