

Newsletter

Winter 2016

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Editorial

IEEP 40 years young



Editorial *by David Baldock*

In 2016, we celebrate forty years since IEEP was established – and by the looks of it, it is going to be an exciting year. While the world did not fully grasp the nettle of climate change in Paris the agreement reached at the 21st meeting of the UN Climate Convention in December injected long overdue optimism and a sense of momentum pointing to only one way forward. It is all the more impressive that this impetus has been little dented by the collapse in oil prices – a development which makes the change of mindset a little more difficult for some.

Europe was not in the spotlight in Paris in the same way as China, India and the US although the EU was certainly one of the deal makers. While Europe is no longer in the front line of international climate negotiations in the way it was we should not forget its critical part in moving the world forward to the point where such an agreement was possible. This effort can be traced back to the Commission's first communication on climate issues in November 1988 and it includes a considerable period when the EU got little if any support from most of its OECD counterparts.

In the future, EU leadership needs to take a different form. It should aim to demonstrate how a low carbon economy can be established, in a way that addresses a host of related priorities not least on the environment, employment, economic stability, trade, social equity, sustainable agriculture and regional development - whilst also contributing to effort elsewhere in the world. This looks like an exciting and demanding agenda although it is not yet central on the EU political radar and is strangely absent from the debate on the UK's place in Europe.

Supporting the implementation of the Paris Agreement is high on the agenda on this anniversary year, as we thank our friends and partners for the past decades and make plans for the years to come. Issues on the horizon include the next round of EU climate and energy policy, the future of nature conservation policy and mechanisms to finance it, the impact of trade agreements, the circular economy and the bio economy, and ways forward with both regulation and economic instruments. Connections between policies for agriculture, food and land need to

be strengthened and there are parallel changes to be advanced in marine policy. One of IEEP's strengths has been to make links between sectoral debates in a wider frame and we see cross-cutting analysis and approaches as critical for the next decade. Our aim is to contribute to sharpening the focus on sustainability and the mechanisms to achieve environmental integration in Europe and a wider stage.

During 2016, we plan to publish a series of short papers addressing issues for the coming decade. These will appear alongside reports on current work such as the environmental implications of a British departure from the EU, the health and social exclusion dimensions of nature conservation policy, and the greening of the CAP. There will be workshops on some of these themes as well. As ever, keep your eyes on the website.

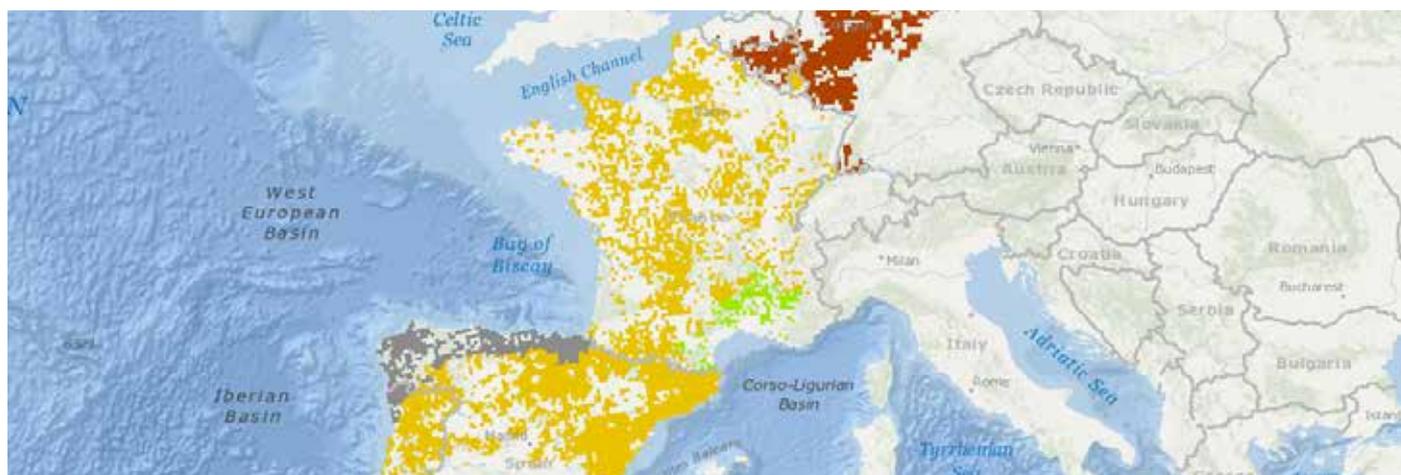


To celebrate IEEP's 40 year anniversary and David Baldock's time as Director, we will host an event in London in May. The evening will invite key speakers, staff and guests from both past and present collaborations to celebrate past achievements.

