Valuing ecosystem services at the project level: what do we want to achieve and how best to go about it?

EU LIFE Platform Event "Costing the Earth?"

10-12 May 2017

Tallinn, Estonia

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Who we are

The global Partnership for nature and people

Who we are

BirdLife INTERNATIONAL

Partnership for nature and people

rspb giving nature a home

Policy Relevance

- EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 (Target 2)
- 7th Environmental Action Plan
- Water Framework Directive
- Natura 2000
- Sectoral policies

By 2020, ecosystems and their services are maintained and enhanced by establishing green infrastructure and restoring at least 15% of degraded ecosystems.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Living well, within the limits of our planet
7th Environment Action Programme

Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystems and their Services (MAES)

→ Action 5 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy

"Map and assess the state and economic value of ecosystems and their services in the entire EU territory; promote the recognition of their economic worth into accounting and reporting systems"

→OpenNESS; OPERAs; ESMERALDA

Natural Capital

The stock of renewable and non-renewable resources that combine to yield a flow of benefits to people

- Ecosystem Accounts (national and business level)
- UK Government Natural Capital Committee
- EU Business & Biodiversity Platform – Natural Capital Accounting workstream
- Natural Capital Coalition

NATURAL CAPITAL COALITION

Initiatives & Tools

SolVES
Social Values for Ecosystem Services

The Protected
Areas Benefits
Assessment Tool

Guidelines for applicants 2014 - LIFE Nature and Biodiversity

2.4.7 Monitoring of the impact of project actions (obligatory)

- Each proposal …must also include two separate actions aimed to assess the **socio-economic impact** of the project actions on the local economy and population, and to assess the project's impact on the **ecosystem functions**.

- The direct linkages between the project measures and **key ecosystem services** provided, such as carbon sequestration, water purification, pollination, etc. should be clearly assessed in economic terms.

- All these should be consistent in so far as possible with the **MAES** methodology

Guidelines for applicants 2014 - LIFE Nature and Biodiversity

LIFE 2014-2020 monitoring indicators

- …one primary objective of the assessment in the LIFE project is to analyse the possible ***effect*** **of project actions on ecosystem service(s).**

- …take into account the **scale** and **timeframe** of the project, the **data** and **expertise** needed/ available, and the **importance** of/the demand for the ecosystem service(s) to be assessed at the local, regional and/or EU scale**.**

