

Integrating Multidisciplinary Science into Practice for Sustainable Landscapes and Seascapes

Achieving sustainable land and seascapes requires innovative and cost-effective multidisciplinary approaches that integrate biodiversity conservation, ecosystem services, sustainable production, and livelihoods. In order to implement management plans that are sustainable at the land and seascape scale, researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers must work together. Drawing on decades of experience and expertise, our panel will explore aspects of successful land and seascapes initiatives from Central America and South Africa. Discussions will provide an opportunity to learn from successes and address remaining barriers, collectively identifying a path forward for more effective conservation measures.

Monday, September 6 at 1600 CET on Virtual Channel 3

Featured Moderator and Speakers:



Joshua Tewksbury is the Director of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI), a unit of the Smithsonian Institution headquartered in Panama. Josh's deep and diverse scientific track record focused on natural history, biodiversity, sustainability and conservation. His experience developing and managing complex international interdisciplinary projects and partnerships, and his ability to communicate with multiple audiences, will continue to strengthen STRI's relationship with the rest of the Smithsonian units, as well as with the local and global scientific community.



Scott Henderson leads Conservation International's Eastern Tropical Pacific Seascape program out of Galapagos, Ecuador, where he is responsible for developing multi-country marine strategies, building teams to deliver on those strategies, fundraising and communicating results to build awareness of marine conservation issues. He also was heavily involved in the creation of over 2.5 million hectares of marine protected areas in Costa Rica, Panama, Colombia and Ecuador. He has co-published several research articles regarding ocean conservation and threatened marine life.



Tom Akre is the program scientist for the Working Land and Seascapes Action Area of the Smithsonian Conservation Commons. Working Land and Seascapes seeks to understand and integrate the needs of people and nature, using sound scientific and socio-economic research develop sustainable solutions for biodiversity conservation. Prior to his current position, Akre was the director of the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute's Virginia Working Landscapes program, which seeks to understand best practices for ecosystem and biodiversity conservation on public and private lands in Virginia.



Melanie McField is the Founder and Director of the Healthy Reefs for Healthy People program at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. She is also a Program Scientist with the Smithsonian Working Land and Seascapes Initiative. She dedicates her work to conserving the Mesoamerican Reef and supporting local communities in Belize and the Western Caribbean. She has served on the Council of the ISRS, is currently on the Steering Committee of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network in the Caribbean and is involved in several advisory committees, Boards and graduate student committees.



Julia Levin is the Country Director of Conservation South Africa, working alongside Conservation International to develop and implement innovative models to support people and nature in three of South Africa's poorest and most biodiverse rural landscapes. Since 2001, Julia has been a researcher, project manager, strategic advisor and fundraiser in the biodiversity and development field, with particular expertise in the interface between people, the economy and the environment. She also serves as a founding member and advisor to the African Youth Leadership Network.



Samantha Cheng is a biodiversity scientist at the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History. She is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist whose research draws from the biological, social, and computer sciences, to understand connections between nature and human well-being. She has also worked extensively in the policy sphere – partnering with government agencies, conservation non-profits, multilateral institutions, and foundations to systematically evaluate the impact of conservation on ecological and social outcomes.



Imani Fairweather Morrison is Programme Officer for The Oak Foundation's Global Small-Scale Fisheries Sub-programme. Imani has led grant-making efforts focused on a variety of ocean conservation issues in Belize and beyond. Prior to joining Oak Foundation, she was the head of Belize's Coastal Zone Management Authority and Institute. She served as the first female Chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Belize, as a member of the Board of Directors of the Biodiversity Funders Group, and is currently a member of the Board of the Ocean Foundation.

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