

WP1 current status and future planning

WP1 focuses on the economic methods to express the value of biodiversity through ecosystem services. Economic methods are widely used to express the value of biodiversity, yet politicians and the public in general in Europe do not appear to respond swiftly and effectively to prevent further biodiversity degradation. Fundamental issues with economic valuation are addressed, such as: Do people value nature in quite different realms than current economic approaches elicit? Could more embedded and contextual methods of economic valuation perform better in motivating people to act for nature? This research line will deliver new methods of valuation, with improved motivational impact from the local to the global scales. WP1 will be engaging all debate and proposals for improvement of economists and others. Literature study will play a major role here but WP 1 will ground itself also in interviews with economists (academic and applied) and practitioners of economic valuation in biodiversity policy settings.

Good progress has been made on the task 'Studying economic valuation in context', which is contributing to the database on Economic methods and motivational capacity. Dr Paul Knights was appointed as a Postdoctoral Research Assistant to strengthen the WP1 team. The University of Manchester hosted the joint BESAFE-BIOMOT Project Workshop 2 at the end of February (month 18), as well as the teaching/training workshop for WPs 2 and 3. These meetings were extremely fruitful and resulted in significant progress regarding the design of the empirical component of WP1. The Q methodology has been selected at this workshop as the methodology with which to carry out this empirical component ('Eliciting the voices from theory and practice').

During the coming months, the research setup of WP1 will gain substance and detail. Trail interviews using Q methodology have begun, leading to an improved selection of statements for the method. Coming up are a comparison and selection of software to use, determining the response format, and the selection of respondents. The interviews are planned for later this year.