



## Welcome to the Nature Valuation and Financing Network's *First* Newsletter

### Dear Reader,

Welcome to the very first issue of the new Nature Valuation and Financing Newsletter!

*The overall **aim** of the Network is to stimulate the development of practical tools for proper valuation of the goods and services provided by ecosystems and biodiversity so that decisions about economic development are made with the full understanding of **all** the costs and benefits*



Our aim is to bring out an issue regularly every three months. This first issue will briefly explain the recurring topics that will be covered in each issue, as well as a more extensive explanation of the nature Valuation & Financing Network.

*Dolf de Groot and Mishka Stuip*

### Origin and “Rationale” of the NV&F Network

Attention for ecosystem services, their values and possible financing instruments has increased rapidly in recent years and international organizations and conventions increasingly recognize that more and better information on the socio-cultural and economic benefits of ecosystem services is necessary to:

- demonstrate the contribution of ecosystems to the local, national and global economy (and thus built local and political support for their conservation and sustainable use),
- convince decision-makers that benefits of conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems and protected areas usually outweigh the costs and thus attract investments and factor nature into development planning through more balanced cost-benefit analysis,
- identify the users and beneficiaries of ecosystem-services to secure sustainable financial streams and incentives for the maintenance of these services (i.e. make users pay and ensure that local people receive a proper share of the benefits),
- increase awareness about the many benefits of ecosystems to human wellbeing and ensure that nature is better taken into account economic welfare indicators (e.g. in GNP-calculations).

There is a rapid growth of organizations and individuals actively engaged in many aspects of investigating and communicating the benefits (ecologically, culturally and economically) of ecosystems but a mechanism is missing where all these initiatives could share their experiences, data, contacts and ideas

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## The Main Objectives of the Nature Valuation & Financing Network

The main objectives of the NV&F Network can be divided into the following 5 topics:

### 1. Network Themes

- provide **Guidelines for valuation** (ecologically, culturally and economically) of goods and services provided by natural and semi-natural ecosystems and landscapes.
- develop **Instruments for financing** of sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services
- application of valuation and financing in **decision making instruments** (CBA, MCA)

### 2. Case Studies & Collaboration

- stimulate development of **case studies**
- provide a **platform** for finding partners to collaborate in research programs and projects

### 3. Databases & Certification

- provide a **portal** to relevant databases
- supporting the set-up of a certification system to ensure the **quality of future valuation & financing studies**

### 4. Clearing House Function

- Website
- Newsletter
- Discussion groups
- Educational material
- Meetings, announcements

### 5. National Platforms

To facilitate the development of **National Platforms** on the topic of Nature Valuation and Financing (*people interested in this service can obtain editing rights to their own National Platform allowing direct linkage to all the data and functionalities of the international Network*)

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## About the Website

The website offers the opportunity to both **download and upload information** (publications, case studies, meetings, etc) on the below topics. It also provides access to the main organizations and **databases** and allows you to engage in **discussion groups** and share your experiences with ecological, economic and cultural valuation and application of this knowledge in decision-making regarding conservation and sustainable use of nature and natural resources

During this initiation-phase, the **Foundation for Sustainable Development** provides financial support for the development of the Website and Clearing House. Recently the Network also received additional financial support from IUCN for this initiation phase.

For the time being, Dolf de Groot will be the acting **Coordinator** of the Network, supported by a **Clearing House manager** (Mishka Stuij).

In the next few months, a **Steering Committee** will be installed to discuss the work plan of the Network and to ensure the Network provides maximum added value to the activities of the associated organizations. In addition, an **Advisory Board** will be created with representatives of the main organizations active in this field.

Where possible, shared responsibilities will be established with partner organizations. For example, the **Ecosystem Service Data base** (<http://esd.uvm.edu>) will be further developed in close collaboration with the Gund Inst. for Ecological Economics, Univ. of Vermont, USA.

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## About the Newsletter

This newsletter will provide a supporting function for the website [www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org) (see website description above).

The newsletter will be sent out every 3 months to all subscribers and will contain announcements for upcoming events and meetings related to Nature Valuation & Financing, a listing of new publications, short editorials and commentaries on topics related to NV&F. The Newsletter, similar to the NV&F website, provides the reader opportunities to respond to previous articles or to contribute his own articles. You can send your input to: [Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl](mailto:Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl)

The Newsletter, in its' supporting role to the website, will also update the reader on what publications, links and topics have been added to the website, providing the reader with an update of what is new on the website since the previous newsletter.

