

# Vienna STS Talks

## Globalizing biodiversity: representation, order, and the politics of knowledge

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### WHEN:

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### WHERE:

STS Seminar room, NIG St II, 6th floor  
Universitätsstraße 7, 1010 Wien

Centralized states and science have something important in common: they both require order to function. This is one reason why, in spite of the many complaints about the supposed gap between science and policy, they actually get along very well in many areas. One of these areas is biodiversity conservation. Here, various elaborate classification systems function as technologies of order, making possible the political treatment of specific, scientifically sanctioned, conservation priorities and preferences. In this talk, I will draw on examples in Ecosystem Services literature and on the Global Assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services, which is currently being developed under the auspices of IPBES (the Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem services) to illustrate how biodiversity knowledge and global biodiversity governance are made to align in practice. Specifically, I will demonstrate what orderings are at work to enable the global representation of biodiversity and how, at the same time, these orderings are continuously tweaked and resisted. I will conclude by discussing these simultaneous practices of ordering, tweaking, and resisting as sites where the politics of biodiversity knowledge plays out and, consequently, also as the sites where the democratization of biodiversity knowledge may take shape.

Esther Turnhout is Full Professor at the Forest and Nature Conservation Policy Group of Wageningen University, the Netherlands. Her research program The Politics of Environmental Knowledge includes research into the different roles experts play at the science policy interface, the political implications of policy relevant knowledge, and the participation of citizens in environmental knowledge making, also known as citizen science. Current research projects focus on the UN Intergovernmental science-policy Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), wildlife management and invasive species, auditing practices in forest management and the production of transparency and traceability in global value chains. She has published articles on these and other topics in journals such as Nature, Environmental Politics, Geoforum, Journal of Rural Studies, Science and Public Policy, Environment and Planning, and Conservation Letters. She is associate editor of Environmental science & Policy and she has been selected as an expert for IPBES.

No registration required

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