

Dialogue Session:

“Putting the Ecosystem Approach into practice – what can it do for you?”

Summary Report

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*Meeting held on the 28th September 2015 at the Edinburgh
Centre for Climate Innovation (ECCI)*

The Natural Capital Initiative

NCI's mission is to support decision-making that results in the sustainable management of our natural capital based on sound science. We aim to do this by:

- initiating and facilitating dialogue between people from academia, policy, business and civil society who make or influence decisions to find shared solutions and approaches; and
- communicating independent, authoritative synthesis and evaluation of the scientific evidence base.

Our aim is to be the UK's leading forum through which decision-makers from academia, business, civil society and policy can engage in meaningful cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral dialogue on how to embed natural capital thinking in policy and practice based on the best available evidence from across the natural and social sciences.

NCI is a partnership between the Society of Biology, British Ecological Society, the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the James Hutton Institute.



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Executive Summary

The Ecosystem Approach was defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as an integrated approach for managing ecosystems for sustainable use and equitable outcomes. The concept has high level policy support, however, understanding exactly when and how to implement the Ecosystem Approach is challenging. NCI brought together 20 experts who have experience with the approach (researchers, practitioners and policy-makers) in a 'Dialogue Session' to discuss their views on the implementation of the Ecosystem Approach. This allows us to build on the practical experiences of those working with the Ecosystem Approach when reaching out to other sectors and stakeholders in the future.

Meeting Chairs: Dr Kerry Waylen & Dr Kirsty Blackstock from the James Hutton Institute.

Summary Points

- We need to better involve sectors that are not typically perceived as connected with environmental management, e.g. the health sector. This should be initiated by demonstrating the relevance to their current concerns and priorities. This will require better evidence of the long-term sectoral and societal benefits of using the Ecosystem Approach.
- Evaluation of existing experiences, structured by the CBD's 12 Malawi principles, can provide this information about benefits, and should also be the basis for project learning. However to enable adaptive management there must be openness to learn from problems as well as best practice.
- It is important to learn from and link to existing activities that support or relate to the Ecosystem Approach (e.g. good practice in participation), even if these are not the same as the Ecosystem Approach. It may be helpful to illustrate how different approaches and concepts relate to the Ecosystem Approach.
- As well as spreading the message across sectors, enabling the Ecosystem Approach requires change from the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' levels i.e. from policy- and project-levels. Organisational as well as individual change is needed to embed the necessary 'soft skills' and the ethos of a more holistic and collaborative way of working. To achieve this, both individual champions and reappraisal of formal processes may be needed.
- In the long-term, embedding systems thinking and appreciation of natural capital into education systems should better enable future professionals in all sectors to understand and engage with the Ecosystem Approach.

Key areas for further discussion

- How to encourage interest and engagement in the Ecosystem Approach from new sectors, whilst not downplaying the scale of changes that may ultimately be required for widespread implementation of the Approach.
- Achieving the correct balance of investment between gathering new evidence – so we understand more about the effects of taking the Ecosystem Approach and how to implement it – versus communicating, disseminating and

making accessible existing evidence about the Ecosystem Approach and its benefits.

Summary Actions by Sector

- *Policy*: use the 12 Malawi principles as a form of policy appraisal (all domains, not just the environment); revise fiscal regimes and incentives to support the Approach; encourage local authorities to mainstream the Ecosystem Approach in their planning frameworks; support and fund long-term partnerships delivering integration across sectors; share experiences between environmental and other policy arenas (particularly urban planning and health).
- *Business*: be open to forming partnerships with the environmental sector and explore opportunities offered by the Approach, especially in terms of reducing risks to the supply chain or improving social impacts of projects.
- *3rd Sector*: reach out to non-traditional partners (land based businesses, health); invest in soft skills and nurture champions of the approach; self-evaluate using the 12 Malawi principles but recognise that not all principles may be implemented, nor does the label have to be used; share both successes and problems.
- *Education*: include the Ecosystem Approach in a wide range of degree courses (health, engineering, planning, agriculture and forestry) and deliver ongoing continued professional development courses that provide the relevant skills.
- *Research*: undertake a gap analysis to identify 'missing sectors' in order to target guidance and information about the approach to them using 'their language'; assess evidence about the benefits of adopting the Approach and collate existing datasets; translate and disseminate existing information whilst identifying where new information is needed.

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Introduction to workshop and this report

The Ecosystem Approach is an ambitious concept that shows how ecosystems should be managed inclusively and by taking into account dynamic natural systems. However, understanding when and how to implement the Ecosystem Approach has remained challenging since the concept was first adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2000. Understanding the potential of the Ecosystem Approach is perhaps particularly challenging in a country such as the UK where there are already many concepts and instruments being used for environmental management. The NCI convened this Dialogue event in September 2015, in order to address this challenge.

The objective of this meeting was to share experiences of putting the Ecosystem Approach into practice in the UK, in order to

- Identify the benefits of the Ecosystem Approach for policy and practice
- Identify opportunities & actions to put the Ecosystem Approach into practice

Participants to the event were invited by targeted emails, in order to bring together a range of experiences from individuals who already had some experience of the Ecosystem Approach. Twenty people from England, Scotland and Wales attended the event. Participants came from the public sector (both policy making and statutory agencies), private sector, third sector, and from research organisations. The number of participants from a range of different sectors suggest widespread interest in the Ecosystem Approach across the UK. The list of attendees is provided as Annex 1 to this report.

Because the focus of this event was on dialogue and discussion, the only presentations made were a brief introduction by the facilitators and a recent review of experiences of the Ecosystem Approach in the UK as synthesised by the Ecosystems Knowledge Network.

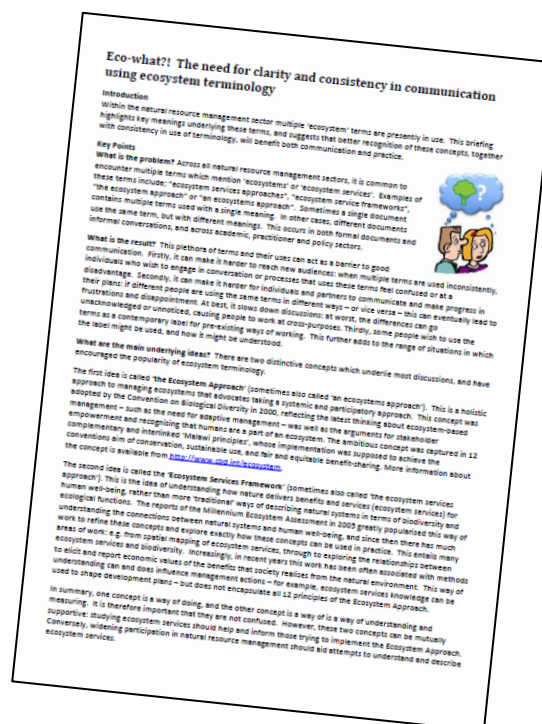
This report provides a brief overview of the ideas presented and discussed during the day. The report broadly follows the order of the agenda (see Annex 2).

