



University
of Exeter

Land, Environment,
Economics and
Policy Institute



UNIVERSITY OF EXETER BUSINESS SCHOOL

LEEP@10

A Decade of Impact, A Future of Change

LEEP@10 - Thursday 10 September 2026

LEEP, XFi Building, University of Exeter Business School

This programme brings together two flagship University of Exeter Business School events taking place across consecutive days in September 2026: LEEP@10, celebrating ten years of the Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute, and NetZeroPlus: From Evidence to Action, showcasing insights and tools from the NetZeroPlus project.

For more information regarding LEEP and the work we do please see the link to our website [here](#):

Please retain this document for your reference. It contains the full running order for both days together with speaker and panellist biographies.



Introduction: Professor Ian Bateman

Welcome to LEEP@10

It is a pleasure to welcome you to LEEP@10 as we celebrate a decade of research, collaboration and impact.

Over the past ten years, LEEP has brought together researchers, professional services colleagues, students and partners to address environmental, economic and policy challenges of local, national and global importance.

This event is an opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved together, reconnect with colleagues and friends, and look ahead to the opportunities of the next decade.

Thank you for being part of the LEEP community, and I hope you enjoy the day.

Professor Ian Bateman
Director, LEEP

Welcome from Professor Alex Gerbassi

It is a pleasure to welcome you to LEEP@10 and to celebrate ten years of achievement by the Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute.

Over the past decade, LEEP has established itself as a leading interdisciplinary research institute, delivering internationally recognised research and helping to inform environmental and economic policy at regional, national and global scales. Its success reflects the commitment of researchers, professional services colleagues, students, alumni and partners who have contributed to its growth and impact.

LEEP exemplifies the ambition of the Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy to conduct research that addresses real-world challenges through collaboration, innovation and engagement beyond academia.

On behalf of the Faculty, I congratulate everyone who has contributed to LEEP's success and wish you an enjoyable and inspiring celebration.

Professor Alex Gerbassi
Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Executive Dean, Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy

The Story of LEEP

Ten years ago, LEEP was established with a simple ambition: to bring together expertise from economics, environmental science, data science and policy to address some of society's most complex challenges.

Since then, LEEP researchers and partners have helped shape policy, develop new evidence and decision-support tools, train future leaders and create new ways of understanding the relationship between people, nature and prosperity.



LEEP's success has been built not only on outstanding research, but on the people and partnerships behind it: professional services colleagues, students, alumni, policymakers, businesses, communities and partners who have helped turn ideas into impact.

Today we celebrate that journey and look ahead to the opportunities of the next decade.



Celebrating 10 Years of LEEP

The central challenges of the 21st century including food security, climate change, and biodiversity loss are united by one common factor: how we use land. Land is the vital resource underpinning both economies and ecosystems. Addressing these challenges requires a new frontier in evidence-based decision-making. LEEP brings together cutting-edge data science with natural, physical, economic and social science to address these interconnected challenges.

LEEP@10: A Decade of Impact, A Future of Change

Thursday 10 September 2026 · Main event 09:30–16:30, followed by a Garden Party Reception 17:00–19:00

XFi Building, University of Exeter Business School, Streatham Campus

LEEP@10 is a celebration, showcase and thought leadership event marking LEEP's tenth anniversary, while looking ahead to the next decade of frontier research. Bringing together leading researchers, policymakers, business partners and funders, the event will explore a decade of impact and the future of interdisciplinary, evidence-led decision-making for land resources through keynote talks, demonstrations and interactive discussion.

