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Millennium Ecosystem Assessment of Spain



Ecosystem services for human well-being

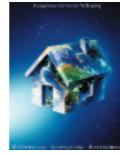


"Good governmental policy must be based on reliable scientific data. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment is an outstanding example of the sort of international scientific and political cooperation that is needed to further the cause of sustainable development"

Kofi Annan

ex-Secretary-General of the United Nations and the main promoter of the program.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA)



Turning interdisciplinary scientific knowledge into action

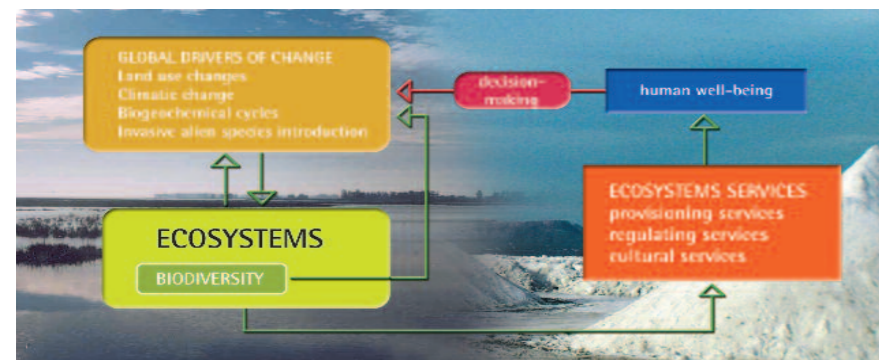
The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was an international scientific four-year program (2001–2005) led by United Nations in which more than 1300 leading researchers from 95 countries were involved. The study assessed the condition and conservation trends of the planet's ecosystems and their linkages with human well-being through the services or benefits they generate. It highlighted that the basis of human well-being and economic development are being degraded due to the unsustainable use of around 60% of the ecosystem services analysed. To reverse the current degradation of ecosystems and biodiversity loss, the MA has proposed an Action Plan to governments, businesses and civil society. The MA was also designed to satisfy the demands of interdisciplinary scientific information from several international conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention to Combat Desertification, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands or the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Startup conceptual framework

Preserving ecosystem services we preserve ourselves

Since we are part of nature, it is hard to think of any activity, investment or daily life activity that does not depend on the nature or affect it. Thus, both ecosystems and biodiversity constitute a natural

THE VALUE OF ECOSYSTEMS TO SOCIETY



capital that we need to preserve in order to ensure the maintenance of critical ecosystem services, which make life both possible and worth living.

There is a close interdependence between human and ecosystem health. On one hand, we need provisioning services such as food, wood, water, fiber, fuel, etc. On another hand, we especially depend on the regulation services, such as carbon sequestration for climate control, pollination for the production of crops, water purification, soil formation, diseases and pests regulation, nutrient uptake, and so on. We must also mention the social value related to cultural services in aesthetic, educational, recreational or spiritual terms.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in Spain (EME)



Managing Spanish natural capital for human well-being

The Spanish ecosystems and the biodiversity associated provide a rich and diverse flow of services that determines to a large extent the well-being of the Spanish people. For this reason, the project aims to scientifically justify the need for governments, businesses and civil society to include the close links between nature and society in their decision-making processes to prevent the degradation of our natural capital.

In this context, the Biodiversity Foundation from the Spanish Ministry of Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs has promoted the development of the MA conceptual and methodological framework. The aim of EME is to generate interdisciplinary scientific knowledge relevant to public and private sectors on the impact of changes in aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems of Spain on human well-being, as well as possible response options. Furthermore, the project contributes to the accomplishment and development of the Spanish Natural Heritage and Biodiversity Act.

The assessment will be developed at different scales, i.e. national, regional or basin. It will incorporate study cases from different ecosystems. EME is organized around a "core group" of people composed by scientists from universities promoting the project, the staff from the Biodiversity Foundation and various governmental agencies. This group coordinate a large team of researchers from different areas of biophysical and social sciences. They will process the information on the current status and

trends of ecosystem services in Spain. At the same time, the core group has an International Advisory Committee to ensure the scientific robustness of the results, a unit of support and management, and finally a communication unit dedicated to share the main results of the project to the different stakeholders and users, as well as to collect and incorporate their needs and requests into the project.

PROJECT ORGANIZATION SCHEME