- We provide a precis of the Ecosystem Approach concept
- We summarise the results of a brainstorm about the Ecosystem Approach
- We summarise the presentation and subsequent discussion about a recent review of experiences applying the Ecosystem Approach at the landscape scale
- We summarise the ideas of small group discussion on the topics raised during the earlier brainstorming session
- We highlight key actions that can enable further implementation of the Ecosystem Approach within the UK.

Introducing the Ecosystem Approach

Kerry Waylen introduced the rationale and background to the meeting, by reviewing the origins and definition of the Ecosystem Approach concept. The Ecosystem Approach has been defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity as “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”. It is commonly referred to by 12 ‘Malawi Principles’ for implementation (see Annex 3). These principles are complementary and interlinked. They emphasise a need to take account of the complexity of dynamic natural systems and also require inclusive and decentralised decision-making that takes account of multiple forms of knowledge. The Ecosystem Approach therefore represents and combines ideas from other principles and concepts in environmental management, such as participation, integrated catchment management and ecosystem-based management.

The Ecosystem Approach is not the only ‘Eco’ term used in the environmental sector. This can occasionally cause confusion or misunderstandings. In particular, the Ecosystem Services Framework (or Ecosystem Services Approach) is sometimes confused with the Ecosystem Approach. Ecosystem services are ways of understanding the services and benefits provided to humans by nature. The Ecosystem Approach and ecosystem services should be seen as complementary but distinct concepts: the former being an approach to action, whereas the latter is an approach to understanding. Being consistent and careful in using these terms can help ensure discussions are based in mutual understanding and purpose.



A short briefing note on this subject called ‘Eco-What?!’, produced by Kerry Waylen and Kirsty Blackstock as a result of previous discussions on this subject, is available as a pdf from the website www.hutton.ac.uk/EcosystemApproachReview.

Brainstorming about the Ecosystem Approach

At the start of the meeting, participants were asked the following four questions, and asked to stick up post-its under each question to capture their responses.

1. *What does the Ecosystem Approach do for my work that other approaches don't do?* This question was designed to identify what is unique or distinctive about the Ecosystem Approach versus other concepts already in use.
2. *How do I use the Ecosystem Approach in my work?* This question was designed to elicit the diversity of ways in which the Ecosystem Approach was already being applied by participants.
3. *What needs to change, in order to use the Ecosystem Approach in my work?* This question was designed to identify the opportunities for change in order to enable implementation of the Ecosystem Approach.
4. *Questions or concerns about the Ecosystem Approach?* This allowed participants to voice concerns or criticism whilst ensuring the focus of the meeting was to discuss and identify constructive steps for enabling use of the Ecosystem Approach. Therefore, this topic was revisited at the end of the day.

This section synthesises the comments in the post-its placed under the four questions.

What does an Ecosystem Approach do for your work that other approaches don't do?

- It encourages **participation** by stakeholders. It should encourage and allow all interested parties to come together to discuss managing the landscape to deliver shared outcomes.
- It provides an **international framework** for taking a holistic approach to link people and the environment, with the legitimacy/authority that comes from its adoption by the CBD.
- It is holistic and encourages a more **integrated approach** to land management, taking a systems approach that encompasses all the connections between people and nature rather than just certain elements.
- It may assist in connecting issues **across scales**, to move from the small (i.e. farm) scale through to the landscape or catchment scale.
- It allows different departments, public sector agencies and other organisations with different remits, to work in **partnership**.
- It encourages consideration of **multiple benefits** and impacts, helps to identify conflicts, co-benefits, trade-offs and possible beneficiaries of different actions. It thus challenges decision-makers to relate what they do for environment, economy and people.
- It considers **future** change and impacts, so that decisions are better informed and more equitable.
- It is a practical **means of action** – exemplified at the local level – its framing is more positive than engaging people around problems.

However:

- It is **not the only approach** or concept that encourages a holistic systems approach. We need to understand all these approaches, and their interconnections, to help identify the best opportunities for action.

How do I use an Ecosystem Approach in my work?

- The concept can help **select, identify and translate science** into policy, planning and practice.
- It helps **frame discussion and dialogue** and may bring together stakeholders on new issues (e.g. Wildlife Trusts and implementation of Urban SUDs) as they see they rely on /can benefit from the same natural system.
- It helps give stakeholders a greater **sense of ownership/engagement** and an increased commitment to act.
- It helps to **identify the connection** between the environmental and other issues and considerations.
- It **underpins expert advice** in natural resource management, and especially in water and wetland management.
- It helps advocate and **formulate land-use policies** that can deliver a range of ecosystem services/multiple benefits.
- It helps to understand the diverse outcomes that are and could be delivered by **agriculture**.
- It is both the **start point and end point** for discussing the management of land, water and nature.
- It helps in **prioritisation** – locations where management should be carried out, and how to avoid risks, safeguard ecosystem health and deliver multiple benefits.
- It is used at a **strategic level**, as both an objective and a framework for action, and also to raise awareness.
- It informs organisation and personal **performance appraisal** processes.
- It is used to help **communicate and advocate** for the role of the environment in supporting the economy and society.
- It underpins my approach to designing **stakeholder dialogue** about the natural environment.

What needs to change in order to use an Ecosystem Approach in my work?

- **Individuals** working with the approach need to acquire confidence in systems thinking and other soft skills, linked to a willingness to consider new issues, places and other interests.
- **Social science** needs to be seen as having equal weight to natural science knowledge and perspectives.
- Public sector **organisational change** is needed across levels from national to local government, to formally recognise the Ecosystem Approach in policy, but also to reflect it in regulations, agency structures, and funding mechanisms. This may involve realigning policy on nature conservation, but also revisiting other processes such as contracts made to private sector.

- **Leadership** in the Ecosystem Approach needs to be valued and nourished in order to promote individual and organisational changes.
- More evidence: **examples of implementation** – both good and bad – so we can learn. Formal training may also be valuable.
- More information about **relevant existing datasets**, including valuation data.
- Negotiation and **connections across levels**, between local, regional and national-level decision-makers.
- More understanding and **evidence about implications and outcomes** of implementation and comparing these to expectations, in order to build awareness and help justify investment in this Approach.
- Making existing **evidence more accessible** and widely disseminated.
- More understanding of **thresholds in Natural Capital** and how to understand and represent the risks they pose for the Ecosystem Approach.
- Finding **new ways to implement** the Ecosystem Approach, both to connect it to existing paradigms and sectors (such as planning for the built environment) and to identify the role of new versus old instruments such as PES versus agri-environment schemes.
- Need to **communicate clearly**, at all levels, so people can relate to the underlying ideas regardless of the terms used.