This is also an opportunity to welcome the new director of IEEP and to look ahead towards future engagements and collaborations.

Please note – by invitation only.

Towards a better use of biodiversity data in Europe



Better information on biodiversity can improve our understanding of the state and drivers of biodiversity change, supporting better policy making. IEEP is contributing to an EU-wide research effort to improve access to biodiversity data and its use in policy.

The EU BON project is creating a biodiversity information network in Europe that will provide access to integrated biodiversity data sources and analyses. The project is incorporating biodiversity data from a range of sources, ranging from professional monitoring programmes to citizen science, from museum collections to remote sensing data. This requires a network of communities of practice engaged in collecting and managing observations and data, with methods and tools for assessing, analysing, and visualising biodiversity and ecosystem information to inform decision makers.

As one of the EU BON project partners, IEEP is focusing on exploring the role of public authorities who use biodiversity data to target, implement and assess policy mea-

asures at the regional and national level. The aim is to identify where and why biodiversity data have been successfully used, and what has prevented data access and use. Three areas are being explicitly looked at: the targeting of rural development payments; the use of biodiversity data in river basin management planning; and environmental impact assessments and spatial planning.

For example, the new agri-environment scheme in England is targeting payments at selected priority habitats and species in mapped locations, to achieve greater biodiversity benefits by funding the right actions in the right places at the right scale. This is based on a large data set and biodiversity maps integrated into the IT system for land management. The scheme will be used as a good practice example of biodiversity data use, with comparison to schemes in other countries.

IEEP's assessment of lessons learned and recommendations based on the identified good practices, barriers and challenges will contribute to a joint report with the University of Cambridge, to be found on the EU BON website by

early next year. The findings will also be publicized at the EU BON final conference in June 2017.

For more information, please contact [Evelyn Underwood](#).

Building on the Paris outcome: what next for energy efficiency in the EU?



The success of COP21 is a historic turning point in global climate action. No single sector or technology will let us meet the agreed target of limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Energy efficiency – no longer only ‘nice to have’ – becomes an essential element of the post-Paris climate race, in which buildings will play an active and strategic role.

The Paris Agreement signed at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP21) in December 2015 shows the commitment of 195 countries to fight against the anthropogenic causes of climate change. The level of headline ambition agreed is so high that it will take much more than ‘business as usual’ to achieve it. A significant reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at source is therefore a priority, especially in energy generation, which is responsible for some 35% of global emissions.

Apart from renewables and other efficient low- or zero-carbon technologies for energy production, the lion’s share of the commitment will have to be delivered through efficiency of final energy consumption across the economy. The EU has in the past crystallised this in the ‘energy efficiency first’ principle, with the buildings sector a key area of its application. The Paris outcome means that this approach will need to be reinforced.

Buildings account for around 40% of total energy consumption and 36% of CO₂ emissions in EU. In many cases there is great potential to reduce the energy needs of buildings while delivering very welcome co-benefits such as cleaner indoor air or improved thermal comfort. Why leave this potential unexploited?

In a [study for the European Commission](#), IEEP has recently analysed the key factors of successful energy efficiency investment in public and residential buildings supported under the EU Cohesion Policy. Our findings confirmed that financial and behavioural barriers often prevent the comprehen-

sive energy renovation of existing buildings. To tackle these barriers, a combination of policy, regulatory and financial measures is necessary. Regarding the latter, whilst funds are available, many potential beneficiaries seemed unaware of the benefits of improved energy performance of the buildings they manage, or found it difficult to access the funds and expertise. The experience from across the EU on how to avoid similar traps in the future should not be lost. After all, better use of the money available for energy efficiency upgrades of our homes and offices will help us stand up to the climate change challenge.

For more information on our work in this area, please contact [Kamila Paquel](#).

Green spaces and healthy people – realising the benefits of nature



Nature is important for human health and wellbeing. Scientific evidence on the multiple benefits of green spaces for physical and mental health is growing. How can the health, social and nature communities work together to realise these benefits?

