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# The role of scientific councils in bringing together researchers and practitioners: potentials and limitations

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## Abstract

Nature management or conservation organizations strongly resort to science, albeit in a versatile, diversified and pragmatic manner. Establishing scientific councils is one way of bringing together scientists and practitioners. This option has been particularly developed in France and, to a lesser extent, in Switzerland. We carried out surveys about these scientific councils, their composition, organization and functioning at France level and in some protected area in the Alps. More specifically we investigated the benefits and difficulties experienced by the scientists and practitioners involved in these organizations.

Drawing on this material, we show the diversity of scientific councils and identify the modalities under which they contribute to establish relationships between scientists and practitioners. We then compare them with alternative ways of bringing together these two professional communities. Despite their potentially effective contribution to effective collaboration between scientists and practitioners, we show that scientific councils alone are not enough to achieve this goal and must be complemented by other ways according to specific modalities.

**Keywords:** scientific councils, practitioners, researchers, collaboration

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