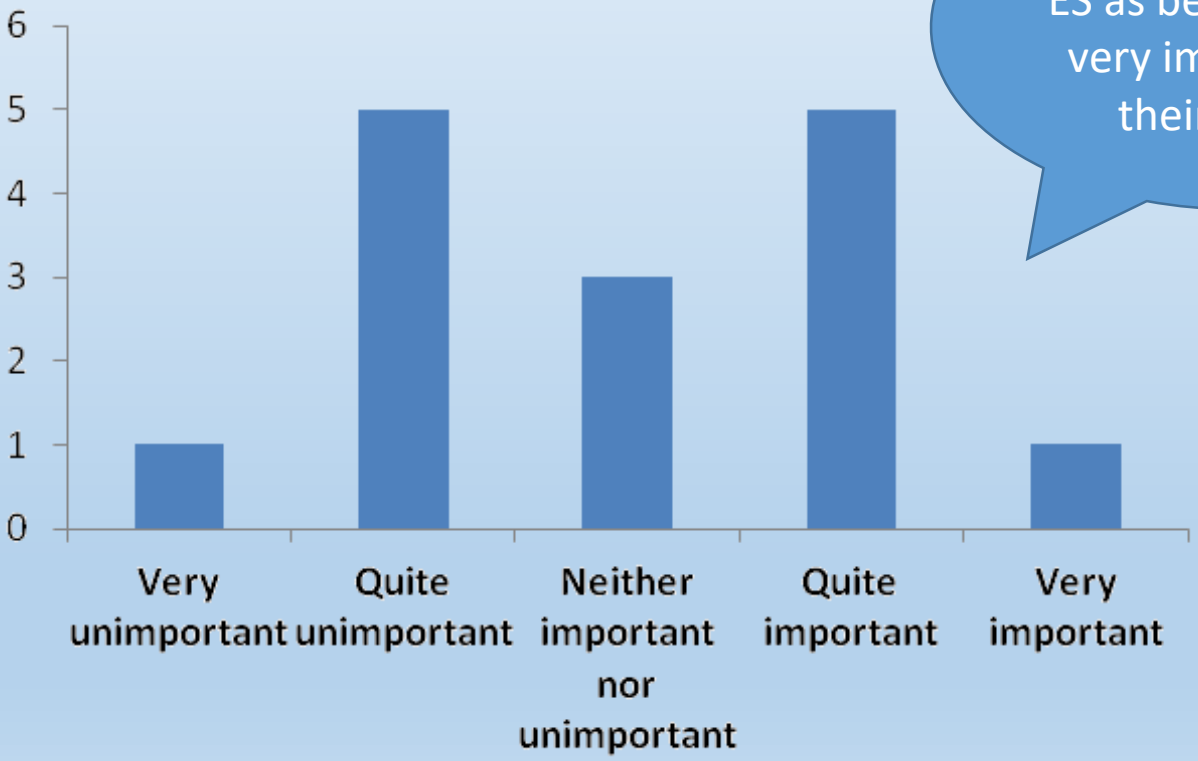
- **Stakeholder involvement** in the process and transparent communication of the assessment results is key.

LIFE Nature projects - Survey

LIFE Nature Projects - Ecosystem Service Assessments

Funding year	Responses
2003, 2007	1 each
2009	1
2011	3
2012	2
2013	1
2014	4
2015	2
TOTAL	15

14/15 of the LIFE Nature projects we surveyed are aware of the ES requirement



6 projects identified ES as being quite or very important to their project

What have people understood the requirement to mean?

Unclear what the requirements are and whether this is the same as the "assess project actions on **ecosystem function**"

