

# **Valuation of Ecosystem Services**

## **About the Course:**

Ecosystem services provide substantial benefits to human well-being and sustainable development. The failure to recognize the value of the ecosystem is the primary cause of ecosystem mismanagement. The benefits and costs associated with their conservation and degradation have been largely excluded from the policies, markets and prices that affect people's production and consumption patterns, investment choices, land uses and resource management practices. Many decisions have been made based on partial information, leading to ecosystem degradation and economic loss.

A series of global efforts have recently emphasised the need of valuing ecosystem services in decision-making for sustainable development and biodiversity protection and conservation. It is necessary to change the prevailing culture in how nature is valued and managed. The reasoning underlying ecosystem valuation is to identify the linkages between the socio-ecological connections, to understand how human decisions would impact ecosystem services. Besides, an appropriate institutional framework and a more plural approach to valuing nature are increasingly seen as critical to improve decision making in different social contexts. Additionally, there are major significant challenges for valuation, associated with defining and quantifying ecosystem services, with their uniqueness and distinctiveness according to different contexts, and with the appropriateness of valuation methods in each case. The course will provide an understanding of importance and need of valuation of ecosystem service, an overview of existing valuation frameworks and a critical review of valuation methods and tools, highlighting the importance of integrating ecosystem service value in policy and decision making.

## **Learning Objectives:**

At the end of the course we aim to provide participants:

- ▶ Better understanding of the pertinence and purpose of valuing the services provided by ecosystems
- ▶ To be aware of the role of ecosystem service valuation in diverse decision contexts
- ▶ To appreciate the necessity of adopting inclusive, relevant, transparent, diverse and effective valuation approaches;
- ▶ To be familiar with the main existing methods and tools for ecosystem service valuation, their applicability and limitations;
- ▶ Develop a critical understanding about the opportunities and challenges of ecosystem service valuation for practical application in policy

## **Course Structure:**

Beginner Module (BM) - The self-paced e-certificate course covers the following key themes and topics:

### **BM 1: Introduction to Course**

- 1.1. Basics of Ecosystem services
- 1.2. What is Ecosystem Service Valuation
- 1.3. Importance of Ecosystem Service
- 1.4. Need of Valuating Ecosystem Services

### **BM2: Frameworks for Ecosystem service Valuation**

- 2.1. Introduction to various frameworks of ES valuation
- 2.2. Comparison of frameworks

### **BM3: Valuating Ecosystem Services**

- 3.1. Classification of Ecosystem Services
- 3.2. Types of Values of Ecosystem Service
- 3.3. Methods of valuating Ecosystem Service
- 3.4. Total Economic Value
- 3.5. Economics behind valuation
- 3.6. Role of Valuation of ES in economic growth
- 3.7. Additional resources: Videos, literatures

### **BM4: Case Studies**

- 4.1. Case studies in Indian Context
- 4.2. International Case studies
- 4.3. Success Stories of Ecosystem Services valuation

## **Who is the Course For/ Intended Audience:**

This e-course aims to build the capacity of participants and contribute towards better understanding of value of services offered by nature. The e-course is relevant to research professionals, students, policy makers, practitioners, and other stakeholders.

## **Duration and Time Commitment:**

It is a self paced learning course. The completion of course can take upto 1-2 week depending upon the the dedicated by participants.

**Additional Resources:**

Links and references for external resource material will be mentioned in the module itself. Diverse tools will be used, ranging from videos, professional interviews, case study reports and literature, for better understanding.