LEEP@10 Event Programme

A Decade of Impact, A Future of Change · Thursday 10 September 2026

09:30–10:00	Arrival, refreshments and pastries (XFi Atrium) Stands, demonstrations, posters and videos on show in the Conference area
10:00–10:50 · Looking Back, Looking Forward (Henderson Theatre)	
	Welcome
	DVC Welcome Alex Gerbasi, Deputy Vice Chancellor - LEEP and Sustainability at Exeter
	Alex Inman - Menti wordcloud
	Keynote: Emma Campbell, Director of Analysis and Chief Economist, Defra Q&A
	Ian Bateman - LEEP: Ten Years in Ten Minutes
10:50–12:30 · New Ideas, New Evidence, New Voices (Henderson Theatre) · MC: Ian Bateman	
	Brett Day - Valuation, tools and nature markets Q&A
	Amy Binner - Biodiversity and development Neha Deopa - Disease at the Root, Deforestation at the Edge: Cassava Epidemics and Forest Loss in Uganda Ben Balmford - Biodiversity additionality mapping in Latin America

	Daniele Rinaldo - The Economic Cost of War: Gaza Q&A
	Danny Williamson - Environmental Data Science & Systems Modelling Cassie Bird — Bringing water quality into land use policy Q&A
	Ben Groom - HM Treasury Discount Rate Review Q&A
12:30–13:30	Lunch (XFi Atrium) Stands, demonstrations, posters and videos on show in the Conference area
13:30–17:00 · From Research to Decisions (Henderson Theatre) · MC: Ian Bateman	
	Launch of the ExPLORE Decision Support Suite - overview: Ian Bateman
	Brett Day, Danny Williamson and Amy Binner - Launch of the ExPLORE Decision Support Suite and demonstration Q&A
	LEEP & LUNZ Hub Panel 1 – Shaping the Future of Land Use Land Use Policy in the UK: introduction, Chris Lee Tom Lafford, Head of Land Use Team & Land Use Framework (LUF), Defra Tracie Evans, Head of Natural Science for the Environmental Land Management (ELMs) Evidence and Analysis Team, Defra Panel Q&A - chaired by Chris Lee
15:00–15:30	Refreshment break (XFi Atrium)
	LEEP & LUNZ Hub Panel 2 – Markets, Finance and Business Leadership Research and Impact across Business and the Environment: introduction, Matthew Agarwala Dominic Scriven, CEO, Dragon Capital (TBC) Amy Coulthard, Wessex Water Emily McKenzie, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) Panel Q&A - chaired by Matthew Agarwala, including Ben Groom
	Closing: LEEP: the Next Ten Years, Ian Bateman
17:00–19:00	Dragon Capital Garden Party Reception and BBQ (XFi Atrium & Garden/Magnolia Walk) Stands, demonstrations, posters and videos on show in the Conference area

Speaker & Panellist Biographies

Guest Speaker Biographies



Emma Campbell

Keynote speaker · Director of Analysis and Chief Economist, Defra

Emma Campbell is the Director of Analysis and Chief Economist at the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). She leads an analytical community comprising economists, statisticians, social researchers, operational researchers, geographers and data scientists to deliver evidence-based policy-making across the breadth of Defra's priorities. Before taking on this role in April 2022, Emma held a number of senior civil service analytical and policy positions including in energy, climate change, rail, aviation, competition and consumer policy, and EU exit.



Tracie Evans

Head of Natural Science, Environmental Land Management (ELMs) Evidence and Analysis Team, Defra

Tracie leads the Natural Science Team within a multidisciplinary evidence function supporting the development of Environmental Land Management schemes in England. She provides strategic leadership on evidence priorities, identifying the key short- and long-term questions needed to inform policy decisions and shape future research. With eight years' experience in the programme, she has built a high-performing team of scientists and a strong network of external experts. Through commissioning research, directing analysis, and applying scientific scrutiny, she ensures policy is underpinned by robust evidence while addressing emerging knowledge gaps and anticipating future policy needs.



Professor Matthew Agarwala

Chair, Research and Impact across Business and the Environment Panel

Professor Agarwala is Bennett Chair of Sustainable Finance at Sussex University's Bennett Institute for Innovation & Policy Acceleration, Affiliate at the Bennett School of Public Policy (Cambridge), Senior Policy Fellow at Yale University's Tobin Center for Economic Policy, and Honorary Professor at Scotland's Rural College. His research covers natural and social capital, economic measurement, green finance, productivity, and wellbeing. Spanning sectors and disciplines, Matthew's collaborators include ecologists, social anthropologists, members of UK Parliament, and Nobel Laureates in peace, medicine, physics, and chemistry. Matthew collaborates with the UN, World Bank, governments, and businesses to highlight nature-related financial risks. He is a sought-after public speaker and regular media contributor (BBC, Bloomberg, Channel 4 News, FT, Guardian, NYTimes, Reuters).