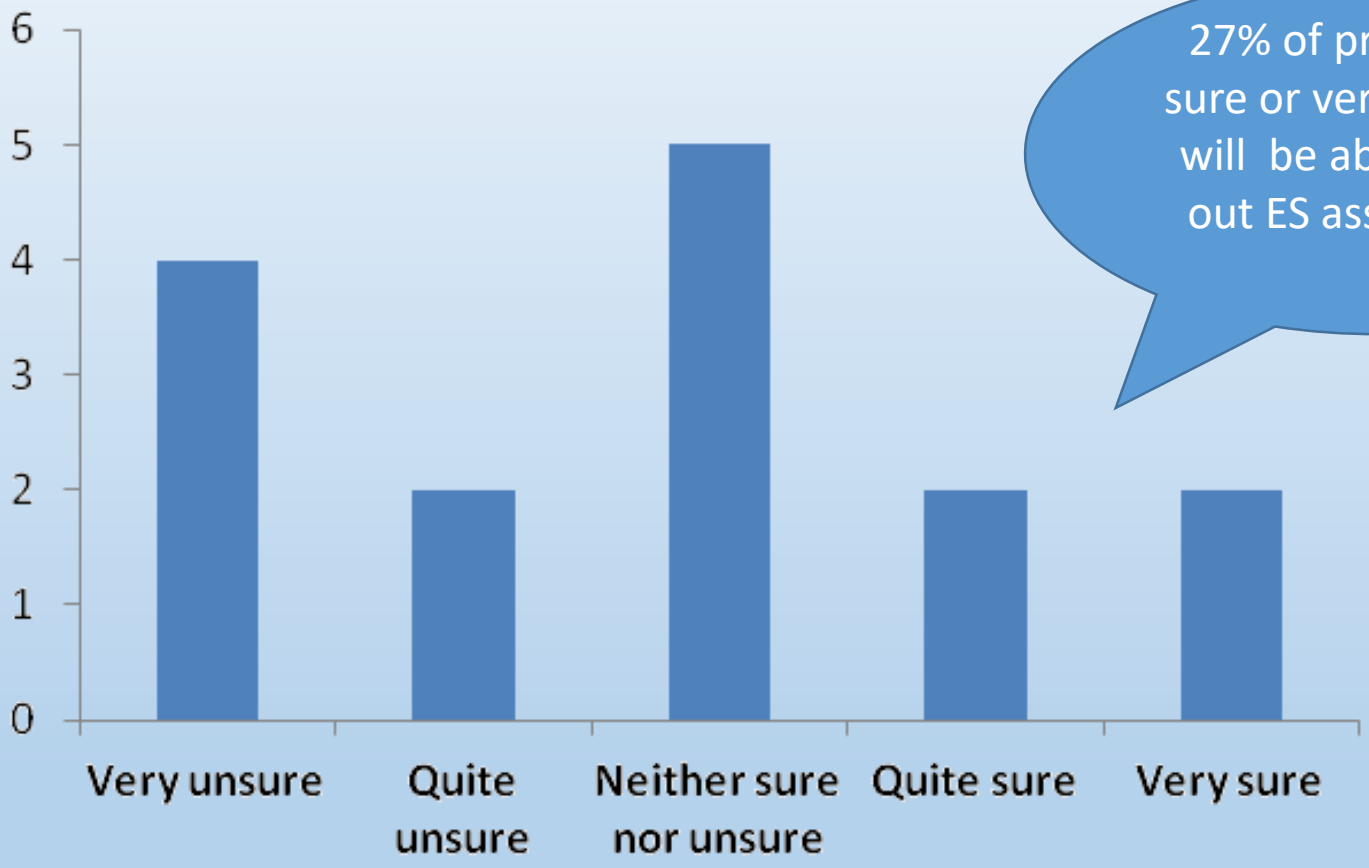
We need to assess the impact of project conservation actions on **ecosystem services**, such as: clean water, food provision, benefits for human health and culture, etc.

Identify the impact of the project actions in increasing functionalities of ecosystems and **delivery of benefits** to local, national or global population.