Questions and concerns about the Ecosystem Approach

The **relationships and differences between other concepts** and the Ecosystem Approach are not always clear, or acknowledged:

- Catchment management and Ecosystem Approach need to acknowledge each other and not work in isolation.
- Aspects of the Ecosystem Approach are being applied without realising it, whilst the need to address other aspects goes unrecognised: e.g. some may not see it as very different from the stakeholder engagement that is already carried out.
- Conversely, the Ecosystem Services agenda has hijacked thinking, resources and work but is not the same as the Ecosystem Approach.

Communication on the subject is often imperfect and challenging:

- Different research activities on the subject need to talk to each other.
- It can difficult to articulate the concepts to stakeholders.
- Too few project managers understand or even know of the Ecosystem Approach.

Decision-making for /in the Ecosystem Approach was not well-understood:

- Whose views should carry the greatest weight? How do you achieve equitable outcomes?
- How should biodiversity concerns be balanced versus ecosystem services and stakeholder needs?

As a result of these problems, it may seem that progress to implement the Ecosystem Approach has been limited, or the same questions are repeated ('Groundhog Day').

Dan Hunt (Bowfell Consulting) and Bruce Howard (Ecosystems Knowledge Network) jointly presented the outcomes of a recent review of experiences of application of the Ecosystem Approach at the landscape scale in the UK. The report "Applying the Ecosystem Approach at the landscape scale: a review of progress and challenge" will be available soon on the [Ecosystems Knowledge Network website](#), or contact info@ecosystemsknowledge.net to receive a copy.



Summary: *The Ecosystems Knowledge Network had recently undertaken a review of experiences of the Ecosystem Approach at the landscape scale. The logic for looking at the landscape scale was that landscapes are commonly thought to combine many natural and cultural features, as they are often a spatial unit that people can relate to, and are also the subject of many past and ongoing approaches to managing or protecting nature (for example Areas of Outstanding National Beauty, catchment partnerships). Therefore, landscapes may also be the appropriate 'scale' at which to carry out the Ecosystem Approach.*

The review had been carried out by using semi-structured interviews with experts who were experienced in implementation of the concept. This provides a snapshot of current activity and experiences across the UK, and this meeting provided the first venue to present the findings of this study. Many of those interviewed did not use the 'Ecosystem Approach' as the main term to describe their work. Related terms included: Integrated working; Natural resource management; Working at catchment scale; Sustainable land management; or Working holistically. This indicates the challenges of communicating the concept clearly, but also shows the connection of the concept with pre-existing or ongoing ideas and activities.



Integrating sectors and interests, and working long-term were both identified as challenging but critical to being able to implement the Ecosystem Approach. Integration might be promoted by a single integrated management plan by and for multiple partners, contained commitments to joint

actions, and connected with statutory processes (as in the case of the South Downs National Park). Such plans should also be long-term, and planning discussions

should give space to reflect on the dynamic nature of socio-ecological systems, and the potential effects of long-term changes.

The Ecosystem Approach seemed a useful way to help address 'gaps' in the current ways of working at a landscape scale – to encourage some processes to become more holistic, or more participatory. However, the review also identified some key sticking points which are preventing wider adoption of the Ecosystem Approach. The presentation concluded by highlighting the following four challenges – and suggested ideas for addressing them.

- There is a need for more clarity about the societal benefits of integrated working. Approaches to address this might be case studies to illustrate the benefits, and techniques such as Social Impact Evaluation.*
- Adaptive management is necessary to implement the Ecosystem Approach, but practitioners and policy-makers can sometimes have different expectations and understandings about its nature and value. This might perhaps be addressed by analysis of the benefits of adaptive management and thus when and how it should be further supported.*
- Identifying and using multiple different forms of knowledge and information about what nature does for people is necessary but challenging. Approaches to address this might include guidance for how to combine and incorporate techniques such as monetary valuation with long-term dialogue with communities.*
- Related to this, the meaning and purpose of valuing nature is sometimes disputed or confusing, and it is difficult to encompass all ways of relating to and valuing nature and the variety of ways these values may be expressed. Approaches to address this might be collaborations to produce valuation tools applicable at the land-scape scale.*

Overall, carefully collating information about cases and then communicating using targeted approaches could play a key role in addressing the above challenges. This could show how implementation challenges could be addressed, as well as demonstrate the public benefits arising from the Ecosystem Approach to encourage wider interest and adoption.



The discussion that followed the presentation began by debating the need for more evidence. It is sometimes the case that we already have evidence, but that evidence is not always communicated, well-known or convincing. Thus there was some concern that collecting more evidence could act as a 'diversion' or be in tension with the difficult work of actually managing complex systems. However, there are certain gaps and evidence needs for certain topics or for certain sectors. Better information about health benefits, could, for example, help engage and persuade the health sector to get involved. Information framed in terms of risks to supply chains might help engage some private sector interests. The rationale for investing in evidence collection versus other activities must be carefully thought through.

The group also explored the relationship between the Ecosystem Approach and other topical concepts in environmental management. Firstly, rewilding was discussed. Rewilding and the Ecosystem Approach are not necessarily incompatible, but often are not the same because many initiatives to re-wild are not inclusive, and rewilding is often perceived as being about removing human involvement with landscapes. Conversely, applying the Ecosystem Approach in urban settings was agreed to be a more important albeit particularly poorly understood challenge. Historically, urban settings have not been considered relevant to many natural resource management initiatives.

Working out what is and is not an Ecosystem Approach, in any setting, is challenging. The term can be applied post-hoc to justify a project, or at the start to explain the way to address a problem. Many in the room had encountered projects or businesses that said they were doing the Ecosystem Approach but whose activities bore little relation to the concept: if we apply the term broadly to any type of intervention, we risk losing the meaning of the concept. However, if we stop using the term, and assume other concepts or terms (e.g. 'integration') cover it, that may also risk missing opportunities to connect or improve our work. There is also a lot to learn, e.g. about skills in facilitation, collaboration and partnership working processes – from projects that are not (yet) labelling themselves as the Ecosystem Approach. The group recognised that 'loose' application of the term risked diluting or changing its meaning, but some participants worried that being too 'strict' might deter interest and engagement from initiatives who were not yet able to apply all 12 principles.

