

# Exploring the factors that facilitate and hamper the implementation of ecosystems services

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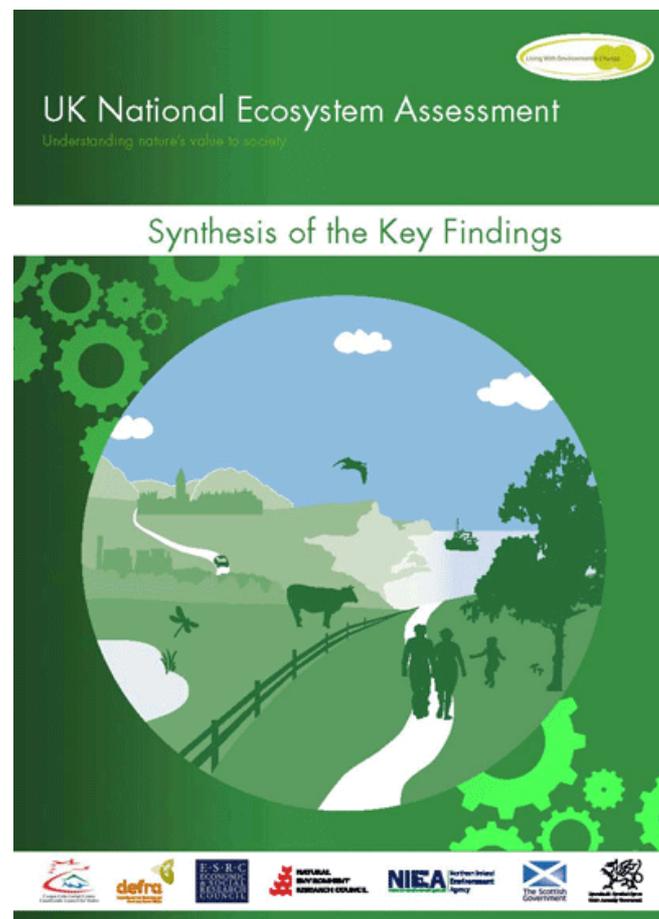
# So what's the puzzle?

"[ecosystems and the services they deliver] are consistently undervalued in conventional economic analyses and decision-making"

[NEA Synthesis, 2011, p. 5]

- Implementation deficit related to the issue knowledge *utilisation*.

“Problem of little effect” (Weiss 1979)



# There are many challenges because 'policy making' is complex

**SOMETIMES:**



**The rational high ground**

**MOSTLY:**



**The swampy lowlands**



“There is nothing a politician likes so little as to be well-informed. It makes decision making so complex and difficult.”

(John Maynard Keynes)



“For me, politics shouldn’t be some mind-bending exercise. It’s about what you feel in your gut”

(David Cameron, April 2011)

# Our approach

- **Aim:** investigate capacities and constraints to embedding consideration of ecosystem services in policy decision making, with a specific focus on the role played by institutional behaviours and cultures as both barriers and enablers.
- We have been down this road before – very important to learn lessons from the past
- Extensive analysis of policy documents
- In-depth interviews with ca 40 policy makers, stakeholders and implementers

# Enablers and Barriers



# Individual-level barriers

- Lack of data availability and models
- Poor understanding/unclear terminology

***“communication is a barrier because some people struggle with the concept. They can’t see the bigger picture.”***

***“If I have 10 experts in a room, I will currently get 10 different approaches.”***

- Questioning credibility of approach (valuation/quantification)

***“...people resist it because they think it is just about monetising bio-diversity which runs against their core values”***

# Individual-level barriers

- Low awareness
- Not perceived to add value to work

***“This is interesting stuff but no there is no evidence of its value to us”***

- Capacity:
  - Skills gap
  - Time/ work overload
  - Austerity/ funding cuts

# Individual-level Enablers

- Sell the positives/added value (don't force)
- Need greater clarity of tools & case studies of benefits
- Tailoring language to context

***“...linking the ESA to Green infrastructure will help with the communication with planners.”***

# Institutional Barriers

- Departmentalism and power structures

***“It’s not got the other government departments interested. They still see it as ... the environment sector’s agenda so they are not joining up policy.... This makes implementing it not very easy.”***

- Lack of real leadership by key departments (e.g. Treasury) ministers/Executive Officers
- Runs against established procedure

***“People have been working on an area in a certain way for a prolonged period of time, so they question why they should change.”***

# Institutional enablers

- Piggy-backing on existing mechanisms, concerns and discourses

***“I suggest using existing frameworks and embed ESA within them rather than using ESA as standalone. This was tried in agri-environment schemes in a proposal to look at delivery in the next phase using ESA – but was put on the too difficult pile. But I think there’s potential long term.”***

