

# Quick Guide to Eliciting Demand for Ecosystem Services

## Summary

Based on experience in seven of the OPERAs Exemplar case studies, we summarize what the research team has learned about working with stakeholders to elicit demand for ecosystem services.

## Purpose

This summary document is intended to help researchers apply an ecosystem services approach to identify the ecosystem services that stakeholders value.

The full user guidance document, *Eliciting Demand for Ecosystem Services: Results and User Guidance from the OPERAs Demand Synthesis Working Group*, is available at: <http://www.oppla.eu/product/17515>.

## Motivation

- A great deal of ecosystem services research focuses on describing and mapping the supply of individual ecosystem services – what nature provides.
- Studying only ecosystem service supply risks focusing on those services that are

easy to measure or viewed as ecologically important by researchers, but may be not well understood or highly valued by stakeholders.

- One way to motivate conservation and using ecosystem services in practice is for researchers to connect ecosystem services to things that people care about.
- Much OPERAs research aimed to understand what people demand and value from ecosystems.
- Better understanding and linking the supply and demand perspectives can help more fully achieve the potential for ecosystem services to improve policy and practice.

## Eliciting demand

We propose an eight-step process for eliciting ecosystem service demand:

1. Determine study objectives
2. Identify and engage key stakeholders
3. Identify all potential ecosystem services for your case
4. Develop indicators for ecosystem services
5. Select method to elicit demand
6. Elicit stakeholder demand for ecosystem services
7. Analyze and compare demand
8. Assess implications of results

## 1. Determine study objectives

## 2. Identify and engage key stakeholders

- 2.1. Identify and analyze your stakeholders
- 2.2. Approach and engage stakeholders

## 3. Identify all potential ecosystem services for your case

- 3.1. Select an ecosystem services framework
- 3.2. Use the framework to enumerate ecosystem services for your case
- 3.3. Involve experts and stakeholders in enumerating ecosystem services

## 4. Develop indicators for ecosystem services

- 4.1. Find an indicator for each ecosystem service
- 4.2. Consider the types of indicators
- 4.3. Represent indicators clearly in words

## 5. Select method to elicit demand

- 5.1. Select an appropriate method to answer your questions for your case
- 5.2. Consider the most appropriate format for conducting your method

## 6. Elicit stakeholder demand for ecosystem services

- 6.1. Conduct research
- 6.2. Give space for stakeholders to express views in their own words

## 7. Analyze and compare demand

- 7.1. Identify the most highly valued services within your study
- 7.2. Explore questions of scale
- 7.3. Compare stakeholder demand with ecosystem supply, and with ecological assessments of priority for conservation
- 7.4. Compare between cases

## 8. Assess implications of results

- 8.1. Draw conclusions from your analysis
- 8.2. Communicate demand
- 8.3. Determine action plans to use your results to improve policy or practice

Examples from OPERAs for each of the eight steps of this framework are included in the full user guidance document.

## Conclusion

- Through collaborating across OPERAs Exemplars, we were able to identify common threads in our approaches from very different studies that aimed to elicit stakeholder values for ecosystems.
- This affirmed the importance of eliciting stakeholder demand and helped us to reflect on our approach to doing so, resulting in the creation of this eight-step framework.
- Ultimately, understanding the ecosystem services that stakeholders value can illustrate conservation and education priorities, raise awareness of the importance of ecosystem services, and inform better policy and practice.

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