Participants differed over whether it would be wise to strictly 'police' use of the term 'Ecosystem Approach'. However, there was more agreement about what an Ecosystem Approach projects should aim to achieve, and how this could be evaluated. All 12 principles should be taken together. If projects are not able to implement all 12 principles, they should at least be able to show all 12 were considered. A process of continual self-evaluation is important; evaluating a project against all 12 criteria, but also considering the extent to which the project has been able to deepen and widen the issues and sectors it deals with. As an example, one question to ask might be "are you still working with the same people as you were 10 years ago?" Very often there is not the full breadth of societal engagement that the Ecosystem Approach implies: the 'usual suspects' of rural sector and environmental NGOs and agencies, but not the health sector, transport sector etc.

There is a worry that present cuts in public funding mean there is less capacity to plan for the long-term and be inclusive, even though this should bring benefits to all of society in the long term. Finding new partnerships to share resources may help to tackle this, but implementing the Ecosystem Approach also depends on communicating and convincing government as a whole, and sectors such as agriculture and health, to 'speak Ecosystem'.

Insights from small group discussions

At the start of the meeting, participants were asked to share their ideas, queries and experiences about the Ecosystem Approach, by sticking post-its under four questions (see Annex 4). The first three themes were then used as the basis of small group discussions, whereby every group took it in turns to discuss every topic. Ideas and insights from the small-group discussions emphasised, added to and extended the ideas previously collected in the brainstorm session. These additional insights are summarised in this section.



What does the Ecosystem Approach do for my work that other approaches don't do?

The discussion noted below highlights what is unique about the Ecosystem Approach, and also gives insight as to the challenges particularly associated with it. This illustrates what needs to change for further implementation of the approach by participants and other groups.

- To understand what the Ecosystem Approach can offer, it must be understood in terms of its origins. It was developed 15 years ago to deliver the three pillars of the CBD – **balancing protection of biodiversity, sustainable use and equitable distribution of benefits**. Explicitly balancing these goals is unique to the Ecosystem Approach. The 12 principles provide a specific

foundation for achieving these. To apply these principles, the CBD provided 5 points of 'operational guidance' that will soon be supplemented by new guidance ('G20') on how to implement the Ecosystem Approach¹.

There is now support for the Ecosystem Approach within the UK policy framework: the National Ecosystem Assessment and the Natural Capital agendas have generated new momentum, but it is still not the 'usual' way of working. To bridge the gap between aspirations and delivery, and not deter new groups from adopting the Ecosystem Approach, it may be useful to downplay the extent to which a paradigm shift is needed.

- **Ecosystem management is another related approach** that shares the need to widen out from 'single issue thinking' towards the consideration of the multiple benefits that nature provides. The Ecosystem Approach's 12 principles are useful as they help to challenge and ensure this is actually happening, e.g. are ecosystem function and critical thresholds being taken into account? However, applying this criterion should not be used to prevent action due to uncertainty or missing data.
- The **12 principles can be used as a checklist** to ensure project managers consider the ethos of the Ecosystem Approach, and to keep progress on track. Many project managers might think they are applying the Ecosystem Approach but looking at the principles helps them to decide if they really are: for example, many struggle with the principle of societal choice. The principles help assess the process as well as the outcomes.
- The Ecosystem Approach can inform not only management action, but also should be used in planning and design. It can therefore support **all forms of decision-making** in a policy or business cycle, and by different actors.
- The Ecosystem Approach should be applicable in many different contexts and settings, **not only rural** areas. It is in urban areas that people may most need to reconnect with nature: for example, in Scotland over 80% of the population live in urban areas.
- The Ecosystem Approach can be used to connect **statutory targets for the environment with benefits to people**, that most of society are more interested in. However, evaluating and demonstrating the widespread benefits from changing a whole system is more difficult than marshalling evidence on one specific or acute issue.
- The Ecosystem Approach is distinctive by **encouraging the delivery of benefits to multiple sectors simultaneously** (e.g. environmental protection, social cohesion and economic growth). In general though this requires time and arises from incremental changes. This is easier or better understood in some settings or some types of benefits than others: for example, discussing and identifying measures to deliver of benefits to water quality, flood risk management and health in the context of climate change.

¹ Contact Ed Maltby for more information on this guidance: E.Maltby@liverpool.ac.uk.

- Implementation of the Ecosystem Approach is often informed by descriptions of ecosystem services. Sometimes demonstrating the benefits to services in monetary terms is necessary to obtain funding or allow certain groups to participate (e.g. water utilities must be able to demonstrate value-for-money to their regulator; monetising health benefits may engage the health sector). However, **quantifying and monetising services may not always be helpful**: it can lead to a focus on conflicts; may lead un-monetised benefits to be forgotten; and also may not help consider the interconnections within systems, leading to 'disaggregation' of thinking back into separate sectors and interests. Instead, the Ecosystem Approach is useful for bringing together different sectors and allowing them to see where we have common ground, and build shared views on what should be protected and sustained, thus providing impetus for collaboration and pooling of resources.
- On the subject of monetisation, it is much easier to quantify the costs of setting up collaborative and participatory processes, than to quantify their benefits, particularly those delivered in future. It would therefore be useful to **assess if and how the benefits of participatory working are worthwhile**. This problem was highlighted by the '[True Cost of Participation](#)' project: in this, even when participants were convinced a process was worthwhile; it could be difficult to provide convincing evidence of this.
- The Ecosystem Approach **can operate at a range of spatial scales**. It asks us to think about scales that resonate with local people. Thus we should avoid applying the Ecosystem Approach only to a certain scale e.g. only catchments, but instead use the scale that makes sense to the issue at hand – shaped by habitats and species connections, but also perceptions of place, business and governance processes. It is useful when different programmes or partnerships share boundaries (e.g. Nature Partnerships and Local Enterprise Partnerships).
- The Ecosystem Approach **should help bring people together**. It is not the only approach advocating participation, and like many of these, actual implementation of the Ecosystem Approach is not always as inclusive as it could be. It is important to go beyond the 'usual suspects' although there may be a tension between bringing in too many people at the start, and risking a loss of focus. Brokering trust between new actors and sectors requires face-to-face interactions and well-designed processes that create 'safe spaces' to achieve this. These processes take time and funding them can be challenging: some schemes such as Scotland's Environment Cooperation Action Fund can help, but have tiny budgets versus those allocated to other priorities.

How do I use the Ecosystem Approach in my work?

Much of the discussion in this session actually relates to the question 'what needs to change', so to avoid duplication the material is not noted here. The predominance of this focus on what needs to change may suggest that at present the Ecosystem Approach is something that people are not able to use as often as they would like.