- Sustained internal institutional leadership/champions
- Central institutional leadership

# Sociatal/Political Barriers

- Underlying values
- Broad political priorities (e.g. deregulation vs env)

***“In part this is down to politics. In this Government, growth is the only priority. Anything that effects this in any way is typically squashed.”***

- Narrow political/policy priorities

# Sociatal/Political Enablers

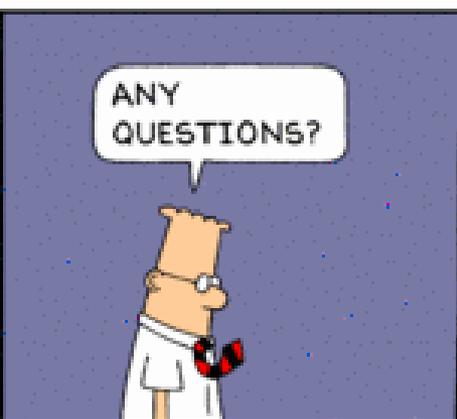
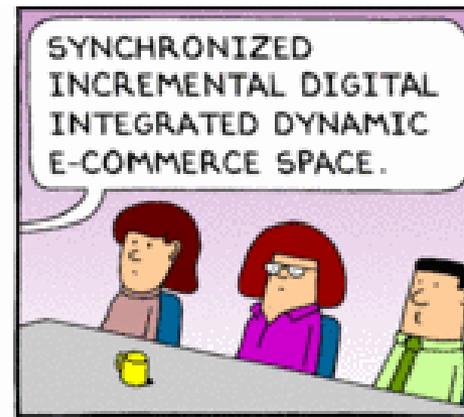
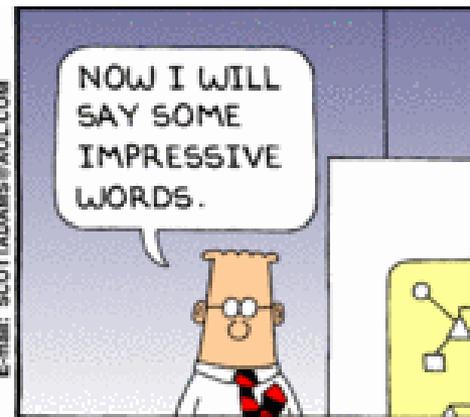
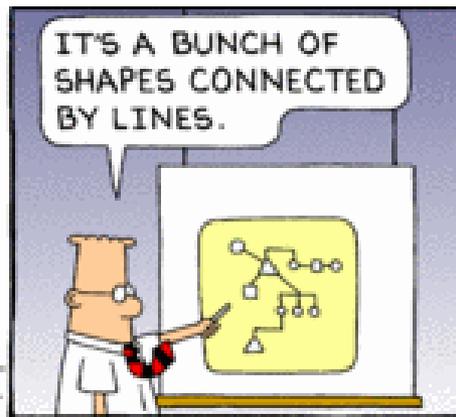
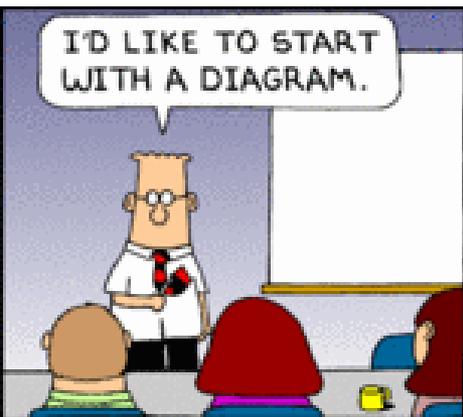
- Few and far between
- Political opportunities

***“We also managed to kept the commitment through the change of government. The coalition had a commitment to produce a Natural Environment White Paper.... This type of approach seemed to be a positive thing to build upon NEA. So the White Paper prioritised the closer integration between protecting preserving nature and humans living alongside.”***

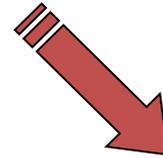
# Key messages to date

- Possessing ‘more knowledge’ or championing new idea does not necessarily mean that it will be embedded into policy making and help implementation
- Need to tailor knowledge to venue and context, e.g.
  - language (micro)
  - existing procedures (meso)
- Little can do about the wider societal values
- Interaction between levels; ‘mix that matters’
- Dispassionate objective scientist vs policy engaged scientist; issues of credibility

# Importance of language



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From 'bridging' to dialogue,



# Where next?

- Special issue on ecological knowledge use in *Environment and Planning C*, 2014 (Jordan and Russel eds)
- UK National Ecosystem Assessment, follow-on, WP9:  
<http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/Resources/tabid/82/Default.aspx>

Thank you.

Any questions?

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