A practical approach to mapping of ecosystems and ecosystem services using remote sensing

Abstract:
Earth observation (EO) via remote sensing technologies is increasingly being used for ecosystem assessment and valuation. Processed satellite data enables development of spatially explicit and geographically broad assessments of ecosystems around the globe. These often cost less and take less time than field surveys, even when including resources required for ground-truthing of remote data. As satellites revisit the same areas at regular intervals, ecosystem change over time can be captured. Processing this data with information about users of ecosystem services (ES) allows decision makers understand not only ecological functions but how they deliver benefits to people. As a result, remotely sensed or EO products can support defining, measuring and assessing ecosystem services effectively. In this chapter we describe some practical examples of how satellite EO products can be used for the assessment of specific ecosystem services around the globe.

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