- The Ecosystem Approach was agreed to provide a useful **framework** within which project leaders or practitioners can open a dialogue with stakeholder groups, that bridge policy, science and other groups, and then aids integration of different forms of knowledge and different interests in order to identify and respond to opportunities for beneficial change.
- When existing experiences of using the Ecosystem Approach were discussed, it became clear that there was a diversity of ways in which it could be carried out. There was **no 'one-size fits all' solution** or scale to work at, but in any situation good communication was imperative to help work out what was appropriate.
- Good communication, liaison across groups, and the collection and use of many forms of knowledge requires so-called '**soft skills**' in managing, communicating, and collaborating with others. These skills are often undervalued.
- **Trusted intermediaries** (ideally with 'soft skills') are the best place to build new relationships – this may not be agencies or organisations that have traditionally led environmental management.

The difficulty in demonstrating benefits that arise from using the Ecosystem Approach may also explain why people found it difficult to expand on its use in their own work.

What needs to change, in order to use the Ecosystem Approach in my work?

Many of the post-its originally collected on this subject noted the need for more evidence. However, discussions revealed ambivalence about the need for more evidence to enable use of the Ecosystem Approach. In general, whilst there was perceived to be a need for more evidence, this should be carefully targeted to fill gaps that would allow engagement with other groups, and to allow better design and understanding of the interventions using the Ecosystem Approach. The points that follow provide some notes about what the priority evidence gaps might be, but also about other changes needed to enable implementation for the Ecosystem Approach over the long term.

- **What?** We need to communicate the concepts of the Ecosystem Approach to priority sectors (e.g. health, urban planning) that are not currently engaged in thinking about ecosystems, or do not see it as relevant to them.
How? Use a gap analysis to confirm who is currently missing from our discussions (i.e. businesses that use natural resources in their supply chains, insurance companies). Communicate with them about the Ecosystem

Approach only once we have learned about their interests and can talk their language. We also need to convince non-environmental policy sectors, both ministers and policy-teams: we can do this by emphasising the societal benefits that the Ecosystem Approach would deliver, and connect these with existing policy targets, National Reporting Frameworks etc. Engaging with the health sector is a priority.

- **What?** We need to create “compelling reasons” for new groups and individuals to consider the Ecosystem Approach.

How? More evidence about the benefits of the Ecosystem Approach versus other approaches/the status quo is needed, and that evidence needs to be communicated. Identifying how the concept connects with existing processes such as Environmental Impact Assessments, or statutory planning processes, can also help new groups identify opportunities to change in response. Legislative changes can also compel consideration of the Ecosystem Approach, so should be considered, but nobody wants to encourage a proliferation of complicated legislation unless it is necessary. We should focus on what enables trust to be built between actors and sectors.

- **What?** We need more evaluation of initiatives that are using the Ecosystem Approach.

How? We should use the 12 principles as a guide for self-evaluation and learning. All 12 principles should be used, rather than ‘cherry-picking’ them, which can lead to certain concepts becoming dominant whilst other aspects of the Ecosystem Approach are forgotten. Individual projects can use the Principles for self-evaluation and improvement. This would also allow learning to be combined with other experiences, to allow coordinated evaluation across multiple cases. However, for this to be really useful, there must be an openness to report and learn from failures as well as best practice. If results must be reported externally, especially to higher-level funders, the openness to learning from failure may be reduced.

- **What?** We need to work ‘top down’ as well as ‘bottom up’.

How? Higher-level context (e.g. some legislation, disconnections between some sectors, funding processes) is not always very supportive of the Ecosystem Approach. We must continue lobbying to change these processes, as has already been tried. Achieving widespread higher-level change may be a slow process, but we can search for opportunities for incremental change (e.g. could new concepts be applied, or existing processes like Agri-environment schemes, be tweaked to support the Ecosystem Approach?) and we can also identify and encourage change at other levels. There are already several ‘bottom-up’ initiatives that we can learn from. Understanding how these initiatives came about, and came to be successful can offer lessons for supporting more ‘bottom-up’ action as well as perhaps offering insights for enabling change at other levels.

- **What?** We need to change organisational cultures.
How? We should facilitate change within organisations through a mix of formal processes (job appraisals, values and corporate strategies) as well as formal leadership and informal champions. All are needed to achieve a systemic change. Using individuals as sectoral champions can also help spread interest within a discipline or sector that currently has little idea or interest in how the concept connects to their work.
- **What?** We need to incorporate systems thinking and appreciation for the value of natural systems into education systems.
How? The Ecosystem Approach should be part of national education curricula. To counteract the tendency that advanced education and specialisation means a narrowing of perspective, the Ecosystem Approach and techniques for thinking holistically should also be part of university degrees and other advanced professional training. Lobbying for degrees in 'joined-up' subjects such as 'Agriculture and Environment' would also be helpful.

All of these approaches need to be mixed: for example, we should not rely solely on champions to circulate and perpetuate ideas with a sector, but also set up peer-to-peer networks. Similarly, we should not wait for or rely on top-down policy processes to support the Ecosystem Approach, but also encourage and learn from existing and new 'bottom-up' activities.

Action Planning

The group used post-its to brainstorm all possible actions that could be taken to enable implementation of the Ecosystem Approach. Some actions had already discussed (in particular, see the previous section's notes on 'what needs to change') but this provided an opportunity to add additional ideas, and to discuss more detail.

These post-its are summarised in Annex 4. Their contents were then synthesised and discussed in plenary, to identify some possible actors and needs for implementation. Because multiple actions were identified, time did not allow for a formal action planning process, and so these actions were not fully detailed: however, the points that follow provide a starting point for further development by NCI.

Six main categories of actions are discussed on the following pages.



Reframing the political agenda

What? All participants agreed there is a need to engage with politicians and non-environmental policy makers, to persuade them to appreciate and engage with the Ecosystem Approach.

How? It will be useful to consider what policy processes might look like if the Ecosystem approach was widely taken on board – what are we hoping for? More appreciation of the importance of the environment should hopefully be reflected in more funding – but this is not just a question of budgets. Perhaps all policies could be appraised in terms of the 12 principles. To assist with this, all new politicians would receive 1 week's training in ecosystem management and the Ecosystem Approach. A White Paper might help develop deliver this, but there was also a need to specify how and where policies need to be aligned and integrated.

Who? National and devolved governments respond to the views of the electorate, media, and lobby groups. Therefore it may help to liaise with lobby groups, the media and/or influential individuals (e.g. George Monbiot) to raise the profile of these issues – the professional environmental sector cannot do this on its own. All sectors of society have a part to play in this.

Engaging new sectors

What? We need to engage with sectors and organisations that may not traditionally be thought of as 'environmental'. Key sectors to engage are land-based businesses, health sector, and local government. The urban-rural divide in expertise

and working also needs to be bridged.

