The Importance of Trust
A study of knowledge production of biodiversity
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The loss of biological diversity is one of today’s greatest environmental problems. Scientific knowledge is typically presented as the premise to solve this problem. However, science alone is not sufficient to produce knowledge of biodiversity. Other actors are also involved in knowledge production. The aim of this thesis is to analyse how different actors create knowledge of the environmental problem of biodiversity loss and to further investigate the importance of trust in the relationships between these knowledge producers.

This thesis uses a discourse analytical perspective and conducts interviews and document studies to explore how actors use different narratives to legitimate their knowledge production. Through four papers addressing different aspects of knowledge production, this thesis discusses conditions for knowledge production, particularly the importance of trust.

The results show that actors other than scientific experts also have the ability to act in knowledgeable ways and to be involved in knowledge production of biodiversity. Knowledge is produced by making use of many different dimensions and aspects, such as global, regional, local, and science, politics, and everyday life. The result also shows how trust, distrust, and as-if trust are key activities in knowledge production of environmental problems, such as the loss of biodiversity.

This thesis argues that the actors involved need to realise and acknowledge that knowledge production is a mutual process in which actors must engage in trust and distrust activities. In so doing, it will be possible to understand the complexity of the loss of biodiversity and thus to better manage this problem.