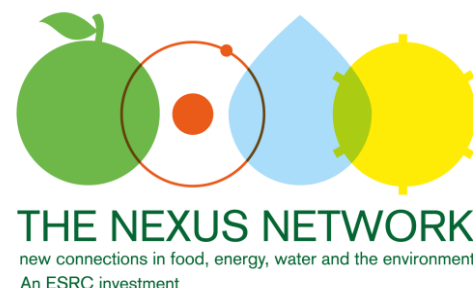


NATURAL CAPITAL LEADERS PLATFORM

The Nexus Network: exploring social and natural linkages between food, energy, water and the environment



The [Nexus Network](#) is a three-year initiative to foster debate, innovative research and practical collaborations across the linked 'nexus' domains of food, energy, water and the environment. Participation in the network is open to decision makers in government, business and civil society and to researchers from all disciplines.



Funded by the ESRC, the Nexus Network brings together researchers, policy makers, business leaders and civil society to develop collaborative projects and improve decision making. The Nexus Network research partnership programme aims to enable researchers to build meaningful inter-disciplinary research collaboration networks, and to establish connections with civil society, policy and business communities in order to engage them as knowledge partners in the co-design of research proposals on nexus topics.

The Nexus Network, launched in June 2014, offers business the opportunity, for the first time, to design and deliver research by embracing science in all its manifestations – social and natural – to ensure the sustainable management and secure supply of natural capital, including food, energy and water.

"While business is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of natural capital, there is an urgent call to explore not only natural capital elements themselves but also the connections between them. In an era of growing resource pressures, the Nexus Network will play a crucial role in identifying system-level responses to protecting livelihoods and natural resources. Our business networks will bring a distinctive, pragmatic perspective to nexus challenges."

Dr Jake Reynolds, Director, Business Platforms

Exploring business-led action from nexus thinking

What is 'nexus thinking' and how can it be applied? Business is experienced at considering many issues and priorities simultaneously, yet the need to make balanced choices with so many potential elements to consider can prove difficult. CISL is working to explore how the nexus of food, energy, water and the environment can be applied prioritising action and stress testing current strategies.

Investigating the gaps between sustainability knowledge and business practices

Through the Nexus Network, CISL is questioning current gaps in sustainability knowledge and assessing how these could influence business practices. CISL will be reviewing the key sustainability questions that need to be addressed in order to inform company practices and activities. This will include a consultation event that will bring together a number of academics and business leaders.

Nexus issues and business

The relationship between business activity, growth and loss of natural capital is well understood, with progressive companies aware of their responsibilities towards the environment.

What is missing is the intrinsic link, or nexus, between the challenges we face in delivering food for more people with less water, in addressing growing demands for energy without exacerbating climate change and in maintaining the natural capital which underpins these functions.

Business supply chains are critically dependent on the management of processes that provide 'global goods,' including food, water and energy. Rather than being linear and predictable, supply chains work as a complex network of dynamic interconnections and overlapping lines.



The nexus presents a number of complex linkages. Industry and business are inevitably at the heart of this puzzle. Industry and business therefore need to identify and address externalities and interdependencies to operate within the limits of natural systems.

For the first time, business can design and deliver research by embracing science in all its manifestations-social and natural-to ensure the sustainable management and secure the supply of natural capital, including energy, food and water.

Nexus Conference and Workshop-November 2014 in London

Over 170 people attended the first Nexus Network conference in November 2014. This was an opportunity for network members to meet, hear high-profile keynote speakers, discuss nexus challenges and find out about possibilities for collaboration. There will be a number of other Nexus workshops in coming months, please visit <http://thenexusnetwork.org/events/>

Nexus think pieces

In July 2014, the Nexus Network commissioned 13 think pieces with the remit of scoping and defining nexus approaches, and stimulating debate across the linked domains of food, energy, water and the environment. Read all think pieces on <http://thenexusnetwork.org/thinkpieces-published/>

Nexus research partnership programme: Calling proposals for networking grants.

In a first phase, launched in November 2014, the Nexus Network is offering five networking grants of up to £20,000 each to enable researchers to build meaningful inter-disciplinary research collaboration networks and co-design of research proposals on nexus topics.

In the second phase (launching in November 2015), the Nexus Network will offer two grants of up to £150,000 each for inter- and trans-disciplinary research projects on nexus themes. Deadline for submissions to phase I of the call is Friday 30 January 2015 (17:00 hrs GMT).

Participation in the network is open to those with an interest in these debates.

Please join by signing up at thenexusnetwork.org.uk/join.



Follow The Nexus Network on Twitter @uk_nexus

Please contact Hannah Tranter at hannah.tranter@cisl.cam.ac.uk

or check out www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/NatCap for more information.