How? Using existing venues such as the NFU Scotland Farming and Environment Forum may offer opportunities to engage these sectors. Networks such as the Scottish Forum on Natural Capital were set up to do this and are working to connect better to agriculture. Translations of the UK National Ecosystem Assessment and/or Malawi principles into plain English, or for specific audiences may assist. However, what is most important is to take a problem-focus, rather than a sector-focus. This does not only help motivate engagement, but it also helps with the necessary integration across sectors.

Who? There is a tension between putting energy into opening up discussion with 'new' sectors and sharing and developing good practice with those already putting the Ecosystem Approach into practice. Those already working on the Ecosystem Approach (typically those working on rural issues and protected areas) can work with new sectors within their projects, but cultivating 'champions' within the new sectors who will be able to more effectively communicate with others in their sector is a priority.

Finding mechanisms to change delivery

What? The Ecosystem Approach could be more widely considered through changes to existing systems that incentivise and regulate resource use.

How? A variety of mechanisms could be used to enable widespread change: (1) Changes in tax regimes could be informed by ongoing work: the European Commission are already looking at fiscal reform to prioritise environmental protection; the UN have developed approaches to environmental accounting; and national-level governments have also worked on 'green' or 'true' accounting to support the green growth agenda; (2) new concepts such as social impact bonds, Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) may also offer opportunities to incentivise the Ecosystem Approach, but their potential is poorly understood; (3) Appraisal processes that scope cost and benefits could also change: for example at present, whilst the Treasury Green Book does include environment costs, the way these are used in decision-making means they limited consideration compared to some other countries e.g. Germany; (4) Considering the Ecosystem Approach within statutory planning is already possible e.g. in Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) and Environmental Impacts Assessments (EIAs). Planning guidance also offers useful examples of best practice, but use of this is not always made, and the UK planning system does not encompass all land.

Who? Local authorities are able to require the Ecosystem Approach to be considered during planning applications. National policy would need to change to enable UK planning processes to encompass all land. Treasury and financial policies are needed to develop new fiscal regimes and accounting mechanisms. Research is needed to support all these areas, particularly to develop and understand new mechanisms.

Incorporating the Ecosystem Approach into education

This was not discussed in plenary beyond what was previously noted in the small group discussion (see previous section). It was reiterated that the Ecosystem Approach should be incorporated into national curricula for all children and universities: revision of state curricula provided opportunities to achieve this.

Improving so-called 'soft skills'

Skills in systems thinking, communication, coordination and partnership working all need to be developed and better valued.

How? The way to support these skills may vary according to current skills sets of different sectors, but can vary from briefing professional groups, providing formal Professional Development workshops, and supporting peer-to-peer networks (e.g. farmer to farmer, or planner to planner). A key skill is the ability to 'sell' the message and potential benefits of the Ecosystem Approach, and media training about communicating simple messages may assist in this. To achieve this in a time of austerity, task and finish groups could form around a specific issue or challenge, rather than requiring open-ended commitments to ongoing partnership meetings. However, long-term partnership working is ultimately required, so it is necessary to seek funding for this (e.g. via Rural Development Schemes or Heritage Lottery funding), especially to widen existing partnerships.

Who? Existing networks such as the Ecosystems Knowledge Network, and other sectoral or discipline specific networks can support new networking and skills sharing, whilst many organisations can provide formal training on specific subjects. Funding bodies are crucial to resourcing environmental management projects and/or partnership working.

Collecting more evidence and examples

More evidence – albeit targeted on certain issues – is required to help encourage adoption and improvement implementation of the Ecosystem Approach.

How? The group discussed two main reasons why evidence is needed: firstly to illustrate the benefits of the Approach, to engage with new sectors; secondly, to learn from existing experiences in order to inform and improve practice. For the first reason, information needs to be collected that demonstrates the benefits of the Ecosystem Approach in term of societal needs (e.g. health benefits) or in the terms that matter to specific groups (e.g. reduction in business risks). Also, examples of where the private sector interests have decided to adopt the Ecosystem Approach may be useful in order to understand when and how to engage with similar interests. For the second purpose, it is important to be able to learn from problems and failures as much as 'best practice'. A dedicated 'problems conference' could provide a venue to discuss frustrations, what to learn from them and how to tackle them. Some reviews already exist (such as the Ecosystems Knowledge Network review, the review of Scotland's Land Use Strategy principles) and this will improve our ability to carefully plan and help projects. In future it will be great if 'families' of projects – such as RSPB's Futurescapes projects – could reflect on what they have

learnt, and make this accessible via existing platforms such as the Ecosystems Knowledge Network. Understanding success factors is vital. However, it may yet be too early to evaluate practice. Many projects take time to develop and their effects may take time to become apparent so we need to revisit this in future years. When we do so we should use the 12 Malawi principles to assess projects. As noted in the previous section, self-assessment and external reporting can be in tension. A proposal to provide anonymised self-assessment of progress against the 12 Principles to help identify common actions to change could address this, but may also make it hard to judge the reasons for 'success' or 'failure' without detailed understanding of context. Evaluating projects goes hand-in-hand with updating and designing new projects: intervention logic should be carefully applied in order to ensure that best use is made of new evidence.

Who? The points above encompass action by both practitioners and researchers, to collect and use new evidence. To coordinate and communicate the collection of evidence and examples, existing networks and platforms should be used.

Several of these actions are interrelated and would be mutually supportive or even necessary to develop them together.

Final plenary discussion & conclusions

After discussing future actions, the group finally and briefly visited the queries and concerns about the Ecosystem Approach that had been noted at the start of the day (see page 9-10). These included difficulties in understanding the relationships with other concepts, in communicating on the subject and in supporting decision-making for the Approach.

There will likely be very few 'quick and simple' solutions to many of these concerns, but the actions suggested above were designed to address them. Some issues have no technical solution – in particular the question of how much priority biodiversity conservation should receive versus providing services to society. Thus, the Ecosystem Approach cannot directly resolve wider issues about power and representation in decision-making – it can, however, make them more visible.

Based on the discussions during the workshop, there are some clear areas where we can make progress. Firstly, in terms of communication and engagement: whilst there were concerns about not applying the term Ecosystem Approach in a consistent or accurate way, particularly in light of conflating an Ecosystem Service Assessment with the holistic management approach. Many felt it was the spirit, rather than the title, of the concept that matters. Therefore, if integrated catchment management, for example, achieves the same outcomes as the Ecosystem Approach, it should not matter what it was called.