People are part of nature. Yet this simple fact is often forgotten in our policies, planning and investment choices, and daily decisions. Globally and in Europe, societies are increasingly urbanised, and nature is increasingly distant from our daily living and working environments. At the same time, physical health issues related to sedentary lifestyles, such as cardiovascular diseases, are on the rise in Europe, along with mental health issues such as depression. Moreover, in these times of austerity policies in many countries, social cohesion is at stake.

Scientific research is revealing more and more the importance of nature for human health and social cohesion. For example, natural green spaces can provide important con-

tributions to improving urban living conditions and being surrounded by and in contact with nature, and using natural spaces for activities, can contribute to improved mental and physical health. While the evidence base is getting stronger, translating these findings into practical on-the-ground policies remains a challenge. A diverse set of policymakers and practitioners from different disciplines and with different backgrounds must collaborate to achieve this.

A study led by IEEP for the European Commission has explored both the scientific evidence and the opportunities for cooperation across health, social and nature initiatives. A workshop organised by IEEP at the end of January brought these communities together and presented practical cases where such collaborations already exist.

Insights from the workshop show that stakeholders from the environmental sector have so far been most active in promoting the health and social benefits of nature. For example, protected area managers and experts working with green infrastructure have often played a key

role in initiating health and nature related projects. However, there is also increasing interest in these issues within the public health sector. The workshop concluded that, while there are several good examples of using nature to deliver health and social benefits, much broader take up of such initiatives is of key importance to mainstream nature into the health and social wellbeing agendas in the future.

The outcomes of the workshop will feed into a health-social-nature roadmap for future action, developed in the context of the IEEP-led study.

For further information on the workshop outcomes please contact [Jean-Pierre Schweitzer](#) and [Konar Mutafoglu](#).

Europe's soils: a foundation for nutrition, materials, energy & environmental protection



The International Year of Soils in 2015 ended with targets to halt land degradation being embedded in international law. In 2016, Europe must be seen to respond; IEEP has an ongoing programme of work to contribute to the protection of Europe's soils.

2015 was named the International Year of Soils, and in policy terms it did not disappoint. September saw the adoption of long debated additions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with a dedicated goal (Goal 15) now calling for land degradation to be halted and reversed. Critically this was supplemented by a specific target (Target 15.3) requiring that 'By 2030 [parties], combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world'.

In October 2015, this was swiftly followed by the adoption of a target, indicators and commitment to

establish a new fund under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) focused on achieving land degradation neutrality by 2030, complementing the SDG commitments. This in many eyes elevates the status of the UNCCD, which now contains a formal target that signatories should strive to achieve. The additions are considered to extend the remit of the Convention beyond a focus on arid and semi-arid regions and desertification issues to addressing the issues facing soils and land protection more generally. These international commitments have increased the attention paid to soils, particularly carbon sequestration and preventing land degradation.

Having actively supported the inclusion of the soil goal within the SDGs, in 2016 the European Commission is taking forward commitments - originally set out in the 7th Environmental Action Plan - to find ways of achieving the sustainable management of EU soils. This primarily involves looking at the existing set of policies relevant to soil protection, assessing gaps and identifying ways in which the EU might add value in policy

terms. This is being done in close collaboration with Member States under the auspices of a new expert working group.

In 2016, IEEP will be taking forward research intended to build on the momentum achieved in 2015. We have a number of projects underway that are intended to contribute to the debate on how best to protect and monitor Europe's soils. A project for the European Commission (DG Environment) is assessing soil policies and measures that currently exist in Member States, identifying potential gaps in coverage. Within the [Isqaper EU research project](#), IEEP is looking at how policy addresses soil protection on agricultural land, including drivers for land management decisions. We are also developing policy briefings interpreting and summarising key findings from technical research projects on soil contamination and toxicology.

For more information about IEEP's work on soil protection please contact [Catherine Bowyer](#).

Deploying renewable energy in harmony with nature



How can Europe deploy renewable energy in an environmentally responsible manner? A new IEEP study calls for ambition in renewable energy investment and targets, accompanied by coherent and geographically specific plans to allow effective assessment of the impacts of renewable energy.

There is a strong environmental rationale for accelerating the development and deployment of renewable energy throughout Europe. The scale of expansion in renewable energy needed to decarbonise European energy supply, and the associated grid infrastructure, will have a range of impacts over a large area of Europe. These impacts include increased demand for land and consequent pressures on the environment. For example, biodiversity protection needs particular attention given the growing spatial distribution of renewable installations.

