

Towards the definition and classification of ecosystem services for SEEA

Presentation Plenary 18 June 2018

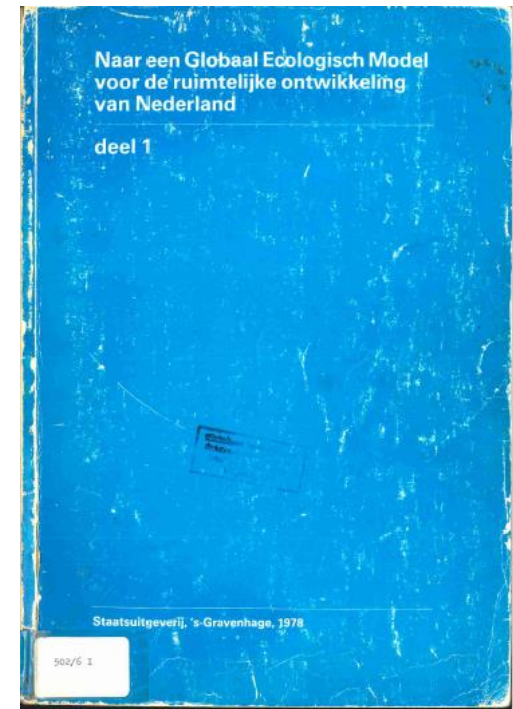
Lars Hein;



Background

There are several classifications of ecosystem services including

- Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA, 2005)
- The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB, 2010)
- National Ecosystem Services Classification System (NESCS) – EPA (2015)
- Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services (CICES, 2018)
- IPBES ES classification (2018)
- Initial work in the SEEA EEA



The Netherlands classification of ecosystem services (1978), featuring provisioning, regulating and information (/cultural) services (in Dutch)

However....

- These classifications for ecosystem services are quite different
- IPBES has proposed a new term : 'Nature's Contributions to People'.
- Specific challenges are posed when an ES classification system is designed in support of SEEA

Objective of this work stream

- To propose an approach towards a consistent definition and classification of ecosystem services for the SEEA.

Objectives of the FORUM

- To discuss (and hopefully agree) upon the basic premises of these definitions and classification system for SEEA

Towards a consistent definition and classification of ES for SEEA:

- Agree upon premises: what criteria are there for defining and classification of ecosystem services for SEEA?
- Identify points of broad agreement and discuss challenges
- Identify goals and priority areas for further work
- Establish the contours of a work plan for this further work
- Coordination needed with other work streams including on condition and valuation

Principles (*first list, to be discussed*)

- Needs to be compatible with SNA and SEEA EEA Framework (some progress was made already)
- Use SEEA EEA Technical Recommendations as a basis for discussion
- Build upon relevant classification systems: CICES, IPBES, NESCS –but they are quite different and we cannot fully align with all of these
- Needs to adhere to principles of statistical classification: unequivocal labels for ecosystem services; if there is a hierarchy, classes need to be mutually exclusive
- Needs to accommodate a wide range of very different types of services, in different contexts

Technical questions for discussion

- Does SEEA need a typology of services: provisioning, regulating, cultural (as in MA, TEEB, CICES, IPBES) ?
- Does SEEA need a hierarchy (as in CICES): e.g. Category – Group – Class - Ecosystem service.
- How can services be defined in cultivated ecosystems, e.g. crop production?
- Are carbon sequestration and carbon storage a service?
- Is biodiversity conservation a service?
- Is production function approach useful in supporting ES classifications?
- For which ~10 priority services should we try to get full clarity on definitions, measurement and related benefits?
- Others ?

Somewhat lower priority for discussion

Questions for which guidance is given in the SEEA EEA Technical Recommendations (based on a range of meetings, discussions, tests):

- Final versus intermediate (i.e. a focus on final ecosystem services but potential to include information on intermediate services)
- Supporting versus regulating services

Non-technical questions beyond the scope of the technical forum

- Are NCPs a valid alternative to ecosystem services?

Process of the forum, work stream 3 (Ecosystem services classification)

- Three technical break out sessions
 1. Agree upon principles for ES definition and classification, types of services and classification hierarchy, and identify areas for which no agreement can be reached
 2. Discuss specific technical challenges related to defining and classifying ecosystem services
 3. Agree upon a priority list of around 10 services to get further clarity upon; Identify future work streams and timeline
- In each session: short introduction presentation, followed by moderated discussion
- Work in table groups

Thank you



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