HANDLING THE MESSY WORLD – GUIDANCE, TOOLS AND APPROACHES FOR TAKING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES INTO PRACTICE

IS THIS FOR YOU?

This policy brief summarises the main outputs and outcomes of the EU-funded OpenNESS-project, which ended in May 2017 after 4,5 years of transdisciplinary research, development and innovation.

- The policy brief is directed to policy makers, but also practitioners, researchers and anyone seeking guidance for operationalising the ecosystem services concept.
- The project has been highly rich in outputs and thus offers useful tools, approaches and understanding to people and institutions in many spheres and levels.

> Potential users: forest owners, tourism entrepreneurs, urban planners, consults, EU and national level policy makers and politicians, international institutions, such as The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Agenda2030, as well researchers and research networks seeking for solid research outcomes.

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

We can offer you a variety of information, policy recommendations, and tools for taking ecosystem services into practice. These range from general orientation on how to get benefit from using an ecosystem services approach through experiences from diverse cases on the ground to highly specific tools and papers on topics related to applying the ecosystem services concept.

THE OpenNESS APPROACH

> OpenNESS focused on conceptual approaches, integrated assessment and valuation methods, as well as the role of drivers of change and regulatory frameworks for managing land and water resources in an iterative and integrative way.

OpenNESS was structured around practice-oriented research on methods, tools and approaches which were co-created together with local level stakeholders in 27 place-based case studies.

The long lasting iterative process offered formal and informal collaboration between interdisciplinary research teams and local level actors, including case advisory boards. The integrative process linked the pieces of OpenNESS throughout the project´s time span. Research teams searched for common ground by using case studies as a real-life starting point.

GETTING STARTED AND FINDING YOUR WAY

The project developed various entry points for providing guidance through the wide field of ecosystem services. These are accessible via the Internet:
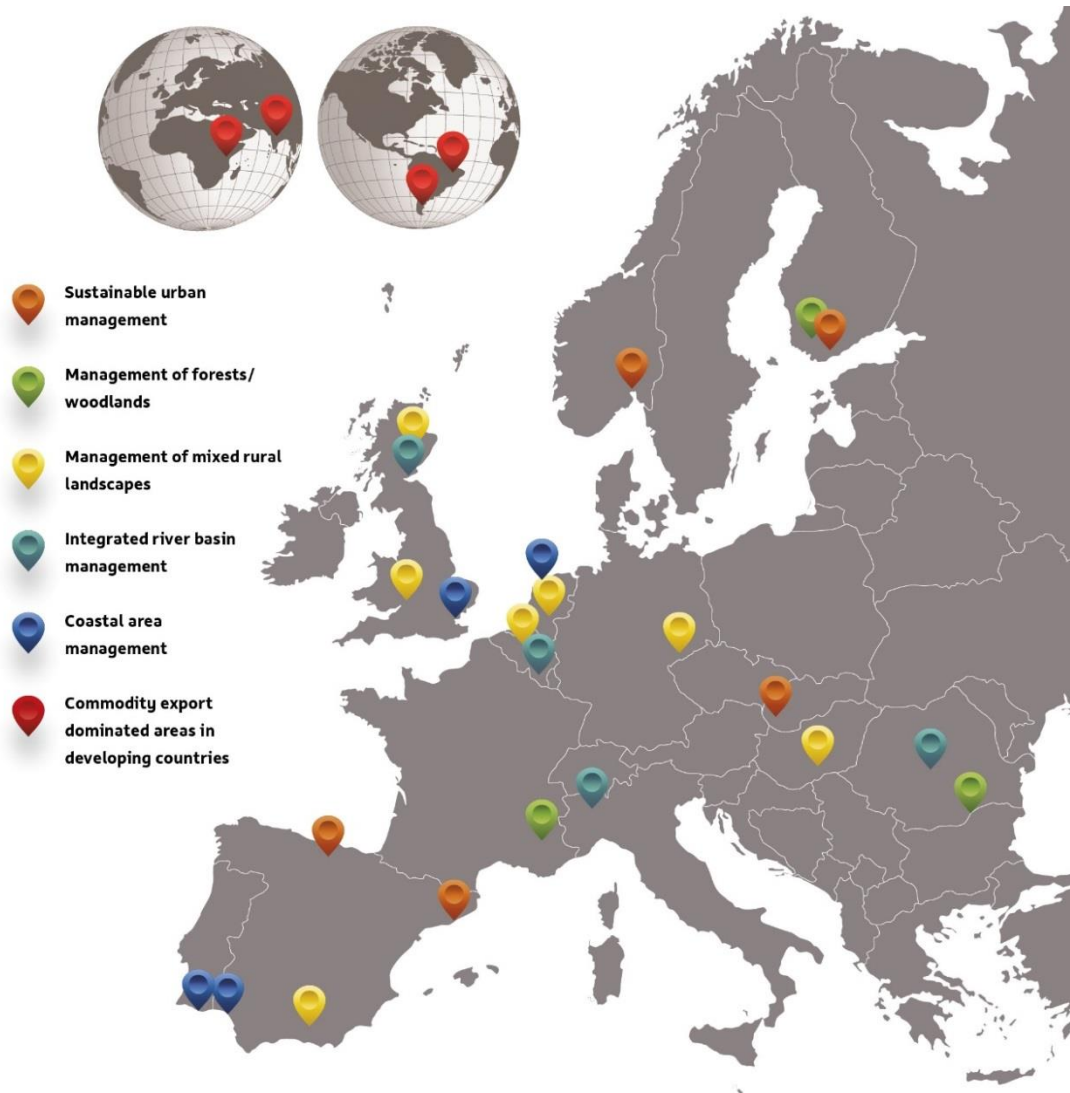
The Oppla platform (www.oppla.eu) is a web-based community and innovation hub for sharing knowledge about ecosystem services and nature-based solutions. The services provided on Oppla will help you to find what you are searching for.

