

Workshop:

Ecosystem services, biodiversity offsets and habitat banking

Cross-sectoral relevance for environmental management in Norway?

Friday 20th September 2013 - 08:30-15:30

Venue: Toppsenteret, Forskningsparken, Gaustadalleen 21, Oslo, Norway.

Directions: <http://www.oslotech.no/forskningsparken/about-oslo-science-park/>

Organisers : Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA),
Oslo Center for Interdisciplinary Environmental and Social Research(CIENS)

Sponsors: OpenNESS
CEDREN-EcoManage
POLICYMIX projects

Registration:

<http://www.nina.no/Aktuelt/Arrangementerogseminarer/Ecosystemservicesworkshopapplication.aspx>



Purpose of the workshop

To discuss the potential for biodiversity offsetting and habitat banking in Norway, in light of ecosystem characteristics, development and conservation policy and current 'environmental mitigation'¹ practices.

Context

As a key element of the EU Resource Efficiency flagship and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, the European Commission is developing a 'no net loss initiative' to be published in 2015. The initiative is expected to propose, in particular, expanded use of biodiversity offsetting in the EU, and of the related market-based mechanism of habitat banking. The EC has already commissioned a number of studies on the use of financial instruments for biodiversity (eftec, 2012), and more specifically on habitat banking (Eftec et al., 2010; GHK, 2013).

A number of EU Member States are currently considering expansion of the use of biodiversity offsetting. In the UK, a recent high-profile report to government by the business-led Ecosystem Markets Task Force identified mandatory biodiversity offsetting as one of the biggest opportunities for business in relation to valuing and conserving nature (EMTF, 2013). Research for EMTF calculated the potential scale of the market in England alone to be in excess of £500 million/annum (Duke et al., 2013)

In Norway, a working group commissioned by the Ministry of Transport has recently completed an evaluation of physical compensation for agricultural and nature areas in connection with transport infrastructure development².

A number of research projects are addressing various aspects of offsetting. The EU project OpenNESS³ (2013-2017) is examining offsetting as one of several mechanisms to operationalise the concept of ecosystem services and is in particular studying operationalising the concept in the context of *urban planning* in Oslo. The EU project POLICYMIX⁴ is conducting an evaluation of economic instruments to promote *forest conservation* in Norway. The CEDREN project Ecomanage⁵ is evaluating the feasibility of

¹ Defined to include the environmental mitigation hierarchy of minimisation, mitigation, offsetting and compensation of environmental impacts of development.

² <http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/38418217/endeligrapportfraarbgr.pdf>

³ OpenNESS - Ecosystem services from concepts to real-world applications.
<http://www.openness-project.eu/>

⁴ POLICYMIX – Assessing the role of economic instruments in policy mixes for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services provision. <http://policymix.nina.no/>

⁵ CEDREN-EcoManage – Improved development and management of energy and water resources
<http://www.cedren.no/Projects/EcoManage.aspx>

biodiversity-offsetting and the relevance of ecosystem service concept in the revision of *hydropower* concessions.

A wide range of international experience on and good practice for biodiversity offsetting has been pulled together by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP, 2009)⁶. Biodiversity offsets and habitat-banking have recently been criticised from theoretical and practical standpoints (Vatn et al., 2011).

Discussion questions for presentations

- Is development impact on ecosystems quantified? Using what indicators? Are there projections for land and water resource development impact by 2020?
- To what extent are existing resource use, planning and development regulations in Norway effective in mitigating¹ negative impacts on ecosystems arising from development and other resource/land/water use?
- To what extent is compliance with environmental regulations in Norway achieved by offsetting negative impacts at a development site, with rehabilitation at another? What kinds of offsetting are applied, in which sectors? How does this vary according to the scale of the project/intervention and or the identity of the players (public/private, small/large)?
- Is offsetting done on a voluntary basis or in response to a regulatory requirement? If voluntary, for what reasons do public and private sector actors use offsets (e.g. corporate responsibility, reputational, economic...)
- What ecosystem characteristics and/or services are offset? What metrics are used to calculate the offset? How satisfactory are these methods in terms of compensating for impacts on nature?
- Where offsetting does not take place, what other mechanisms are currently used, if any, to compensate for negative impacts on nature? Are they more or less effective than offsetting? Would expanded and/or improved offsetting be more effective?
- What are the costs and benefits of offsetting and to whom do these costs and benefits accrue? (e.g. to the land/water/resource user, to the landowner selling land for development, to the landowner offering land for offsetting, to companies servicing offsetting).
- What scope is there to expand offsetting in Norway? What is the potential scale of the offsetting demand in Norway and what is the potential scale of supply? What is the potential scale of the market?
- What contribution could the expanded use of offsetting contribute to competitiveness, growth and jobs in Norway? In which sectors?