However, there are ways of minimising these pressures. Plans for

the future of the energy sector should combine incentives to facilitate more rapid renewable deployment with requirements to ensure that impacts are managed. This combination should enable renewable energy to be sited appropriately, ensure supporting infrastructure is well conceived, and provide a secure basis for investment decisions that reflect long-term pathways for climate mitigation.

The future policy framework to determine energy demand and supply in Europe is currently being designed in detail. Targets and governance structures that will define the nature and ambition of climate and energy action from 2020 to 2030 are under development. It is therefore the right time to develop a more robust and finely tuned framework for delivering environmentally positive renewable energy across Europe.

IEEP's recent report on [Delivering Synergies between Renewable Energy and Nature Conservation](#) supports the ongoing negotiations between EU Member States on the post 2020 climate and energy policy. The [report was](#)

[launched](#) at a breakfast meeting in the European Parliament hosted by Claude Turmes MEP (Greens/Luxembourg). It highlights that the effectiveness of environmental protection legislation is currently being limited by a lack of strategic and spatially explicit planning for energy in much of Europe. In the absence of a solid understanding of the impacts of installation, interconnection and wider infrastructure locations, efforts to establish an effective and efficient future energy system for Europe are in danger of being compromised.

For more information on IEEP's work on this area, please contact [Catherine Bowyer](#).

IEEP Conferences and Events



European Parliament's conference on Land and Forests in 2030

Brussels (Belgium), 16th February 2016

IEEP's Executive Director, David Baldock, will present findings of our [report](#) designing a framework for a separate LULUCF pillar in the 2030 EU climate and energy package. The event is hosted by Paul Branner, José Inácio Faria and Bas Eickhout MEPs with the aim of supporting the ongoing policy-making process and informing the European Parliament and other stakeholders about the opportunities and threats identified. For further information about the event, please click [here](#).

Contact: [Christine Southam](#)

Combatting environmental Crime: priorities and opportunities for further EU action

Brussels (Belgium), 17-18th February 2016

The EU funded research project [EFFACE](#) (European Union Action to Fight Environmental Crime) is coming to an end. A final conference will bring together key stakeholders involved in addressing environmental crime at the local, national, European and international levels to discuss the key conclusions and recommendations emerging from the project and the priorities for further action in the EU. IEEP will present two case studies on illegal fishing and illegal e-waste shipments, outlining recommendations for improving data gathering.

Contact: [Andrew Farmer](#)

Natural capital and ecosystem services for sustainable EU policies

Brussels (Belgium), 1st March 2016

EU [OpenNess](#) and [OPERAs](#) projects are organising a policy day "Innovating with nature" in Brussels. IEEP will discuss the role of Natural Capital Accounting as a way to integrate natural capital in the circular economy. The intervention stems from research and analysis undertaken under the OPERAs project IEEP is part of.

Contact: [Patrick ten Brink](#)

Launching IEEP's report on the environmental implications of a potential UK withdrawal from the EU (Brexit)

London (United Kingdom), 9th March 2016

IEEP's Executive Director, David Baldock, will take part in a panel discussion on "The EU Referendum and Our Environment" hosted by WWF-UK, RSPB and Wildlife Trusts at Church House, London. The event is an opportunity to present the findings of IEEP's report on the environmental implications of a potential UK withdrawal from the European Union (Brexit), followed by a panel debate and a Q&A session with the audience. For any information regarding the event or how to join, please do get in touch with WWF-UK.

Contact: [Lorna Scott](#)

IEEP Conferences and Events



9th International Conference Improving Energy Efficiency in Commercial Buildings and Smart Communities (IEECB&SC'16)

Frankfurt am Main (Germany), 16-18 March 2016

IEEP will present results from the evaluation of energy efficiency in public and residential buildings supported through the Cohesion Policy. This Conference, organised by Messe Frankfurt and the European Commission, will cover: smart building and low energy buildings, (Nearly) Net Zero Energy Buildings, equipment and systems, smart and sustainable communities and the latest advances in energy efficiency programmes, regulation and policies.

Contact: Kamila Paquel

High Level Meetings under the Dutch Presidency

Amsterdam (The Netherlands), 4th and 5th April 2016

IEEP is supporting High Level meetings in Amsterdam on 4th and 5th April, under the current Netherlands Presidency of the European Union, on *Make it Work* and the Circular Economy.

Contact: Andrew Farmer

Greening of CAP Pillar 1 payments – can it be done better and simpler?