- Ask Oppla is a possibility to ask questions directly from experts.
- Case study finder helps you to find real world cases of handling with ecosystem services.
- Ecosystem Services Assessment Support Tool (ESAST) and the Decision Trees are further applications in Oppla which help you to find a fit-for-purpose tool for your needs.

> Oppla services: Ask Oppla, Oppla Marketplace, Case Study Finder, Oppla Community, Oppla Groups, Oppla Labs and Oppla Webinars

OpenNESS website (www.openness-project.eu) is up and running even the project has ended. You can find there our products, including a glossary of over 200 ecosystem services related terms, 27 synthesis papers, which give you an introduction to basic concepts and ideas linked to the ecosystem services approach, 9 policy briefs and a list of all the scientific publications of the project.

Sustainable urban management

Management of forests/ woodlands

Management of mixed rural landscapes

Integrated river basin management

Coastal area management

Commodity export dominated areas in developing countries
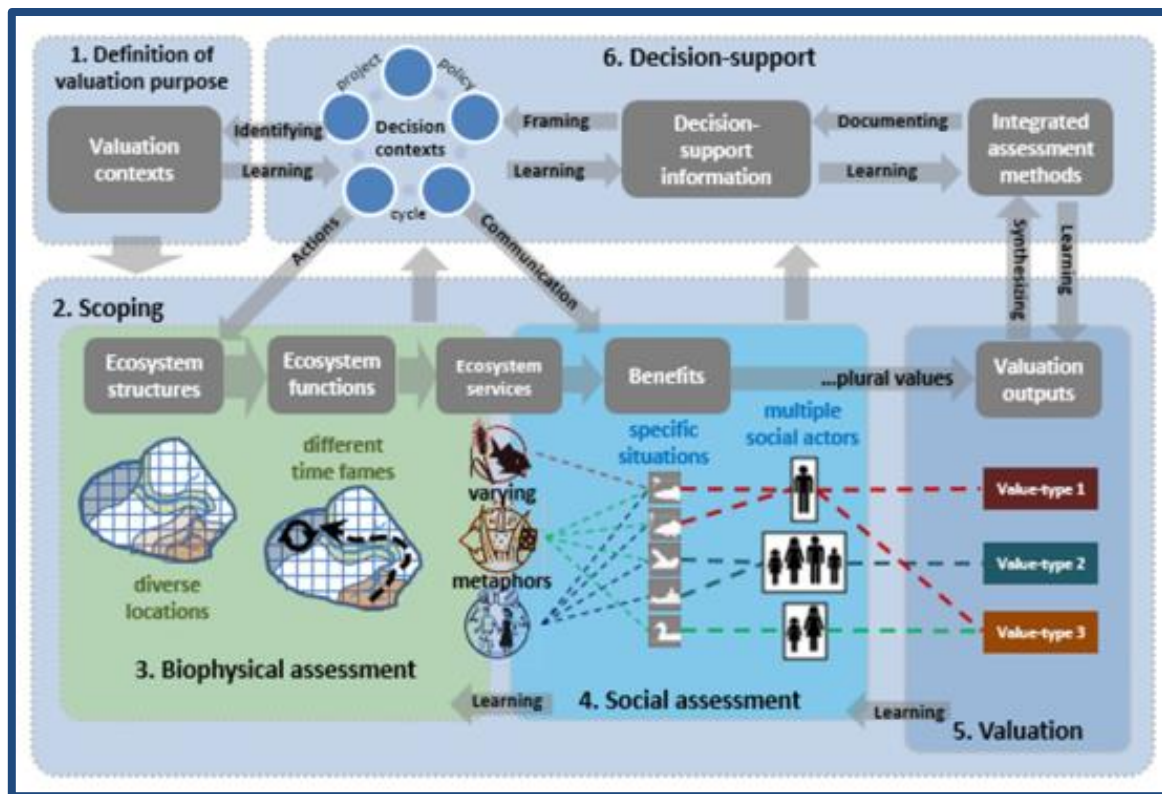
LEARNING FROM REAL-LIFE EXPERIENCES

OpenNESS has benefitted from the settings and procedures used by 27 case studies whose outcomes are well documented. These can be helpful for other projects but also for various real-life situations.