Furthermore, the above ideas for actions, taken together, should help to better understand the relationships between other concepts and the Approach, to improve communication with targeted sectors, and provide evidence to help understand and promote the Approach. This in turn will better enable and inform widespread implementation of the Approach, and help resolve the present 'gap' between aspirations and practice.

Overall, the objectives for the dialogue session were met. However, the fact that it was easier to talk about what needs to change than how the Ecosystems Approach is applied, shows that there is still progress to make in mainstreaming the approach. This report is one way of taking the process forward by highlighting issues that NCI can further develop. It is also a record of the current thinking that can form a baseline for assessing progress in the years to come.

Postscript: The original CBD Ecosystem Approach does not make explicit reference to natural capital (it talks about conserving and/or restoring ecosystem function instead). Possibly as a consequence of the hosting organisation (NCI) or reflecting the current interest in the topic, the connection between natural capital and the Ecosystem Approach was explicitly made by participants. Whatever the terminology used, the application of the Ecosystem Approach must be based on a commitment to protecting the ecosystems on which human life, societies, businesses and cultures depend.

Resources

The Ecosystem Approach was defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) as “a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way”. More information about the Approach and the 12 complementary and interlinked ‘Malawi’ Principles is available from

<http://www.cbd.int/ecosystem/>

Research on the experiences and challenges to implementing an Ecosystem Approach in the UK, carried out by the facilitators of this meeting, is described at: <http://www.hutton.ac.uk/projects/ecosystemapproachreview>. This includes outputs in a variety of lengths and formats, as well as academic papers.

The Ecosystems Knowledge Network is an independent initiative that originated through a partnership involving the NCI and other organisations. It provides resources for anyone wanting to share knowledge or learn about the practical benefits of the Ecosystem Approach. Information on applying the Ecosystem Approach in the UK is also provided at <http://ecosystemsknowledge.net/about/background>

This report is available to download from the NCI website at <http://www.naturalcapitalinitiative.org.uk/publications/> The NCI website also provides links to other publications and reports from other dialogue events.

Feedback

All participants were asked to fill in a feedback form and 12 forms were received. These forms indicate that the meeting was generally regarded as interesting and useful: on a scale of 1-4, where 1 is not useful and 4 is very useful, the average score reported was 3.1. The lower scores were accompanied by comments that the meeting was ‘talking to the converted’ and hence missing key sectors. This occurred because the meeting was aiming to connect insights from those already working with the Approach: the need to widen interest and engagement with the Approach was discussed and has been highlighted by this report.

“Great room full of experience and brains”

“I thought there was healthy and stimulating conversation”

The forms also provided space to suggest ideas for future NCI dialogue events. Ideas suggested were: Biodiversity Off-setting; discussion on delivery for the ‘wider countryside’ where there are no existing delivery mechanisms; and discussion with business, to understand their planning processes.

Annex 1: Participant list

Rob Aubrook, Natural England

Laura Bellingan, Natural Capital Initiative

Kirsty Blackstock, The James Hutton Institute

Jackie Caine, Natural Capital Initiative

Mary Christie, Scottish Natural Heritage

Linda Gateley, Scottish Government

Alison Hester, The James Hutton Institute

Bruce Howard, Ecosystems Knowledge Network

Ann Humble, Welsh Government

Dan Hunt, Ecosystems Knowledge Network / Bowfell Consulting

Amanda Hutcheson, Scottish Water

Maggie Keegan, Scottish Environment LINK / SWT

Ed Maltby, Natural Capital Initiative

Chris Mellor, Arup

Peter Phillips, Collingwood Environmental Planning Limited

Diana Pound, Dialogue Matters

Alister Scott, Birmingham City University

Chris Sherrington, Eunomia

Vicki Swales, RSPB

Kerry Waylen, The James Hutton Institute

Annex 2: Agenda of meeting

9:30 – 10:00	Registration and refreshments
10:00-10:30	Welcome & Aims of Workshop Participatory brainstorm exercise
10:30-11:40	Review of applications of the Ecosystem Approach in the UK (with Ecosystems Knowledge Network), Plenary Discussion
11.40-12.15	Break out exercise
12:15-13:00	Lunch
13:00-13:40	Break out exercise
13:40-14:00	Plenary discussion
14:00-14:40	Action Planning
14:40-15:00	Summarise findings and next steps
15:00	Close. Networking and refreshments

Annex 3: 12 ‘Malawi’ Principles

The following text is copied from www.cbd.int/ecosystem. The following 12 principles, for implementing the Ecosystem Approach are “complementary and interlinked”:

Principle 1: The objectives of management of land, water and living resources are a matter of societal choices.

Different sectors of society view ecosystems in terms of their own economic, cultural and society needs. Indigenous peoples and other local communities living on the land are important stakeholders and their rights and interests should be recognized. Both cultural and biological diversity are central components of the ecosystem approach, and management should take this into account. Societal choices should be expressed as clearly as possible. Ecosystems should be managed for their intrinsic values and for the tangible or intangible benefits for humans, in a fair and equitable way.

Principle 2: Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.

Decentralized systems may lead to greater efficiency, effectiveness and equity. Management should involve all stakeholders and balance local interests with the wider public interest. The closer management is to the ecosystem, the greater the responsibility, ownership, accountability, participation, and use of local knowledge.

Principle 3: Ecosystem managers should consider the effects (actual or potential) of their activities on adjacent and other ecosystems.

Management interventions in ecosystems often have unknown or unpredictable effects on other ecosystems; therefore, possible impacts need careful consideration and analysis. This may require new arrangements or ways of organization for institutions involved in decision-making to make, if necessary, appropriate compromises.

Principle 4: Recognizing potential gains from management, there is usually a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context. Any such ecosystem-management programme should:

1. Reduce those market distortions that adversely affect biological diversity;
2. Align incentives to promote biodiversity conservation and sustainable use;
3. Internalize costs and benefits in the given ecosystem to the extent feasible.

The greatest threat to biological diversity lies in its replacement by alternative systems of land use. This often arises through market distortions, which undervalue natural systems and populations and provide perverse incentives and subsidies to favor the conversion of land to less diverse systems.

Often those who benefit from conservation do not pay the costs associated with conservation and, similarly, those who generate environmental costs (e.g. pollution) escape responsibility. Alignment of incentives allows those who control the resource to benefit and ensures that those who generate environmental costs will pay.

Principle 5: Conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning, in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target of the ecosystem approach.

Ecosystem functioning and resilience depends on a dynamic relationship within species, among species and between species and their abiotic environment, as well as the physical and chemical interactions within the environment. The conservation and, where appropriate, restoration of these interactions and processes is of greater significance for the long-term maintenance of biological diversity than simply protection of species.

Principle 6: Ecosystems must be managed within the limits of their functioning.