Brussels (Belgium), 20th April 2016

IEEP will give a keynote speech on the lessons emerging from the implementation of greening measures in Member States within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and the implications of this for future policy design. The event, organised by the European Network of Heads of Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCAnet) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), provides an opportunity to link discussions on the simplification of the CAP with the need to improve funding for the maintenance and enhancement of biodiversity in farmland areas.

Contact: Kaley Hart

IEEP Books and Publications



CAP greening: what are its environmental prospects?

13 November 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

A significant injection of money was agreed for 'green' farming practices under the recent CAP reform. This report examines the environmental impact these measures are likely to have on the ground. It concludes that Member States' implementation choices appear to have much diminished the chances of the greening measures delivering significant additional environmental benefits.

Protected area approaches in the EU

16 November 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Protected areas play an important role in achieving biodiversity conservation targets. IEEP has compared the approaches and rationale of designating and managing protected areas in the UK and a selection of eight other EU Member States.

A New Vision for Responsible Renewable Energy with a Clear European Dimension

26 November 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Renewable energy is key to the decarbonisation of Europe's energy supply, however, the scale of expansion needed will have significant impacts over a considerable area. This new report suggests how a resource efficient energy system might be delivered in a way that minimises and mitigates impacts on biodiversity and the wider environment.

How well has EU Cohesion Policy supported energy efficiency in buildings?

30 November 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

IEEP, with Danish consultancy Ramboll, has evaluated the contributions of the 2007-2013 Cohesion Policy programmes to energy efficiency in public and residential buildings.

The EU's climate targets, land use, and forests: delivering biodiversity-friendly mitigation

1 December 2015

ACCESS PUBLICATION

Land use and forestry is a new frontier for EU climate policy. IEEP's report for FERN sets out some ideas for how a supportive policy framework can deliver both climate and biodiversity benefits.

Assessing the Potential for Environmental Fiscal Reform in the EU-28

22 January 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

A study for the European Commission assesses the potential economic and environmental benefits of environmental tax reform across the 28 EU Member States.

IEEP Books and Publications



Land suitability assessments for bioenergy feedstocks in the EU – a review of data sources

29th January 2016

ACCESS PUBLICATION

A review examines the availability and utility of data that can be used to assess the potential areas of land that could be suitable for producing biomass for energy supply in an agricultural context. It concludes that current data availability is inadequate to undertake a detailed national or European level study of land areas that are underutilised and could be considered available for bioenergy production within the EU.

Routledge Handbook of Ecosystem Services

February 2016

ACCESS BOOK

The idea that nature provides services to people is one of the most powerful concepts to have emerged over the last two decades. The Routledge Handbook of Ecosystem Services provides a comprehensive reference text on ecosystem services, integrating natural and social science (including economics). IEEP's **Patrick ten Brink**, Senior Fellow and Head of the Green Economy Programme, and **Marianne Kettunen**, Principal Policy Analysis, Biodiversity and Green Economy Programmes, provide an in-depth analysis of the risks and opportunities related to mainstreaming ecosystem services into different sectoral policies.

Order your copy today at www.routledge.com/9781138025080

Routledge Handbook of Ecosystem Services

Edited by Marion Potschin, Roy Haines-Young, Robert Fish and R. Kerry Turner



'This handbook, written by world-class academic and policy experts, is long overdue, and provides a much-needed guide to address this challenge. It is an authoritative reference text written in easy to read sections that is essential reading for academics, decision-makers and civil society.'

From the Foreword by Sir Robert Watson, Professor of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia, UK

The idea that nature provides services to people is one of the most powerful concepts to have emerged over the last two decades. It is shaping our understanding of the role that biodiverse ecosystems play in the environment and their benefits for humankind. As a result, there is a growing interest in operational and methodological issues surrounding ecosystem services amongst environmental managers, and many institutions are now developing teaching programmes to equip the next generation with the skills needed to apply the concepts more effectively.

This handbook provides a comprehensive reference text on ecosystem services, integrating natural and social science (including economics). Collectively the chapters, written by the world's leading authorities, demonstrate the importance of biodiversity for people, policy and practice. They also show how the value of ecosystems to society can be expressed in monetary and non-monetary terms, so that the environment can be better taken into account in decision-making. The significance of the ecosystem service paradigm is that it helps us redefine and better communicate the relationships between people and nature. It is shown how these are essential to resolving challenges such as sustainable development and poverty reduction, and the creation of a green economy in developing and developed world contexts.

Editors

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