ECOSYSTEM SERVICES
AS A PLANNING TOOL
IN FLORIDA
A CROSS-PERSPECTIVE OF AGENCIES

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DeVoe L. Moore Dissertation Fellowship 2014-2015

GEER Conference
April, 2015
Use of Ecosystem Services in Florida

• **Research Questions:** how are ecosystem services assessments (ESA) used in Florida planning, perceived strengths and challenges

• **Target group:** individuals who were involved in projects in which ecosystem services were assessed (valuated, quantified and/or described)

• **Methods:** online survey

• **Recruitment:** via emails, forwarded to others:
  - May 1, 2014 – July 29, 2014
  - 136 (44% of 311) completed the online survey
  - 120 respondents familiar with the term ecosystem services
  - 99 respondents (73% of 136) worked on ESA projects
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender (n=136)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>54%</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>46%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (n=126)</td>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>Latino/ Hispanic</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Multiple races</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age (n=135)</td>
<td>18-24</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>56-64</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>&gt;65</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education (n=135)</td>
<td>Master</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>Doctoral</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some College</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Associate</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace (n=136)</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>County</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Consulting</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions Worked (n=97)</td>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>South Central States USA</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>South Atlantic States (except Fl)</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>Western and Northeast region</td>
<td>6%, 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Regional Gov</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preferred Term

1. Ecosystem Services Assessment (ESA) (27%)
2. No Opinion (23%)
3. Ecosystem Services Approach (13%)

Respondents who worked on ESA projects: n = 94
ESA use and workplace

- Never
- Don't know
- Within 15-20 years
- Within 5-10 years
- Within 0-5 years
- Use/ have used it

n = 128
ESA vs. traditional approach

Involved: n = 95
Readiness planning field
Strengths & Challenges

• Strengths:
  • The ESA approach is comprehensive & holistic
  • Tracks, values and weighs benefits and costs; analyzes trade-offs
Strengths & Challenges

• Challenges:
  • Unclear guidelines and concepts
  • Varying approaches
  • Methods needs more testing and validation
  • Original research (local ecosystem services data)
  • Resources
Conclusions Survey

• Multiple agencies/ institutions use ESAs or expected to use it within 5 years
• ESAs perceived as a comprehensive approach
• Need consensus on framework, guidelines, methods
• ESA approaches vary
• Respondents across multiple agencies/ institutions are supportive of using ESA in planning
• Use ESA together with traditional approach
• Expand ecosystem service databases