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Science into policy: public service perspectives

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In Natural Resource Management, among other disciplines, a disconnect can exist between policy and the suite of science that informs policy decisions. To aid in better understanding this gap, public servants of a range of levels with varying exposure to science were interviewed. Three key areas for improvement were identified through this process: communication strategies, common language, and shared understanding. Further exploration of these themes, and experiences from both sides of the fence, may provide pathways to enhance the use of scientific data within the policy realm, and to improve presentation of science guided by research needs .

This presentation will provide a summary of self-identified factors that influence uptake of science by policy makers. This includes the use of accessible language, appropriately targeted research content, mutual understanding of the policy and research environments, and ongoing relationship development. Key challenges regarding access to and effective interpretation of information identified by policy makers will also be presented.

In the context of the policy forum, this presentation will seek to promote discussion on how scientists, policy makers, and resource managers can better collaborate to improve the utility of target and nontarget research work to answer real world questions. Additionally, discussion and feedback from scientists on limitations to communication with resource managers and policy makers, and the identification and creation of improved routes of information sharing will be encouraged. The importance of relationship development based on common understandings and effective language use will also be explored.