

Increasing the chances for uptake of Ecosystem Services information

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Most of us are perplexed by how little weight the value of ecosystem services carries in policy and planning

- * Millennium Assessment laid bare the danger in ignoring ecosystem services loss
- * Ten years on, policy-makers have still not mainstreamed ecosystem services information
- * Assessments and valuations are only used when a specific policy driver demands information about a particular value
- * Much ecosystem services scientific information (natural and socio-economic) remains in the domain of academics

On the marine front, information about multiple ecosystem services is relevant (and necessary) for effective planning



Valuable ecosystem services include:

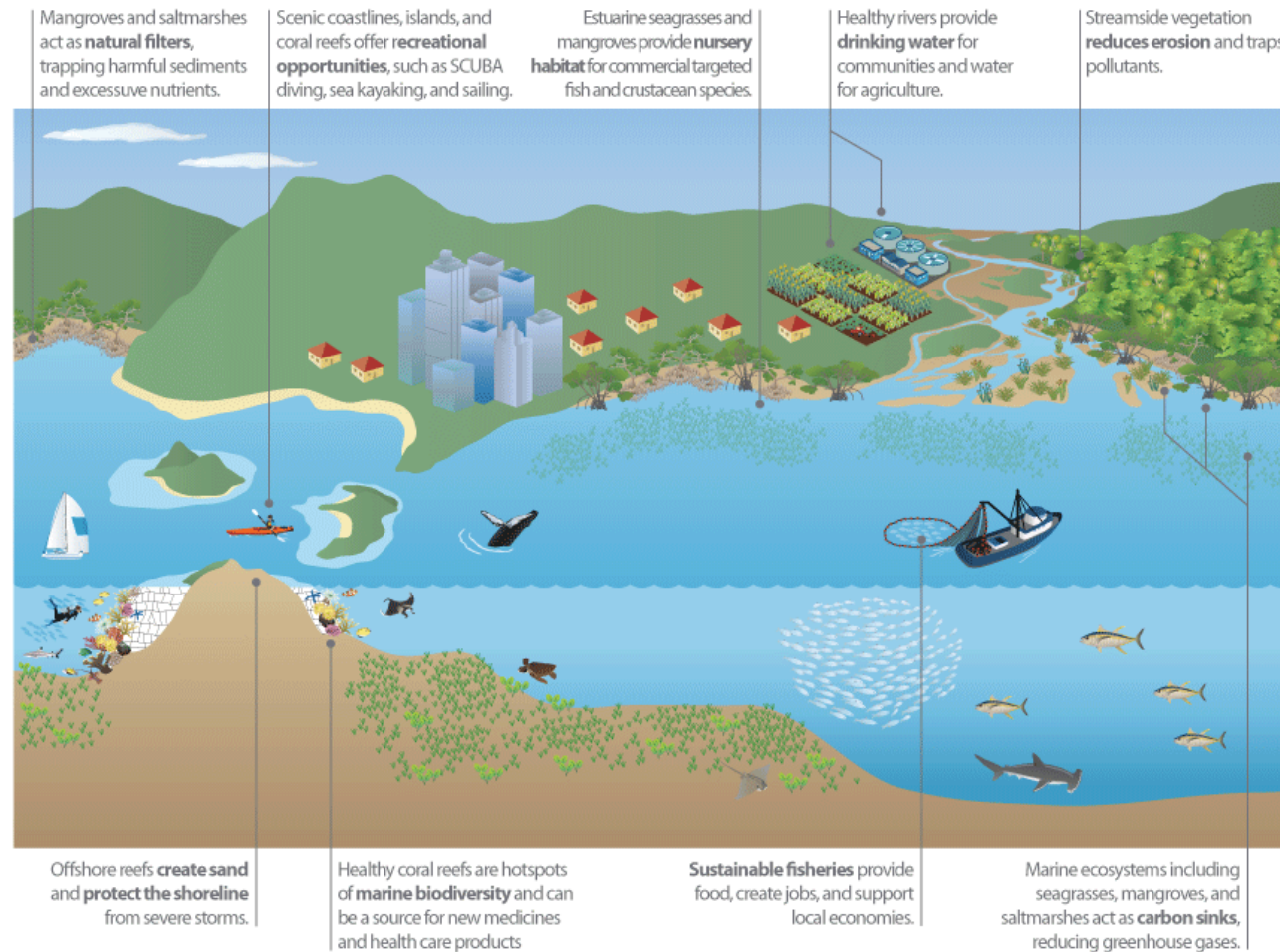
- * Shoreline stabilization
- * Beach production and maintenance
- * Support to fisheries (estuarine, coastal, and pelagic)
- * Waste filtration
- * Safe harbors and waterways
- * Water, water balances, flood control
- * Sites for commercial development (wind, wave, biofuel energy; aquaculture; desalination; tourism)
- * Opportunities for learning, connecting with nature
- * Carbon sequestration



