Ecosystem Services Framework: A step-by-step approach on how to operationalize ecosystem services

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What’s this about?

• Incorporating socio-economic values into the decision-making process is a must.

• Explicitly including ecosystem services into environmental decisions will strengthen the resulting management process by making it more complete and defensible.

• Communicate the importance of ecosystem services and how they relate to human well-being.
How can we include ecosystem services, especially the non-market services, into the restoration decision-making process, in order to have more effective management of coastal and marine resources?

“Decisions are incomplete and inefficient if they do not include all benefits and costs.”
Ecosystem services are the contributions from the Gulf of Mexico marine and coastal ecosystems that support, sustain, and enrich human life.

(Yoskowitz et al., 2010)
Convene regional and national expertise with the specific tasks of identifying

(1) appropriate mechanisms for incorporating ES in restoration decisions, and

(2) a more comprehensive decision making framework that includes ES.

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How do we begin to operationalize the inclusion of ecosystem services into restoration decision-making for the Gulf of Mexico?
Framework

Step-by-step approach on how to operationalize ES

**Phases:**
- Identification
- Analysis
- Implementation and Evaluation

**Identification**
1. Establish human wellbeing (and biophysical) needs
2. Define the objective/goals of the project
   a. Ecological goals
   b. Socio-economic goals
3. Identify project alternatives
Framework

Analysis

4. Perform a tradeoff analysis
5. Analyze the legal framework
6. Choose alternative to implement
7. Acquire baseline information
Framework

Implementation and Evaluation Framework

8. Implement the selected project.
10. Adjust.
11. Communicate the benefits and costs of the ES.
Acknowledgments

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Workshop Participants
THANK YOU

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Questions

• Why do we need yet another framework? Don’t we have enough of those? Does this mean “more rules to follow”?

• Why did we do this? Was this just an academic exercise?

• And why should anybody care about this?