



# SPIRAL

## Interfacing Biodiversity and Policy

Science-Policy Interfaces for Biodiversity: Research, Action and Learning (SPIRAL) is an interdisciplinary research project funded under the 7th Framework Programme for Research of the European Union.

**Biodiversity** is essential for human life and well-being. However, we have not yet achieved policy targets to halt its loss and safeguard the ecosystem services it provides. Knowing and deciding exactly what to do in practice remains a challenge. One crucial step, in all efforts towards more effective policy-making, is fostering appropriate connections between the diverse insights and perspectives of scientists and other knowledge holders, and the needs and interests of policy-makers – *the science-policy interface*.

### The SPIRAL approach

The existence of well-functioning science-policy interfaces is a necessary condition of effective environmental governance. Therefore, the overall aim of SPIRAL is to enhance the connectivity between biodiversity research and policy making in order to improve the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

To achieve this aim, SPIRAL will

- contribute to a better understanding of science-policy interfaces;
- support the design, implementation and improvement of real-life science-policy interfaces;
- support capacity building and networking of science-policy interfaces, in Europe and elsewhere, including Africa, and contribute to the development of a critical mass of practical and theoretical expertise.

### Project Objectives

- To gain insight into how biodiversity research informs policy-making processes and, via policy instruments, the decision-making processes of individual citizens, civil society organisations, business and other actors; and to gain insight into how policy-makers and stakeholders inform biodiversity research;
- To assess and understand the roles of different mechanisms for encouraging social and political behaviour to reduce negative human impacts on biodiversity (particularly targets and indicators and economic instruments);
- To assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing biodiversity science-policy interfaces, to examine when more effective science-policy interfaces are needed and to identify design criteria for science-policy interfaces resulting in more effective biodiversity governance;
- To design mechanisms that improve the integration of scientific, ethical, moral and stewardship principles into policy-making on biodiversity-relevant issues;
- To experiment with and contribute to the designing, implementation and testing of science-policy interfaces for biodiversity in real-time;
- To synthesise the results and recommendations emerging from the project and to disseminate these results in appropriate formats to relevant users, within and beyond the domains of biodiversity-related science and policy.

**Science-Policy Interfaces** are social processes which encompass relations between scientists and other actors in the policy process, and which allow for exchanges, co-evolution, and joint construction of knowledge with the aim of enriching decision-making and/or research.

## **SPIRAL Outcomes and Outputs**

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SPiRAL will contribute understanding and practical examples that enable scientists, policy-makers and other stakeholders to capitalise on existing experience and create more effective science-policy interfaces for biodiversity.

Activities and products include workshops in Europe and Africa, a website, a collaborative internet platform, a practical handbook, policy briefs, newsletters, synthetic 'lessons learnt' reports and academic papers.

## **Contact us / Contribute**

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For more information, to be kept informed, to contribute or to become a member of the SPiRAL Dynamic Network of Advisers: please visit [www.spiral-project.eu](http://www.spiral-project.eu) and/or contact us at [info@spiral-project.eu](mailto:info@spiral-project.eu)



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### **SPiRAL Partners:**

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- NERC Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), UK
- Median SCP, Spain
- Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO), Belgium
- University of Helsinki, Finland
- Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research (NIOZ), the Netherlands
- University of Bucharest, Romania
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