

Debate Rules - Ecology 8000 - Fall 2016

Both teams are given the questions and “sides” below. Between now and Tuesday 11-29-2016 you have time to prep individually and as teams by considering the literature presented to date, splitting effort on finding new appropriate information, and organization of your responses and arguments. In addition to the reading to date, you are encouraged/required to

- (1) read: <http://biographic.com/posts/sto/the-shortfalls-of-biodiversity> a perspective on how biodiversity is used in management and conservation
- (2) watch: <https://vimeo.com/40615050> the entirety of the “Genes to Ecosystems” film that we saw part of in class today.
- (3) assign/divide new readings among yourselves to be as prepared as possible.

A coin will be flipped to determine which team goes first. That team has up to 5 minutes to present their argument, verbally or through illustration/schematic at the board. The response team is given up to 2 minutes to consider their response, and then up to 5 minutes to present their counterarguments. Following these exchanges, the question is open for further debate. Moderators (John, Nina, Ford, Anya, John) may allow additional opportunities to break for group consideration.

During debate, **any** of the moderators may indicate a well-stated or useful argument, and a point will be scored for that team. Points will be scored for each question, with an extra point for either team if all members contribute. The winning team for the debate will have “won” the most questions on the day. The award is of dubious value but will be (somewhat) appropriate to the question of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Function.

Question 1

Team Podostomum: “Biodiversity” is a useful term for ecologists to focus on.

Team Elliptio: “Biodiversity” is only a means of enumeration; instead we should focus on processes and services.

Question 2

Team Podostomum: Whether genes or phylogenetic diversity, we assume that biodiversity generates distinct function or process in an ecosystem.

Team Elliptio: Functions, processes, services may be quite redundant across an ecosystem. The taxon or other level of diversity is a nuisance parameter.

Question 3

Team Podostomum: Greater diversity by any measure allows greater predictability for that system because of stability

Team Elliptio: Greater diversity presents challenges for predicting a system because of many unknown “functions”

As you participate in the debate, pay attention to the information your teammates provide; the winning team gets a trophy, which you may award to your MVE.