### Topics to be included in each newsletter:

1. Publications and Further Reading
2. Case Studies
3. Data Bases
4. Discussion Groups
5. National Platforms
6. Announcements (meetings etc.)
7. Project Opportunities
8. Feedback and Commentary
9. New links and (partner) Organizations



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## 1. Publications and Further Reading

- The Board of the Millennium Assessment met in New York March 22-23 to approve the findings and reports of the assessment. On Wednesday, March 30 these findings were presented to the public for the first time. Starting March 30, MA reports will be posted on [www.MAweb.org](http://www.MAweb.org) as the final print-ready copy becomes available. Also on March 30:
  - A popularized version of the MA Synthesis report, presented as a series of questions and answers, will be launched by GreenFacts. Link through our website, or go to [www.GreenFacts.org/ecosystems](http://www.GreenFacts.org/ecosystems) ;
  - The World Data Center for Biodiversity and Ecology (WDCBE), with United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN), the UNEP- World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), and the National Biological Information Infrastructure (NBII) will launch an interactive system that will allow easy access to reports, maps and the data collected during the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment global evaluation of ecosystems. Link through our website or go to <http://wdc.nbio.gov/ma> .
- An historical overview of Dutch Valuation studies has been updated. This overview contains economic valuation studies on nature and environment dating back to 1973. The newest edition is updated until 2004 and also contains Belgian studies. New is also the inclusion of valuation studies on cultural heritage. Of each study the valuation method, the main results and the full reference are given. If you are interested in valuation methods or looking for values for the sake of benefit transfers, you can download a copy of the Historical Overview at [www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org), click on 'Project Opportunities & Latest News'. For more specific questions you can contact the author Dr.ir. E.C.M. Ruijgrok by email. The address is: [e.ruijgrok@witbo.nl](mailto:e.ruijgrok@witbo.nl)

- Pagiola, S., von Ritter, K. and Bishop J. 2004. [Assessing the Economic Value of Ecosystem Conservation](#). The World Bank Environment Department in collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and IUCN—The World Conservation Union. Environment Department Paper No. 101. Washington, DC
- [RUPES Newsletter](#) (Rewarding Upland Poor for Environmental Services) produced twice a year (in August and December).
- Winrock International. 2004. [Financial Incentives to Communities for Stewardship of Environmental Studies: Feasibility Study](#).

For a complete overview of available publications please go to [www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org) and click on 'Publications'.

## 2. Case Studies

In the following newsletters we will provide you with a list of available case studies on our website, categorized by their eco-region (see listing below).

If you have a specific case study (or eco-region) you would like added, please contact us!

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open Ocean</li> <li>• Coral reefs</li> <li>• Estuaries and shelf sea</li> <li>• Wetlands General</li> <li>• Tidal marsh and mangroves</li> <li>• Swamps and floodplains</li> <li>• Lakes and rivers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tropical forest</li> <li>• Temperate/boreal forest</li> <li>• Woodland &amp; Shrubland</li> <li>• Grass/Rangelands</li> <li>• Tundra</li> <li>• Desert (sand/rock)</li> <li>• Cold desert (snow/ice)</li> <li>• Cultivated systems (cropland &amp; aquaculture)</li> <li>• Small landscape elements</li> </ul> |
|---|---|

## 3. Data Bases

### Ecosystems Services Database (ESD)

ESD is developed by the University of Vermont, in collaboration with the Environmental Systems Analysis Group (Wageningen University & Research Center) and with financial support of the US National Science Foundation. The NV&F-Network aims to contribute to the further development of this database by enabling its members to both use data from ESD as well as adding new data to it (see <http://esd.uvm.edu/> for further information).

This database is a data and analysis portal to assist the informed estimation of the economic values of ecosystem services. The Ecosystem Services Database contains spatially explicit, peer-reviewed valuation data as well as methods of analysis, publications, and projection models. Its novel architecture offers improved data retrieval and visualization capabilities as well as online analysis, aggregation, classification and projection.

Other databases accessible through the NV&F website include:

- [Ecoinformatics Collaboratory](#)
- [Environmental Valuation Database \(EnValue\)](#)
- [Environmental Valuation Reference Inventory \(EVRI\)](#)
- [Global Biodiversity Information Facility \(GBIF\)](#)
- [National Ocean Economics Project \(NOEP\)](#)
- [Science Environment for Ecological Knowledge \(SEEK\)](#)

If you know of any other online accessible databases that should be mentioned here please send an e-mail with the link and a short description to: [Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl](mailto:Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl)  
We will highlight a different Database in each new issue of the Newsletter.

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## 4. Discussion Groups

The NV&F website provides access to a number of discussion platforms to exchange experiences regarding the development of valuation and financing instruments and their application in decision making and real case study situations.

At this time we do not yet have Discussion Group leaders so most Discussion Groups are still dormant. If you want to volunteer to guide the discussion on one of the below topics, or want to suggest a new topic, please contact [dolf.degroot@wur.nl](mailto:dolf.degroot@wur.nl). In each newsletter we will highlight one of the discussion groups, if you respond quickly your discussion may be highlighted in the next newsletter!

Please click on the topic below you wish to discuss on, or go to [www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org) and click on 'Discussion Groups' in the table of contents on the left. (You need to register to join a discussion group)

- Economic Valuation
- Ecological Valuation
- Cultural Valuation
- Financing Mechanisms
- Application of Valuation in Decision Making

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## 5. National Platforms

National platforms can be seen as satellite sites to the NV&F site providing specific data for the country in question. The National Platform is managed by an organization from the respective country and can be hosted in the language of that country. As each new national platform is launched, it will be introduced in the newsletter.