Amy Coulthard

Head of Policy, Wessex Water

As Head of Policy at Wessex Water, Amy Coulthard is responsible for developing the organisation's policy strategy, ensuring alignment with regulatory requirements, government priorities, and long-term corporate objectives. Amy is shaping Wessex Water's position on key industry issues including regulatory reform, influencing external stakeholders, and leading cross-sector discussions to support strategic decision making. A creative collaborator, Amy has held roles with EnTrade, Natural England and the Wildlife Trusts, navigating complex political landscapes, managing multi-stakeholder partnerships, and delivering impactful, scalable solutions that balance the needs of people and nature — including innovative environmental market mechanisms grounded in regulatory compliance, developed in collaboration with Arup and the University of Exeter.



Emily McKenzie

Technical Director, Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD)

Emily McKenzie is Technical Director at the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), and designed its corporate risk management and disclosure framework. She supports the International Sustainability Standards Board on nature-related disclosures. At HM Treasury, she produced the Dasgupta Review on the Economics of Biodiversity and led the government response. At Defra, she built the business case for the Environmental Land Management scheme. Other roles include at the Capitals Coalition, WWF, Natural Capital Alliance, Joint Nature Conservation Committee and Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission. Emily holds an MA in International Policy, Stanford University and BA in Economics, University of Cambridge.

University of Exeter Speakers



Professor Ian Bateman OBE

Welcome, host and closing remarks · Co-Director of LEEP Institute, Professor of Environmental Economics

Ian J. Bateman OBE, US-NAS, FBA, is Professor of Environmental Economics and Co-Director of the Land, Environment, Economics and Policy Institute (LEEP) at the University of Exeter Business School. His research focuses on ensuring sustainable wellbeing through the integration of natural, physical, economic and social science knowledge into policy and decision making. Ian has advised Defra and HM Treasury for over a decade, sat on the UK Natural Capital Committee, and was a Board Member of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. He has published nearly 200 papers in leading international journals, was awarded an OBE for services to environmental science and policy in 2013, and was elected an international member of the US National Academy of Sciences in 2021.



Professor Alex Gerbasi

Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Exeter

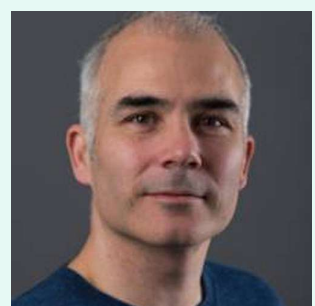
Alexandra Gerbasi joined the University of Exeter in 2017, having previously held posts at the University of Surrey, Grenoble Ecole de Management and California State University, Northridge. She holds a PhD in sociology from Stanford University. Her research focuses on the effects of positive and negative network ties within the workplace and their impact on performance, leadership, wellbeing and turnover, and has appeared in journals including the Journal of Applied Psychology and The Leadership Quarterly. She previously served as Head of the Department of Management and is currently Dean of the Business School and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the Faculty of Environment, Science and Economy.



Professor Alex Inman

Session facilitator · Professor of Practice, Farmer Discussion Network

Alex is both a practitioner and academic working in natural resource management, particularly the interaction between agriculture and ecosystem function. He joined the University of Exeter in 2016, splitting his time between academic research and a private-sector consultancy career with clients including Defra, the Environment Agency, Natural England, water companies and WWF. Alex is founder of the UK Farmer Group Discussion Network, launched in 2018 to give grassroots members of the farming community a voice in shaping an integrated vision for UK land use.



