WOODNET project Workpackage 5 Seminar on Science, Law and Policy Interface:[1]
Uncertainty and Multifunctionality: Legal Challenges and Opportunities for Green Infrastructure (GI) Policy.
Session 1: "GI and the Challenge of Uncertainty".
Session 2: "GI and the Challenge of Multifunctionality".

28 of April, 2020,
13. 00 – 18. 30
Online, TEAMS Platform,
administered by the Catholic University of Louvain
UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

Nature and its vital contributions to people, which together embody biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are deteriorating from the changes in land and sea use, overexploitation of animals, plants and other organisms, pollution and climate change.[2] The anthropogenic changes in ecological systems have been so profound that scientists even warn that we have now entered a new geological period – Anthropocene.[3] As we continue degrading our natural environment in order to gain ecological, economic and social benefits, the utilization of "nature-based solutions (NBS)" remains an under-utilized option. GI concept and the implementation of GI emerges as a policy response to address and reverse the current rather counterproductive practice. The European Commission defines GI as a "strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas with other environmental features, designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services […]".[4] Yet, designing and implementing GI policy has proved challenging: e.g. how to safeguard sound and effective decision-making in managing complex systems with multiple stakeholders at various temporal/spatial scales, under conditions of uncertainty, with multiple conflicting interests?

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[1]WOODNET Project is an interdisciplinary research project on landscape connectivity for forest species. The Project is co-funded by the European Commission (BiodivERsA, https://www.biodiversa.org/1026). Workpackage 5 of the WOODNET project discusses science-policy interface and legal connectivity issues, focusing on how law may integrate both connectivity science and uncertainty to inform GI policy and provide for adaptive management.

[2] Diaz S., et al., Report of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) on the Work of its Seventh Session, Summary for Policymakers of the Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, 2019.

[3] Anthropocene – is relating to the current geological age, when "our Planet's ability to provide an accommodating environment for humanity is being challenged by our own activities", the age "during which we developed agriculture, villages, cities, and contemporary civilizations to an unknown future state of significantly different environmental conditions". See, *Costaneza R.,* Ecosystem Services in Theory and Practice, in *Potschin M.*, *et al (eds)*, Routledge Handbook of Ecosystem Services, 2016, p. 15.

[4] European Commission, Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Green Infrastructure (GI) – Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital, SWD (2013), 155 final, 06 May 2013, COM (2013) 249 Final.

The Seminar addresses the questions by discussing the science-law interface issues and the challenges and opportunities associated with the management of uncertainties and multifunctionality in GI design and implementation. (1) The first session of the Seminar deals with the various aspects of uncertainty management in GI policy and law: e.g. what are the types of uncertainties in GI design and implementation? What are the possible responses in policy-making and legislation? How do these responses conflict with other legal principles (e.g. the principle of legal certainty)? (2) The second session of the Seminar addresses the challenge of GI multifunctionality: What does it mean? What are the risks associated with multifunctionality in GI design and implementation? How to frame the trade-offs between biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services provision into GI policy and law (e.g. biodiversity conservation and other ecosystem services provision sometimes conflict)?

This Seminar is held in preparation of a collective handbook and an international conference to be organized in December, 2021 on the legal issues of GI design and implementation.

Session 1: "GI and the Challenge of Uncertainty" Chair: Professor dr Charles Hubert Born, UCLouvain (Belgium)		
13.00 – 13.10	Welcome by the Chair	
13.10 – 13.30	Introduction: Woodnet Advances in Ecological Characterisation of GIS	- J. Baudry (Woodnet, France)
13.35 – 13.55	What is GI?	- Alix Vollet (Woodnet, France)
14.00 – 14.20	Types of uncertainties and possible legal responses	- Yelena M. Gordeeva (Woodnet, Belgium)
14.25 – 14.45	Using Ecosystem Services to Design Urban GI Policy: legal challenges and opportunities	- J.B. Ruhl (USA)
14.50 – 15.10	Adaptive Management in Canadian environmental law	- M. Olszynski (Canada)
15.15 – 15.35	Summary of the Session. Discussion	
15.35 – 16.00	**BREAK**	

	Session 2: "GI and the Challenge of Multifunctionality" Chair: dr Alexandra Langlais, Rennes, CNRS, University (France)	
16.00 – 16.10	Introduction to the Session by the Chair	
16.15 – 16.35	The traps of Multifunctionality in GI design and Implementation	- Ch-H Born (Woodnet, Belgium)
16.40 – 17.00	The new CAP, GI and Multifunctionality	- E.Petel (EU Commission)
17.05 – 17.25	Connectivity in rural landscapes: what are the main legal aspects?	- A. Langlais (Woodnet, France)
17.30 – 17.50	Natura 2000 and Forests in EU-28: Policy Implementation and Effectiveness	- M. Sotirov (Germany)
17.55 – 18.15	Working with Nature, rather than against it: GI in EU Policy *This is a concluding presentation of the Seminar, followed by a discussion.*	- K. Zaunberger (EU Commission)
18.15 – 18.30	Closing of the Seminar	