At this moment, three national platforms have been launched into the initiation phase:

- Netherlands National Platform

National focal point for the Netherlands is Ms. Mishka Stuip ([mishka.stuip@fsd.nl](mailto:mishka.stuip@fsd.nl)). The Netherlands National Platform is organizing a National meeting on the Topic of Nature Valuation and Financing in the fall of this year. One of the goals of this meeting is to identify Dutch organizations and their activities on the topic of Nature Valuation & Financing in the Netherlands, and their activities abroad.

- Turkish National Platform

National focal point for Turkey is Ms. Esra Basak at: [esra.basak@dogadernegei.org](mailto:esra.basak@dogadernegei.org)

- Indian National Platform

National focal point for India is Mr. Ritesh Kumar at: [ritesh\\_economics@rediffmail.com](mailto:ritesh_economics@rediffmail.com)

To visit the National Platforms, go to [www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org) and click on 'National Platforms'. In our next newsletter we will highlight these three Platforms in greater detail.

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## 6. Announcements

- A National Conference on *Rewards for Environmental Services* was coordinated by RUPES, to highlight and share lessons learned from the sites and to inform policy dialogue. It took place in Jakarta Indonesia, February 14-15, 2005, and was co-hosted by LP3ES/IIED, WWF Indonesia, National Government Units and Ford Foundation in Indonesia. It was held back-to-back with the below mentioned carbon workshop organized by CIFOR. For more information, please contact RUPES Program [rupes@cgiar.org]. Website: <http://www.worldagroforestrycentre.org/sea/Networks/RUPES>
- Workshop on Carbon Sequestration and Sustainable Livelihoods facilitated by CIFOR with support from CIDA took place on February 16-17 2005, CIFOR Campus, Bogor, Indonesia. The workshop provided the opportunity to interact with those who have experiences in implementing similar projects where payments of carbon credits have been demonstrated. Contact person: Dr. Daniel Murdiyarso [d.murdiyarso@cgiar.org]. Website: [http:// www.cifor.cgiar.org](http://www.cifor.cgiar.org)
- Global launch of the Ecosystem Marketplace took place on March 31, 2005. This could be the leading global source of information on markets and payments for ecosystem services. Featuring the MarketWatch, a price-tracking element of the Ecosystem Marketplace. To visit the Ecosystem Marketplace, the first global information resource on ecosystem service markets, click here: <http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/>
- See the [Conservation Finance Alliance Website](#) for information about funding opportunities from the UNEP Division of the Global Environment Facility for projects related to Payments for Environmental Services.
- On behalf of the Society for Ecological Restoration International, the Organizing Committee invites you to participate in the 2005 World Conference on Ecological Restoration, which will be held in Zaragoza, Spain, Europe, 12-18 September 2005. At the beginning of the XXI century, **ecological restoration** arises as a **global** challenge for the improvement of our living planet through the study and practice of the restoration of degraded sites and ecosystems and to be incorporated as a positive aspect of the globalization process.  
You are kindly invited to visit our web page, to register and to submit your proposals. If you have any question, please, do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to seeing you in Zaragoza, Spain, Europe in 2005 September 12-18.  
<http://www.ecologicalrestoration.net>

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## 7. Project Opportunities

### Project on Water Values of Protected Areas in Brazil

- **looking for an economist**

The Conservation Strategy Fund ([www.conservation-strategy.org](http://www.conservation-strategy.org)) is looking at water values from protected areas in Bolivia in collaboration with WWF. They are interested in papers, people, and/or case studies they could consult as well as any economists who might volunteer a bit of time in return for an air ticket.

It is a small project, but may lay groundwork for some larger efforts in the future.

Any ideas or help you might offer are much appreciated.

Please contact John Reid ([john@conservation-strategy.org](mailto:john@conservation-strategy.org)) with ideas or for further information.

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## 8. Feedback and Commentary

In this section readers can respond to topics in previous newsletters, or comment on current events in general, or on the NV&F website.

You can send your feedback and comments to: [mishka.stuip@fsd.nl](mailto:mishka.stuip@fsd.nl)

## 9. New Links and Partner Organizations

### Current Partner Organizations and active working contacts (selection)

- Conservation Strategy Fund
- Gund Institute for Ecological Economics (University of Vermont)
- Dept. of Environment and Conservation, New South Wales, Australia
- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)
- The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- World Bank
- World Conservation Union (IUCN)

(for further information about these organizations and their activities, see the Network's website)

### About the Nature Valuation & Financing Newsletter

The Nature Valuation & Financing Bulletin is produced by the NV&F Network, an independent network on environmental valuation & financing, with the collaboration and support of the Foundation for Sustainable Development (<http://www.fsd.nl/>).

Network Coordinator is Dolf de Groot ([dolf.degroot@wur.nl](mailto:dolf.degroot@wur.nl)), the Website and Newsletter editor is Mishka Stuip ([Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl](mailto:Mishka.stuip@fsd.nl)).

The Nature Valuation & Financing Bulletin/Newsletter is a forum for multiple perspectives, and does not necessarily represent the views of the sponsoring organizations.

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