Professor Brett Day

Valuation, tools and nature markets · Co-Director of LEEP Institute, Professor of Environmental Economics

Brett is an environmental economist working in the field of ecosystem services, with a particular focus on developing methods and knowledge to support environmental decision-making. He received his PhD in Economics from University College London in 2004 and joined Exeter in 2015. Brett has published widely, including in Science, the Review of Economics and Statistics, and the Journal of Environmental Economics and Management. His work on non-market valuation helped change UK government policy on costing transport noise and underpinned emissions-differentiated road tax; he has also designed real-world payment-for-ecosystem-services schemes for water companies.



Professor Amy Binner

Biodiversity and development · Associate Professor, Environmental Economics

Amy Binner is an Associate Professor in environmental economics, specialising in spatial analysis, statistics and economic modelling applied to land-use decision-making, including spatially explicit agent-based models. In 2015 she was awarded her first grant as Principal Investigator for a scoping study valuing the social and environmental benefits of trees and woodlands across England, Scotland and Wales. She has contributed to the Natural Capital Committee's State of Natural Capital Report and the UK National Ecosystem Assessment, and has consulted for Defra on improving the efficiency of payment-for-ecosystem-services schemes for water quality.



Dr Neha Deopa

Disease at the Root, Deforestation at the Edge: Cassava Epidemics and Forest Loss in Uganda · Lecturer in Economics

Neha Deopa joined the University of Exeter's Department of Economics and LEEP Institute in 2023. She previously held a Swiss National Science Foundation Mobility Fellowship at the Aix-Marseille School of Economics, and received her PhD in Economics in 2021 from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. Her research sits at the intersection of environmental economics and political economy, including environmental decision-making under uncertainty and the impact of cultural preferences and belief systems on resource extraction and management.



Dr Ben Balmford

Biodiversity additivity mapping in Latin America · Lecturer in Economics

Ben Balmford is a Lecturer in Economics at the LEEP Institute, part of the Dragon Capital team studying biodiversity economics. His research spans mechanism and market design for environmental problems, the economic drivers of forest dynamics, and the valuation of biodiversity, combining machine learning with quasi-experimental methods to recover causal estimates of treatment effects. He completed his PhD in Economics in 2021, having first studied Biological Sciences at the University of Oxford, and works closely with government departments and water companies to translate his research into real-world outcomes.



Dr Daniele Rinaldo

The Economic Cost of War: Gaza · Lecturer in Economics

Daniele Rinaldo joined the University of Exeter's Department of Economics and LEEP Institute in September 2021. He obtained his PhD from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, in 2019, receiving the Leonid Hurwicz Prize, and was subsequently a fellow at the University of Cambridge. His research lies at the intersection of environmental, development and mathematical economics, currently focusing on the economic drivers of deforestation, resource management under the threat of regime shifts, and the economic impact of endemic diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa.



Professor Danny Williamson

Environmental Data Science & Systems Modelling · Professor of Uncertainty Quantification

Danny Williamson is a Bayesian statistician and Professor of Uncertainty Quantification in the LEEP Institute within the Department of Economics, having also served in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics from 2013 to 2023. His work centres on decision-making under uncertainty — how to quantify it and use it to guide decision-makers — typically applied to expensive computer simulations of environmental systems such as the atmosphere, oceans, land ice and crop growth.



Dr Cassandra Bird

Bringing water quality into land use policy · Postdoctoral Research Fellow, NetZeroPlus

Dr Cassandra Bird is a statistician whose background is in the ethical use of AI, with particular emphasis on exploring the ways in which statisticians produce and communicate results to decision-makers through the use of increasingly complex models. Upon completion of her PhD, Cassandra joined LEEP in 2024 and currently works on the hydrological modelling team, whose focus is on developing national-scale tools that can be used to assess water quality impacts across a range of policy-relevant land use changes.



Professor Ben Groom

HM Treasury Discount Rate Review · Dragon Capital Chair of Biodiversity Economics, Co-Director of LEEP Institute

Professor Groom holds the Dragon Capital Chair in Biodiversity Economics, a philanthropically funded post aimed at strengthening public policy on biodiversity and changing how the financial sector and consumer behaviour support conservation. He is a member of the HM Treasury Biodiversity Working Group and advises HM Treasury on environmental discounting in the Green Book. His work has been published in the American Economic Review, the Economic Journal and Science, and has informed UK, US and EU government guidance on social discounting and long-term decision-making.