⁶ Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme. <http://bbop.forest-trends.org/>

Programme

Time	Presenter	Title
08:30-09:00	David N. Barton, NINA	Welcome and aims of the meeting
		<i>Current practice and theory in biodiversity offsetting</i>
09:00-09:30	Guy Duke, Environment Bank Ltd., UK	"Biodiversity offsets and habitat banking in the UK and some comments on opportunities in Norway"
09:30-10:00	Anne-Charlotte Vaissiere, IFREMER	"Wetlands banking in Florida(USA). A transaction costs perspective"
10:00-10:30	Coffee	
10:30-11:00	Arild Vatn, Noragric-UMB	"A governance perspective on biodiversity offsets and habitat banking"
11:00-11:30	Erik Gómez-Baggethun, UAB	"Ethical considerations on the commodification of ecosystem services. The case of ecosystem offsets "
11:30-12:30		Lunch
		<i>Current Norwegian practice in environmental impact mitigation across sectors</i>
		<i>Transport infrastructure</i>
12:30-12:50	Per-Andre Torper, Ministry of Transport and Karianne Thøger-Andresen, Roads Authority	"Physical compensation for agricultural and nature areas in connection with transport infrastructure development"
		<i>Urban areas</i>
12:50-13:10	Marianne de Caprona, Oslo Kommune	"Blue-green area factor– an approach to offsetting in urban development in Oslo "
		<i>Mountain/nature areas</i>
13:10-13:30	Dagmar Hagen, EcoManage, NINA	"The contribution from restoration ecology to offsetting in nature areas – examples from Norway"
13:30-14:00	Coffee	
		<i>Forest</i>
14:00-14:20	Anne Sverdrup-Thygeson, INA-UMB & NINA	"Environmental offsetting practices in forest management"
		<i>Farmland</i>
14:20-14:40	Arne Grønlund, Bioforsk, UMB	"Environmental offsetting for farmland conservation"
		<i>Hydropower regulation</i>
14:40-15:00	Tor Haakon Bakken, Håkon Sundt (SINTEF) ,David N. Barton(NINA)	"Offsetting examples in Norwegian hydropower projects"
15:00-15:30	Panel discussion	
15:30	Close	

References

- BBOP, 2009. Biodiversity Offset Design Handbook, in: (BBOP), B.a.B.O.P. (Ed.), Washington D.C.
- Duke, G., Conway, M., Dickie, I., Juniper, T., Quick, T., Rayment, M., Smith, S., 2013. EMTF 2nd Phase Research: Opportunities for UK Business that Protect and/or Value Nature. Final Report. ICF GHK, London.
- Eftec, IEEP, IUCN, 2010. The use of market-based instruments for biodiversity protection –The case of habitat banking – Technical Report, London.
- EMTF, 2013. Realising nature's value: The Final Report of the Ecosystem Markets Task Force. March 2013 Ecosystem Markets Task Force.
- GHK, I., 2013. Exploring potential demand for and supply of habitat banking in the EU and appropriate design elements for a habitat banking scheme. Final report, London.
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/enveco/taxation/pdf/Habitat_banking_Report.pdf.
- Vatn, A., Barton, D.N., Lindhjem, H., Movik, S., Ring, I., Santos, R., 2011. Can markets protect biodiversity? An evaluation of different financial mechanisms. Norad rapport: Diskusjon 19/2011 <http://www.norad.no/no/resultater/publikasjoner/norads-rapportserie/publikasjon?key=390699>.