

Workshop on:
**Diverging concepts of nature and human well-being -
from theory to action**

Degrowth conference Leipzig, Fr. 05.09.2014, 14:30-16:30

Theses on the role of biodiversity in current development policies and some consequences:

1. There is an ongoing trend in development policies, strategies and frameworks towards a mere economic valuation of nature, biodiversity and ecosystems.
2. This perspective is accompanied by several political instruments such as habitat banking, biodiversity offsetting and payments for ecosystem services (PES).
3. This leads to an increasing non-consideration of non-monetary, intangible values of nature and biodiversity such as spiritual, cultural or aesthetic values.
4. This non-consideration does not only exclude a wide range of actors and perspectives (e.g. from the global south and indigenous communities in particular) from political discourses and decisions, it also results in a narrowing of arguments valid for the protection of biodiversity.

Thematic link to degrowth debate:

1. The concept of degrowth provides for closer theoretical links to non-utilitarian perceptions of biodiversity compared to conventional economic thinking.
2. Degrowth embraces an understanding of well-being that is profoundly non-economic; well-being is instead based on such understandings as meaningful social relations, rewarding work and a healthy environment.
3. Degrowth is not in favour of extending market rationalities – as inherent in the concept of ecosystem services.