Chris Lee

Chair, Land Use Policy in the UK Panel · Senior Research Fellow, NetZeroPlus

Christopher is an agricultural economist and climate scientist specialising in land use policy design for climate change adaptation and mitigation. He works closely with UK Government policymakers to translate farm business modelling and natural science expertise into practical land use policy evidence, with a focus on spatial modelling of farm businesses and the resilience of rural landscapes to a range of possible futures. He is a qualified Agricultural Valuer and co-leads the Land Use Change advisory group of the Land Use for Net Zero (LUNZ) Hub.



Tom Lafford

Head of Land Use Team & Land Use Framework (LUF), Defra

Tom Lafford is a civil servant in the Department of Environment Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Tom is Head of the Land Use Unit in Defra and has previously held roles in international negotiations, climate change, and energy policy. Before joining the civil service Tom worked at a think tank and in UK Houses of Parliament.

Continuing the Conversation: NetZeroPlus Live

Friday 11 September 2026



NetZero
PLUS

NetZero Plus – From Evidence to Action

NZ+ Live: From Evidence to Action in UK Woodlands

Friday 11 September 2026 • 10:00–16:00

XFi Building, University of Exeter Business School, Streatham Campus

Illustrating the interdisciplinary approach highlighted at LEEP@10, NZ+ Live will share key findings and insights from the five-year NetZeroPlus research programme, funded by the UKRI Strategic Priorities Fund. The programme examines the planned expansion of UK woodlands as part of the Government's commitment to reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. It brings together academic, business, government and third-sector partners to assess how policy choices affect carbon emissions, food security, biodiversity, water quality, recreation, and international trade.

Delivered in partnership with UK Research and Innovation, the Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators (GGR-D) Programme, the University of Aberdeen, Forest Research, and the National Trust.

NetZeroPlus Event Programme

From Evidence to Action: Insights and Tools from NetZeroPlus • Friday 11 September 2026

09:30–10:00	Registration and refreshments
1. The Challenge	
10:00	Welcome
10:15	A Funder Perspective
2. What We Learned	
10:25	Three Key Insights from NetZeroPlus: Understanding Natural Systems Exploring Future Pathways Enabling Real-World Decisions
11:10	Coffee

3. The Tool — ExPLORE: NetZeroPlus	
11:30	Live demonstration: Exploring Net Zero Decisions A guided demonstration of the project's decision support vision and tools Interactive Q&A
12:15	Lunch
4. What It Means in Practice: Implementing Net Zero Land Use	
13:00	Practitioner Perspective Panel: the challenge from policy, business and NGOs Panel Q&A
13:45	Break
5. What Should Happen Next?	
13:50	Researcher Perspective Panel: what research is still needed, and how do we scale solutions Panel Q&A
6. Closing: Final Remarks	
14:45	Key takeaways from the NetZeroPlus project
15:00	End

Delivered in partnership with UK Research and Innovation, the Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators (GGR-D) Programme, the University of Aberdeen, Forest Research, and the National Trust.

Practical Information

Getting to Streatham Campus, Exeter

Both events take place at the XFi Building, University of Exeter Business School, Streatham Campus. Full directions, public transport information, parking guidance and a campus map are available [here](#):

For further information regarding LEEP and the work we do please see our website [here](#):

Accommodation

A range of accommodation is available within Exeter city centre for guests travelling from further afield, including the Exeter Rougemont Hotel, Mercure Exeter Southgate Hotel, Leonardo Hotel Exeter, Hotel du Vin Exeter, Hotel voco Zeal, and Hotel Indigo Exeter. Guests are welcome to book directly with their preferred hotel.

Further Details

Further details, , the full programmes and delegate list are available on the LEEP 10th Anniversary event page [here](#):

Contact Us

For further information please contact us: LEEP@Exeter.ac.uk