We will be doing **a socio economic report** for the project

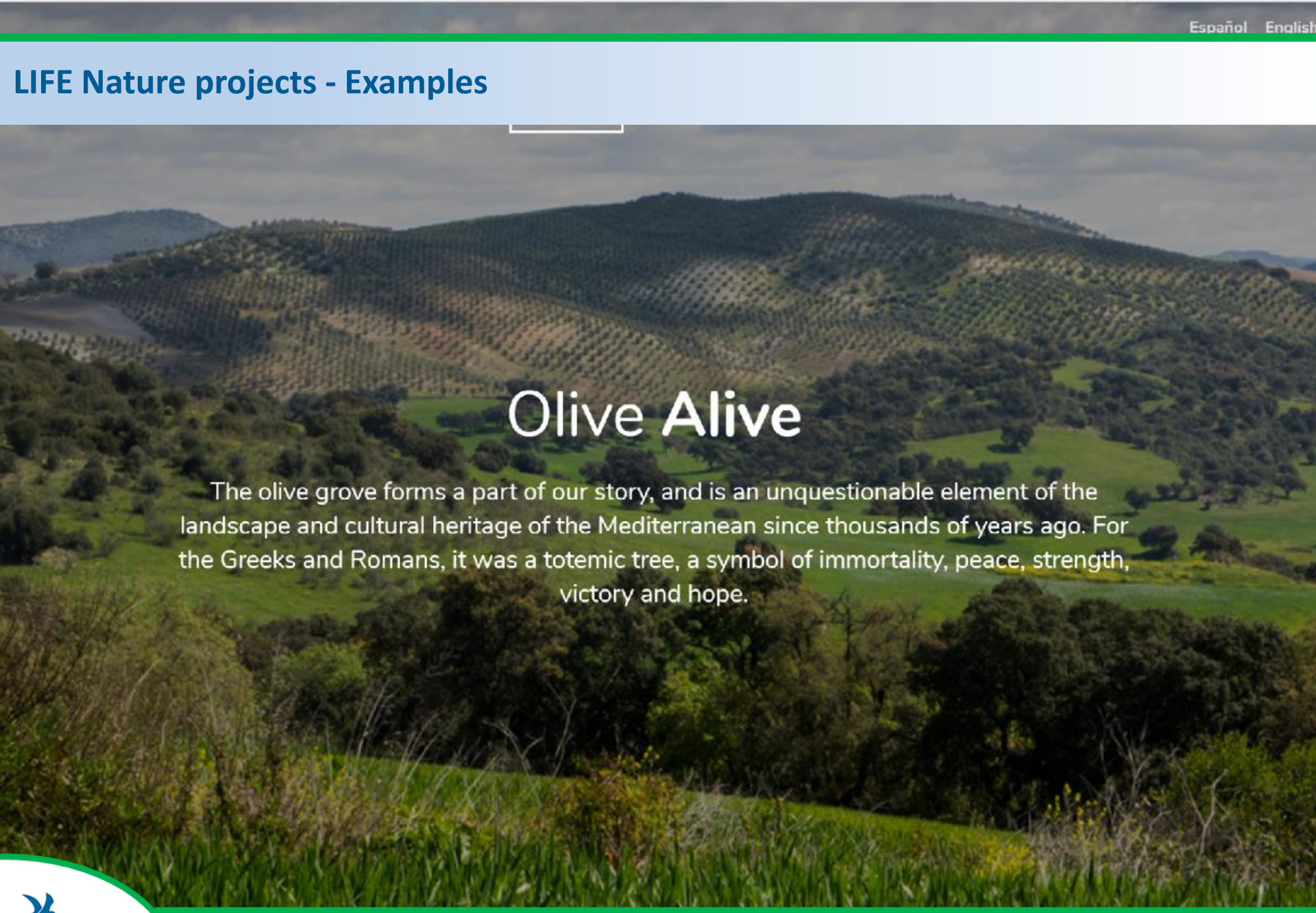
"Not sure. The LIFE regulations and **guidelines are not explicit**..."

LIFE Nature projects - Survey



27% of projects are sure or very sure they will be able to carry out ES assessments

LIFE Nature projects - Examples



LIFE Nature projects - Examples

Projects reported a lack of:

- Capacity (time)
- Resources (equipment, budget)
- Understanding of methods
- Experience/skills
- Clarity in LIFE Guidelines

What would help?

- Sharing experiences
- Access to examples
- Standard methods / common guidelines
- Out-sourcing / contracting services
- Training / workshops

How best to go about it?

Our top tips

1. **Understand why** you are doing an ES assessment
2. Decide what level of detail you need and what **data** to collect. Which services?
3. Identify what **resources** you have and what you need.
4. Choose your **methods/tools** according to capacity, time, money available.

How best to go about it?

