

What is Nature Worth?

Tip sheet for reporters

InVEST: A Decision-Making Tool for Mapping and Valuing Nature's Benefits

Innovative management tool now available

InVEST is a software program that helps decision-makers value the diverse benefits we get from nature and assess the impacts of potential decisions by identifying tradeoffs and compatibilities among economic, environmental and social benefits. It can be used to inform marine spatial planning, ecosystem-based management, payment for ecosystem service schemes and more.

InVEST 2.0 was released online on Feb. 18, 2011. It includes:

- **Marine InVEST.** These are the first models to map and value benefits from oceans and coasts (wave energy, food from aquaculture, protection from coastal hazards and aesthetic views).
- **Updates to terrestrial InVEST.** These improve the water models and add new modules for estimating forest-conversion risk in ecosystem-service model outputs.

InVEST in use around the world

Oceans and coasts: Vancouver Island, Canada; Belize

Lands and waters: Hawai'i, Minnesota, Delaware, Oregon, China, Tanzania, Ecuador, Colombia, Sumatra, Borneo

Land & sea connections: Puget Sound, Chesapeake Bay, Galveston Bay

Background on InVEST (Integrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services and Tradeoffs)

Government officials, conservation professionals, land owners, investors and coastal planners routinely make decisions about how to use natural resources. But they've never had a systematic way to demonstrate the future costs and benefits of their decisions for people and the environment. The Natural Capital Project aims to meet this challenge with InVEST 2.0, a software tool that can model and map the delivery, distribution and economic value of nature's benefits from land and sea well into the future.

Natural Capital Project

The Natural Capital Project seeks to align economic forces with conservation by developing tools to incorporate natural capital into decisions, demonstrating these tools in contrasting places and engaging leaders in key institutions. Project staff work closely with local and regional resource managers. The Natural Capital Project is a partnership among Stanford University's Woods Institute for the Environment, University of Minnesota's Institute on the Environment, The Nature Conservancy and World Wildlife Fund.

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