
INVOLVING NON-HUMAN STAKEHOLDERS IN WETLAND MANAGEMENT: HURDLES AND PERSPECTIVES

Y. Meinard¹, J.-Y. Georges²

¹Centre Gilles Gaston Granger (UMR7304), Aix-En-Provence, France, ²Université de Strasbourg, CNRS, IPHC UMR7178, Strasbourg, France

General data

Preferred type of contribution: poster

Session Title: GOV_13.2: Biodiversity values and governance

Abstract body

Recent years have seen changes in environmental management practices, which have consisted in increasingly involving stakeholders in decision-making. However, this increased inclusion has left aside a whole category of stakeholders whose wellbeing, and even very existence, is at stake in environmental decisions: individuals and populations of non-human species. The main reason underlying this exclusion is that, as opposed to humans, non-humans can neither speak nor vote in collective deliberations and discussions. Here we explore options to overcome this difficulty and thereby include non-humans in environmental decision-making, in the case of wetland management. Three main approaches are compared in terms of relative strengths and weaknesses: i) Empathy consists in striving to take non-human pain and pleasure into account when deciding between alternative courses of action; ii) Interest-based inclusion generalizes the empathic approach by including non-human interests that cannot easily be understood as pain and pleasure, such as the wellbeing of non-sentient beings; iii) "Tentative representation", which refers to attempts, by human stakeholders, to act as representatives of non-human entities. Using concrete examples in wetland conservation, including our project Emys-R (www.emysr.cnrs.fr), we argue that tentative representation is the most promising and practical approach, and we outline operational reforms needed to institutionalize it in wetland management practice.

Confirmation and Consent

- 1. I confirm that I previewed this abstract and that all information is correct. I accept that the content of this abstract can not be modified or corrected after final submission and I am aware that it will be published exactly as submitted.:** Yes
 - 2. I am aware and agree that submitting my abstract constitutes my consent to its publication (e.g. congress website, program, other promotional publications).:** Yes
 - 3. I confirm that all material is the work of the authors listed, and appropriately referenced and that this abstract has not been submitted to any other conference yet.:** Yes
 - 4. I confirm that the contact details saved in this system are those of the corresponding author, who will be notified about the status of the abstract. The corresponding author is responsible for informing the other authors about the status of the abstract.:** Yes
-