



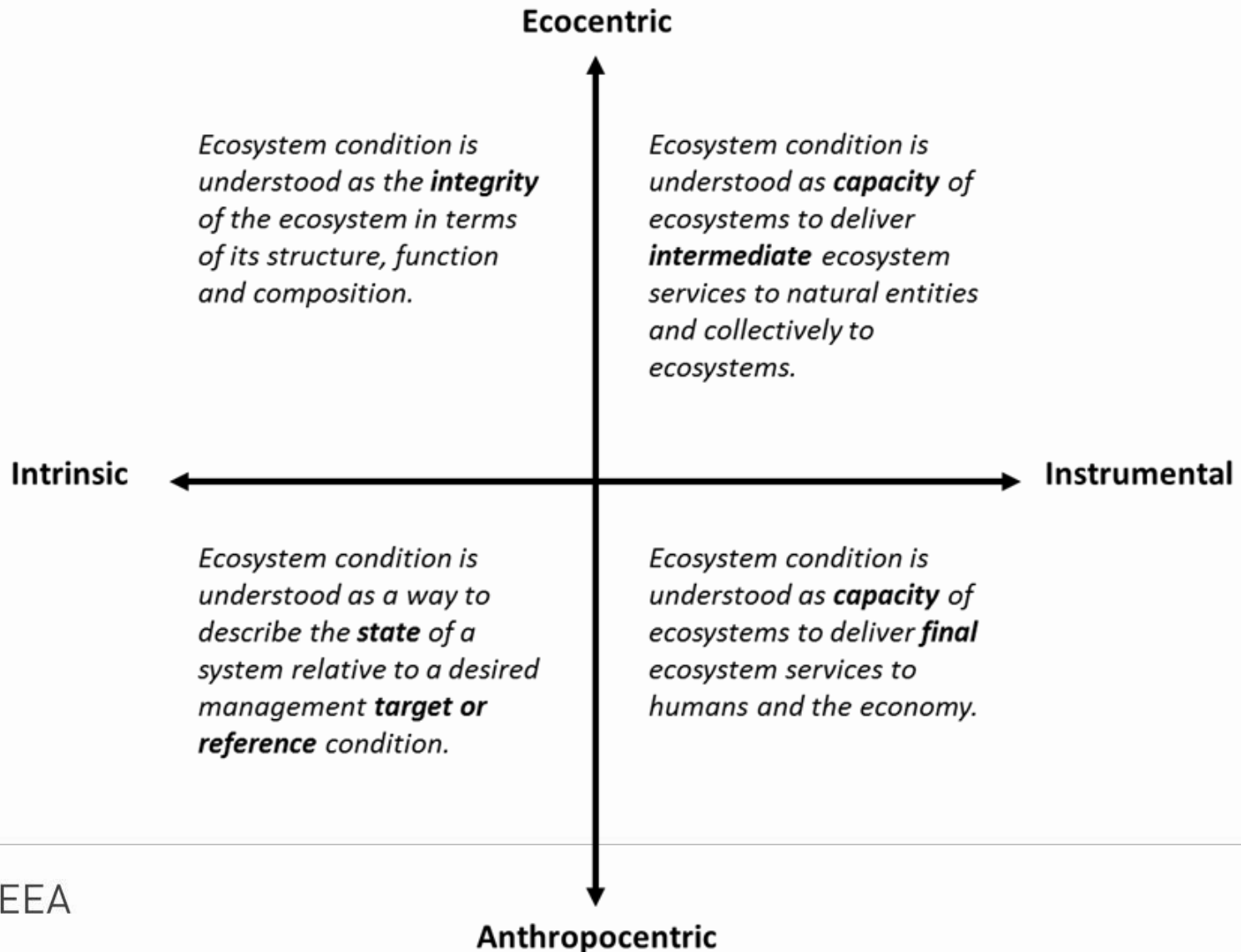
System of
Environmental
Economic
Accounting

Session 2: Advances in ecosystem accounting concepts and treatments: Ecosystem Condition



United Nations

Purpose of condition accounts



Review of existing accounts

- Biodiversity, and in particular **species-related information or indicators**, are essential to measure the condition of ecosystems.

Criteria and typology of ecosystem condition indicators

ECI class and subclasses

I. Species-based indicators (compositional characteristics)

- birds
- trees
- fish
- ...other relevant species groups

II. Vegetation and biomass (structural characteristics)

- tree cover (density / biomass)
- shrub cover
- litter
- pelagic (chlorophyll, phytoplankton, ...)
- ...other relevant vegetation layers

III. Physical and chemical state (abiotic characteristics)

- air
- soil
- water
- ...other relevant (abiotic) ecosystem compartments

IV. Ecosystem processes (functional characteristics)

- disturbance intensity (fire, flood, ...)
- ... other relevant ecosystem processes

V. Landscape pattern (landscape-level characteristics)

- landscape diversity (overall)
- connectivity/fragmentation (specific to an ecosystem type)

Review

- 27 written review reports
 - > 23 **favourable** ("yes, we agree with ...") reviews
 - > 3 **constructive** ("This is a good start but") review
 - > 1 **unfavourable** ("We are not in favor ...") review
- Broad support for the concepts developed in the 3 papers

Discussion points

- How to set reference levels for ecosystem condition indicators / reference conditions?
- How to best highlight that biodiversity is important to define the condition of ecosystems?
- How is ecosystem condition related to ecosystem capacity?
- Proposals for testing ecosystem condition accounts.