Find out more:
- Oppla case study finder (oppla.eu/case-study-finder)
- OpenNESS website:
  - case study material
  - articles on single cases or their clusters
  - synthesis paper on transdisciplinary research
  - Policy brief on nature-based solutions (NBS) in urban cases

FINDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION

During the course of the project, a wealth of knowledge was developed on different issues related to putting the ecosystem services concept into practice. These range from questions of terminology and theoretical background through various kinds of methodologies. Go to the Oppla platform or OpenNESS website to find what you need.

Integrated assessment and valuation framework (Barton et al. 2017)

TOOLS FOR TACKLING PROBLEMS

Several new tools have been developed and tested within the OpenNESS project of which the following four tools provide guidance especially to tackle complex questions:

ESAST

Ecosystem Service Assessment Support Tool (ESAST) offers practical, step-by-step guidance on how to carry out an ecosystem service assessment process and to integrate the results into management and decision-making. It contains information about methods and tools to support ecosystem service assessment, relevant resources as well as illustrative case study examples.
- You can take part in ESAST testing in Oppla laboratory (www.guideToES.eu)

Integrated assessment and valuation framework

OpenNESS has produced a model for integrated assessment and valuation, which synthetizes information about the flows of ecosystem services and their multiple values to societal actors to facilitate informed decision-making and planning (Barton et al. 2017).

Decision trees

Decision trees help you to find alternative biophysical assessment, monetary valuation and socio-cultural valuation methods that are fit for purpose (Harrison et al. 2017). You can access the decision trees, including a tool based on Bayesian Belief Networks (openness.hugin.com/oppla/ValuationSelection) via www.guideToES.eu.

ONEX

The OpenNESS conceptual Nexus (ONEX) has been created to help people to manage complex issues around operationalising ES in place based situations. ONEX can be accessed through the ONEX Lab at trello.com/b/sm1lX0S0 and ESAST in Oppla

SOURCES FOR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

OpenNESS carried out policy analyses and provided policy recommendations in close interaction with policy makers, businesses and other actors at various levels from Europe to national and local level. You can find policy recommendations from the following materials:

- Policy briefs www.openness-project.eu/library

Brief no. 01 - Benefiting from ecosystem services: towards a shared understanding

Brief no. 02 - Towards sustainable nature-based solutions: research to enhance the systemic transition

Brief no. 03 - Integrating nature-based solutions in urban planning

Brief no. 04 - EU bioenergy policies at the crossroad

Brief no. 05 - Diverse valuation and accounting of nature

Brief no. 06 - Links between natural capital and ecosystem services

Brief no. 07 - Local planning with ecosystem services and stakeholder participation

Brief no. 08 - Enhancing Water Framework Directive implementation through the ecosystem service approach

- Peer-reviewed articles (100 by the end of the project), reports and books with policy recommendations, which can be accessed through OpenNESS website
- More information on various science-policy events can be found from OpenNESS website

WHERE CAN YOU FIND OUR OUTPUTS?

- Comprehensive papers with OpenNESS outputs: Furman et al. 2017, Jax et al. 2017 and Saarikoski et al. 2017 www.openness-project.eu/library

What	Where
Cases: Case study finder and further information	www.oppla.eu www.openness-project.eu/cases
Decision support tools: Decision trees, ESAST and ONEX	www.guideToES.eu
Synthesis papers in ecosystem services	www.openness-project.eu/library/reference-book
Policy briefs	www.openness-project.eu/library
Glossary	www.openness-project.eu/glossary
Flyers in various languages	www.openness-project.eu/library
Peer-reviewed articles	www.openness-project.eu/library
Articles and books	www.openness-project.eu/library
Project reports	www.openness-project.eu/library
Old newsflashes: with info of events	www.openness-project.eu/library
Further information	eeva.furman@ymparisto.fi Eeva Furman, Finnish environment institute SYKE
OpenNESS partners	www.openness-project.eu/partners

References

Barton et al. (2017) (Dis)integrated valuation: narrowing the gap between ecosystem service appraisals and governance support. Ecosystem Services. In press.

Furman et al. (2017) Re-connecting Natural and Cultural Capital. Contributions from Science and Policy. European Union. Office of Publications of the European Union, Luxembourg. In press.

Harrison et al. 2017 Selecting methods for ecosystem service assessment: A decision tree approach. Ecosystem Services. In press.

Jax et al. (2017) Handling a messy world: Towards operationalising the ecosystem services approach for a variety of real-world problems. Ecosystem Services. In press.

Saarikoski et al. (2017) Institutional challenges in putting ecosystem service knowledge in practice. Ecosystem Services. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecoser.2017.07.019