

The science-policy-society interface in Europe – linking across sectors and knowledge domains

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The way science interacts with policy and society has been increasingly discussed and debated over the last 10 years. The need for more evidence-informed policy making is continuously reiterated in speeches and strategies (e.g., the 7th EU Environmental Action Plan, INGSA Conference in Brussels, September 2016). At the same time, however, the role of expertise and science is challenged within society together with an emphasis of the need for scientists not only to provide results and advice, but also to explain the processes and background for this advice, and suggest recommendations or options. This reflects the long-standing call for more transdisciplinary, integrative, and reflexive interface mechanisms.

The EKLIPSE mechanism, currently under development in the EU project EKLIPSE is such an approach. It builds on the idea that interface processes (1) must develop in close collaboration between science, policy and other relevant stakeholders, (2) need to be flexible in terms of processes and actors involved, depending on the issues addressed, (3) should be flexible in the use of diverse methods to obtain the synthesis of existing knowledge, thus going beyond the standard “assessment” approach.

Such a mechanism also needs to link up with other advice activities in the EU, like the Science Advice Mechanism (SAM) established at DG Research and Innovation, as well as with the wide network of knowledge holders across disciplines and sectors.

The session aims to reflect on these developments from a scientific as well as practical perspective, build the awareness on the EU advice environment across participants and invite them to play an active role in the future.

Roundtable discussion with speakers and moderator (from EKLIPSE team)

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