

sTradES working group meeting report

2nd working group meeting, September 4-8, 2023

General

The second meeting of the sDiv working group sTradES took place from September 4-8, 2023 in Leipzig, Germany. This time 10 people joined in person and 2 joined online. The participants who joined online in the first meeting (and were participating in the second meeting) could participate in person this time, giving everyone a chance to enjoy Leipzig during our working group meetings. The hybrid setup worked well, with iDiv's infrastructure and very helpful and attentive support. The atmosphere during the meeting was very focused yet relaxed, not the least because of the sunny weather. iDiv also organized a tour of Leipzig's botanical garden as a social event in one of the evenings which was very well received by the working group (see group picture).

Content and Structure of the meeting

Building on the conceptual work on embedded nature's contributions to people (NCPs) that was the focus of the first working group meeting, the main aim of this meeting was to advance a case study that compiles different strands of work, synthesizing them into a case application and showcasing the added value of the concept. The case study is being led by the PhD student in the working group and focusses on how NCPs support the production of coffee and soybeans in Brazil, and how these NCPs enable trade flows and consumption of these crops. The idea has been shaped in online meetings between the first and second sTradES working group meetings. In the meeting we therefore hoped to advance the empirical core of the case study.

To achieve this, we alternated between plenary settings, which left space for more conceptual and strategic discussions, and dedicated hands-on working sessions in three established smaller groups. While lacking a bit of variety, this setup proved to be very productive. We had a group that worked on the role of pollination NCPs, one group that investigated the non-material NCP of "supporting identities" and one that group discussed how links can be made between the NCPs and the beneficiaries, i.e. the consumers of the products, looking at supply chain and consumption data. All three individual groups focused on the following aspects of the work:

- Conceptual issues (how can the NCP be assessed to fit the "embedded" concept; how can links between NCPs and beneficiaries be made);
- Discussing and collating data sources, data acquisition and checks;
- Building an initial working flow for the assessment and how this would fit into the overall work plan.

Across the groups, we identified Brazilian municipalities as unit of analysis. This implies that the metrics on NCPs must be designed in a way, so that they can be aggregated at this level in a meaningful way. At the same time, we employ trade data that link producing municipalities to consumers. Overall, we were able to advance the work in all three sub-team, but still quite some work ahead to finish the case study.

In addition to this program, Nynke gave a seminar talk for all iDiv. The talk was well received and mainly attended by people from the "iDiv Summer School 2023 Integrating ecological and economic theory for modeling biodiversity change", who provided useful and critical feedback on the concepts developed by our working group.

We also spent some time of the meeting discussing the paper that was the main output of the first working group meeting and was, at the time of the meeting, invited for revision. In the meantime, the paper (Marques et al., forthcoming; details below) has been accepted for publication in the journal *People and Nature*.

Outlook

While we advanced considerably during the meeting, we realized we needed a process to keep working on it. For this we set up a process and follow up meeting, considering other commitments of the working group members.

Three working group members are part of the new IPBES assessment on Business and Biodiversity, which presents an opportunity to advance concepts discussed in our working group at the science-policy interface. In addition, we identified several ideas that might be worthwhile to further explore in dedicated research projects, which led us to exploring options for a joint project proposal. However, this did not yield concrete results yet, especially as it turned out difficult identify opportunities for funding that would allow engagement of all working group members and to identify a working group member who would have the capacity to lead such an endeavor.

References

Marques, Alexandra, Aletta Bonn, Antonio J. Castro, Abhishek Chaudhary, María R. Felipe-Lucia, Thomas Kastner, Thomas Koellner, Kira Lancker, Laura Lopez Hoffman, Carsten Meyer, Stephan Pfister, Gabriela Rabeschini, Louise Willemen, Catharina J.E. Schulp. "The role of Nature's Contributions to People in sustaining international trade of agricultural products". *People and Nature*, accepted for publication.

This paper is the main outcome of the first sTradES working group meeting. The link to the publication will be made available on the project website.