Quarry Curfs

1. Why?
2. Data
3. Resources
4. Methods

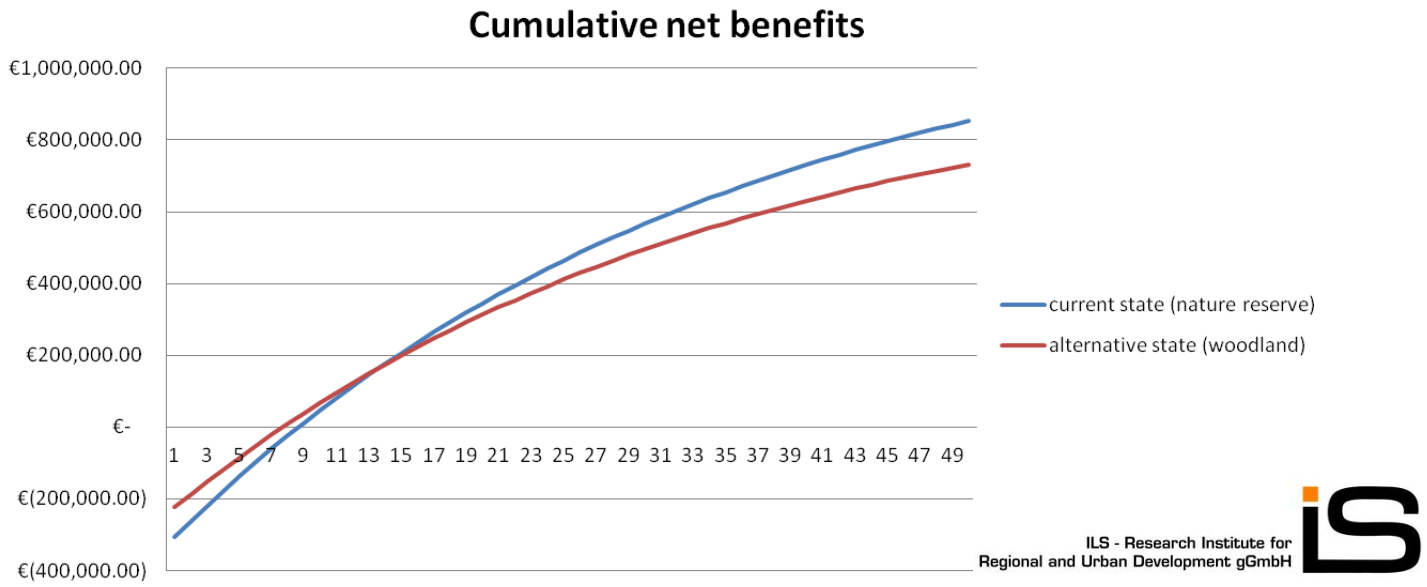
How best to go about it?

Quarry Curfs

	Visitors/Users	Annual carbon storage (tons)	investment costs	maintenance costs
Current state (nature reserve)	4401	48.86	306,787 €	12,960 €
Alternative state (woodland)	3440	67.80	224,177 €	9,360 €

carbon price	cost per km	Discount rate
39 €	0,30 €	3 %

N = 103



The main output of this platform meeting….

To develop a guidance document for assessing and applying ecosystem services concepts at both the LIFE programme level and at the individual LIFE project level

Why does the LIFE programme want projects to collect ES information?

What is the information going to be used for? E.g.

- To contribute towards the delivery of the EU Biodiversity Strategy?
- For informing EU-level decision-making?
- For testing, applying and enhancing ES concept within EU?
- Justification for continued funding of the LIFE programme?

What type of data does the programme want? E.g.

- What type of 'valuation' required? Monetary, qualitative, net change → ***integrated valuation***
- Real change measures or scenarios/counterfactuals? → ***realistic given project timescales***
- Standardised indicators? → ***will this work given the breadth of projects***
- Harmonised approaches? → ***one size fits all tool?***
- Certified methods?

Projects need ……

1) Clear guidance on:
   - What they are required to assess and why → *is it relevant for all?*
   - What they are measuring → *socio-economic impact; ecosystem functions; ecosystem services?*
   - What methods to follow → *best practice; MAES methodology?*

2) Capacity development
   - Where to find resources & tools → *ES tools directories; OPPLA*
   - Workshops, access to training / experts
   - Opportunities for peer to peer learning

3) Adequate planning and financial resources

4) Realistic expectations
   - At programme level and by projects themselves

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING!

Thank you to all the LIFE project contacts who completed our survey

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Toolkit for Ecosystem Service Site-based Assessment

http://tessa.tools