In considering the likelihood or ease of attaining the management objectives, attention should be given to the environmental conditions that limit natural productivity, ecosystem structure, functioning and diversity. The limits to ecosystem functioning may be affected to different degrees by temporary, unpredictable or artificially maintained conditions and, accordingly, management should be appropriately cautious.

Principle 7: The ecosystem approach should be undertaken at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales.

The approach should be bounded by spatial and temporal scales that are appropriate to the objectives. Boundaries for management will be defined operationally by users, managers, scientists and indigenous and local peoples. Connectivity between areas should be promoted where necessary. The ecosystem approach is based upon the hierarchical nature of biological diversity characterized by the interaction and integration of genes, species and ecosystems.

Principle 8: Recognizing the varying temporal scales and lag-effects that characterize ecosystem processes, objectives for ecosystem management should be set for the long term.

Ecosystem processes are characterized by varying temporal scales and lag-effects. This inherently conflicts with the tendency of humans to favour short-term gains and immediate benefits over future ones.

Principle 9: Management must recognize the change is inevitable.

Ecosystems change, including species composition and population abundance. Hence, management should adapt to the changes. Apart from their inherent dynamics of change, ecosystems are beset by a complex of uncertainties and potential "surprises" in the human, biological and environmental realms. Traditional disturbance regimes may be important for ecosystem structure and functioning, and may need to be maintained or restored. The ecosystem approach must utilize adaptive management in order to anticipate and cater for such changes and events and should be cautious in making any decision that may foreclose options, but, at the same time, consider mitigating actions to cope with long-term changes such as climate change.

Principle 10: The ecosystem approach should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.

Biological diversity is critical both for its intrinsic value and because of the key role it plays in providing the ecosystem and other services upon which we all ultimately depend. There has been a tendency in the past to manage components of biological diversity either as protected or non-protected. There is a need for a shift to more flexible situations, where conservation and use are seen in context and the full range of measures is applied in a continuum from strictly protected to human-made ecosystems

Principle 11: The ecosystem approach should consider all forms of relevant information, including scientific and indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices.

Information from all sources is critical to arriving at effective ecosystem management strategies. A much better knowledge of ecosystem functions and the impact of human use is desirable. All relevant information from any concerned area should be shared with all stakeholders and actors, taking into account, inter alia, any decision to be taken under Article 8(j) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Assumptions behind proposed management decisions should be made explicit and checked against available knowledge and views of stakeholders.

Principle 12: The ecosystem approach should involve all relevant sectors of society and scientific disciplines.

Most problems of biological-diversity management are complex, with many interactions, side-effects and implications, and therefore should involve the necessary expertise and stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international level, as appropriate.

Annex 4: Post-its of ideas for Actions

This section summarises the contents of all the post-its notes collected during the session where ideas for actions were brainstormed, grouped by clusters. A synthesis of these ideas, and further discussion as to who and how these actions could be implemented, is presented on pages 20-21.

Reframing political agendas

- All politicians to have 1 weeks training to understand the environment e.g. economy is part of the environment and not that the environment is part of the economy
- Find out what Joe Public wants and explain the EcA route to getting there (short and longer terms)
- The arguments and evidence about the benefits of the natural world to people needs to be turned into understanding an action at the political level. Not an easy task but an important one.
- All policies should align with each other but how to avoid policy gridlock
- Cross-departmental publications/white paper – HMSO government on how to maximise benefits from using the EcA
- Political persuasion
- Make the approach explicit in environment related policies
- All ministerial portfolios should have to take the EcA and report annually against it i.e. all policy decisions taken against this framework
- Who – All, Europe, UK/Scotland, organisations/businesses/ society as consumers and voters; academics

Engaging new sectors

- Engaging local authorities, giving them the confidence to invest in this approach
- Discussion with business about long term needs (outside of government grant support)
- Dialogue with the health sector – joint action particularly in the urban environment
- CBD to relaunch the 12 principles in plain English
- Find the hook/sector for each group/sector to engage them
- UK NEA to be translated for the non-environmental sectors – briefing note to be written with them
- Develop tools to the health sector engage with environmental partners and build multiple outcomes for health and environment
- Link what people/organisations are already doing to an EcA and build from there, language change for people on the ground.

- Sectors outside the env community of interest to publicly recognise the EcA or their version of it.

(New) mechanisms to change delivery

- Make EcA part of the planning/evaluation process
- Investigate impact bonds
- Tax incentives
- SEA applies to plans, policies and proposals – adopt the ecosystem approach which if already does in a small way but should consider ecosystems and examine at landscape scale; trickle down to EIAs and could be adopted by planners

Formal education

- Put EcA into national curricula for all school children and into universities
- School curriculum revision
- Ecosystem Approach embedded in the national curriculum (reworded with actions) (ASS)

Improving capacities of actors tasking with leading or implementing the Ecosystem Approach

- Develop tools for landscape scale project to be able to readily assess values (£ and not \$) and health benefits
- Engage with professional institutes to raise awareness and capacity for how an ecosystem approach can be applied to their sector – use members of the institutes to prepare materials, presentations, case studies and tools
- Facilitate people doing innovative things in different sectors to promote what they have done to their peers e.g. via events, site visits, magazine articles, video blogs
- Improve skills and understanding, soft skills, practitioner training
- EcA workshops for/by professional societies (RICS, RTPI, CABE, LI, CIOB, IEEM, IEMA. ASS)
- Creation of a specific fund for EcA to enable partnership building facilitation etc, especially for 3rd sector and business to bid for

More evidence and examples

- Exchange examples of evaluation of how an ecosystem approach has been applied and different frameworks used/developed for different purposes and put on Ecosystems Knowledge Network website for example
- Think properly about the logic of intervention that are designed to deliver environmental and ecosystem outcomes

- Robust evaluation of ecosystems approach based initiatives: use counterfactual where possible; theory of change; data needs
- All resource management projects have to do self-assessments on a regular basis ... if necessary with anonymous reporting so they are honest but a national picture emerges
- Cock up conference – Moscow rules on difficulties with the EcA
- Identify where the approach is being used already to achieve capitalist goals
- Gather examples of the language people have used effectively communicate and engage different sectors to apply an ecosystem approach
- Examples of situation where a problem arose/happened or objectives were not met and how an ecosystem approach could have helped with this and/or how applying an ecosystem approach to a previous situation and changed the situation
- Evaluation of existing projects/processes –sharing and learning from the results
- More evaluation – critically more analysis of the evaluation to determine critical success factors needed to apply the EcA (RA)
- Identify examples of private sector delivering environment/ecosystems outcomes just because it's a good thing to do (i.e. no revenue for CSR benefit) e.g. sporting estates (PP)