

## Why Valuation and why this Network?

Attention for ecosystem services, their values and possible financing instruments has increased rapidly in recent years and international organisations and conventions increasingly recognise 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 in economic welfare indicators (eg. in GNP-calculations).

### Origin of the Network

The idea for the Network was born during a side-event of the World Park Congress in Durban (Sept. 2003), which had as the central theme "Benefits Beyond Boundaries". During the congress it appeared that there is a rapid growth of organisations and individuals actively engaged in many aspects of investigating and communicating the benefits (ecologically, culturally and economically) of ecosystems but that a mechanism was missing where all these initiatives could share their experiences, data, contacts and ideas.

Following "Durban", the idea for a Clearing House on Nature Valuation and Financing was further developed and officially launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Bangkok (Nov. 2004).

## The main Objectives of the Nature Valuation and Financing Network

### 1. Development of Guidelines and Instruments

- 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
- apply valuation and financing in **decision making instruments** (e.g. CBA, MCA)

### 2. Stimulate Case Studies & Collaboration

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

### 3. Provide Databases & Certification

- provide a **portal** to relevant databases, publications and organizations
- support the development of a certification system to ensure the **quality of future valuation & financing studies**

### 4. Clearing House Function

- Website
- Newsletter
- Educational material
- Meetings, announcements

### 5. Support National Platforms

The Network will 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 which can be designed in the National Language but allows direct linkage to all the data and functionalities of the international Network*)

## About the Website

The site offers the opportunity to both **download and upload information** (publications, case studies, meetings, etc) on the network topics. It also provides access to the main **organizations and data-bases** 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.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Nature Valuation and Financing Network. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo and the URL 'naturevaluation.org'. Below the navigation bar, there are several images representing different aspects of nature valuation and financing. The main heading is 'Nature Valuation and Financing Network'. Below this, there is a paragraph explaining the overall aim of the Network (NV&F) and the site's features. The site offers features such as a publication database, a case study database, discussion platforms, and national platforms. There are also links to various sections: Valuation Methods, Financing Ecosystem Services, Application of Valuation in Decision Making, Ecosystem Management, and National platforms. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Latest News & Events' and 'Latest Publications & Case Studies'. The footer includes logos for 'Supported by: IUCN The World Conservation Union' and 'Project collaboration: Water & Nature Initiative'.

[www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org)

## Organisation:

During this initiation-phase, the **Foundation for Sustainable Development** provides financial support for the development of the Website and Clearing House Mechanism. For the time being, Rudolf 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 organisations. In addition, an Advisory Board will be created with representatives of the main organisations active in this field.

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

#### Collaboration and active working contacts (selection)

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

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

#### Sponsored by:



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#### Contact Information

[www.naturevaluation.org](http://www.naturevaluation.org)

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## Nature Valuation and Financing Network



*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 involved*



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