When the focus is on a single service, uptake of ES info is limited

- * Carbon sequestration rates can be incorporated into REDD+ strategies and NAMAs
- * Coral reef values can be used to determine compensation for damages
- * Fisheries services (esp. fish nursery habitat) can be used to define Essential Fish Habitat and influence fisheries management
- * Cultural or spiritual values can drive protected area designations

But, to really see ES information mainstreamed into policy and planning, all ecosystem services should be considered



Two Examples

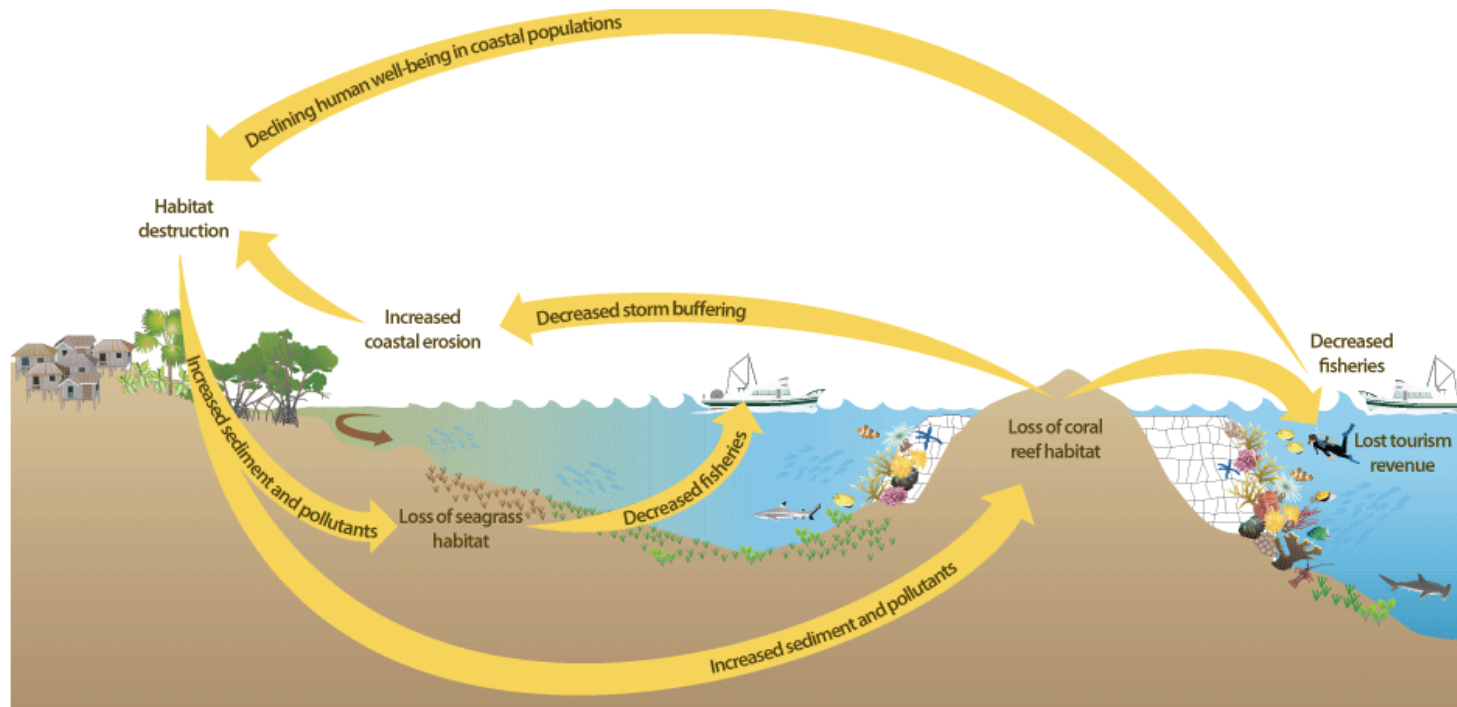
- * Marismas Nacionales, Mexico, where consideration of bundled ecosystem services arising from mangroves and lagoons is influencing Investments in Watershed Services and land use policies
- * Abu Dhabi, UAE, where the analysis of co-benefits of blue carbon is influencing land use planning and the siting of future coastal and marine protected areas



What are possible paths for uptake of marine / coastal ES information?

- * Raise awareness about values and/ or impacts that human use has on those impacts
- * Allow for landscape scale planning, with consideration of a wide spectrum of ES and values
- * Facilitate the understanding of trade/offs
- * Help to establish priorities for conservation, including siting of protected areas
- * Steer restoration efforts
- * Attract private sector investment

ES knowledge allows us to move from protecting ecosystem structure, to protecting function, and thereby protect our own futures...



Thank you

