

Climate & Sustainability

Putting a Price on Nature: The Economic Power of Ecosystem Services



What are the ecosystem services & why are they so important?



Ecosystem services

The services that **natural systems generate** and from which **humanity benefits directly or indirectly**; e.g. food, water, plant materials, as well as other less tangible services, such as climate regulation and mitigation of extreme natural phenomena like floods, fires, landslides.

44 trillion \$ of economic value generation, over half the world's total GDP, is dependent on nature. This means the economy is alarmingly exposed to risks from today's unprecedented and catastrophic loss of nature.

Source: WEF (2020)

Types of ecosystem services

Support Services

Services that do not produce direct benefits for humans, but are essential for the maintenance of biodiversity and the ecological cycles that make the other services possible.

Procurement Services

Tangible goods that can be extracted from ecosystems, such as food, water, raw materials, and energy resources. These services respond to basic needs and support economic activities.



Regulatory Services

Services that maintain the balance of ecosystems regulating processes such as climate, water quality, soil fertility and protection from natural disasters.



Cultural Services

Services that enrich the quality of life, offering emotional, intellectual and symbolic experiences. They are closely linked to culture, traditions and psychological well-being.



Source: IPBES (2019) Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Examples of ecosystem services

Procurement Services



Food

Fish from seas and rivers, fruits and vegetables from forests and farmland



Freshwater

Supplied by rivers, lakes and aquifers for domestic, agricultural and industrial use



Timber and fibres

Wood for construction, vegetable fibres for textiles



Medicinal resources

Plants and organisms used in pharmacology (e.g. aspirin derived from willow)

Regulatory Services



Water and air purification

Wetlands filter pollutants from the water, while plants improve air quality through photosynthesis



Coastal protection

Mangroves reduce the impact of storms and tsunamis, stabilize the soil and prevent coastal erosion



Climate regulation

Forests absorb CO₂, helping to mitigate climate change

Cultural Services



Recreational value

Natural parks, forests, and beaches for activities such as hiking or camping



Spiritual and religious value

Natural places that are considered sacred, e.g., Ganges in India and Mount Sinai



Aesthetic value

Natural landscapes (e.g. mountains, lakes) that inspire art, photography and tourism

Do you know that it is possible to estimate the economic value and impact of an ecosystem service your company relies on?

A business acknowledges its reliance on an ecosystem service

What impacts (economic, operational etc) would generate the stop of such ecosystem service for the business?

Through multiple methodologies, it is possible to assess the value of ecosystem services for a company



A factory **withdraws water from the nearby river** for its production activities

Without the freshwater from the river, the factory would have **to stop production and rely on water supplied by tankers**

The **replacement cost method** makes it possible to **value the service provided by the river**, using the cost of water tankers required to supply the factory **as a proxy**

Important notice

This document has been prepared by Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B. for the sole purpose of enabling the parties to whom it is addressed to evaluate the capabilities of Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B. to supply the proposed services.

The information contained in this document has been compiled by Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B. and may include material obtained from various sources which have not been verified or audited. This document also contains material proprietary to Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B. Except in the general context of evaluating the capabilities of Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B., no reliance may be placed for any purposes whatsoever on the contents of this document. No representation or warranty, express or implied, is given and no responsibility or liability is or will be accepted by or on behalf of Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B. or by any of its partners, members, employees, agents or any other person as to the accuracy, completeness or correctness of the information contained in this document.

Other than stated below, this document and its contents are confidential and prepared solely for your information, and may not be reproduced, redistributed or passed on to any other person in whole or in part. If this document contains details of an arrangement that could result in a tax or insurance saving, no such conditions of confidentiality applies to the details of that arrangement (for example, for the purpose of discussion with tax authorities). No other party is entitled to rely on this document for any purpose whatsoever and we accept no liability to any other party who is shown or obtains access to this document.

This document is not an offer and is not intended to be contractually binding. Should this proposal be acceptable to you, and following the conclusion of our internal acceptance procedures, we would be pleased to discuss terms and conditions with you prior to our appointment.

Deloitte Climate & Sustainability S.r.l. S.B., a company, registered in Italy with registered number 1250609063 and its registered office at Via Santa Sofia no. 28, 20122, Milan, Italy, is an affiliate of Deloitte Central Mediterranean S.r.l., a company limited by guarantee registered in Italy with registered number 09599600963 and its registered office at Via Santa Sofia no. 28, 20122, Milan, Italy.

Deloitte Central Mediterranean S.r.l. is the affiliate for the territories of Italy, Greece and Malta of Deloitte NSE LLP, a UK limited liability partnership and a member firm of Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited, a UK private company limited by guarantee ("DTTL"). DTTL and each of its member firms are legally separate and independent entities. DTTL, Deloitte NSE LLP and Deloitte Central Mediterranean S.r.l. do not provide services to clients. Please see www.deloitte.com/about to learn more about our global network of member firms.

© 2026 Deloitte Central Mediterranean. All rights reserved.

