Project

Strategic funding considerations to safeguard ecosystem services



Working on behalf of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), EBP examined the general funding needs associated with the goal of safeguarding ecosystem services in Switzerland. We also drafted a guideline to enable the sound evaluation of various financing models for ecosystem services.

The term ecosystem services refers to the many and varied benefits that humans, and society in general, freely gain from the natural environment and from properly-functioning ecosystems. The use of the term allows us to account for the direct and indirect contributions that nature makes to our well-being.
Various factors pose a threat to our ecosystems and undermine our ability to safeguard them and the benefits they provide. These threats include continued settlement development, agricultural production and our unsustainable use of natural resources. According to experts, climate change can also be expected to have a significant impact on ecosystem services in the future.
We approached our project by first analyzing the extent to which the relevant ecosystem services in Switzerland are secure and whether there is any need for action. We also examined the sources of funding (including market intervention) that are available to safeguard ecosystem services in the future, as well as any efforts that might need to be undertaken to develop new sources of funding.
As a second element, we designed a guideline for the identification of possible sources of funding for ecosystem services. In the context of this work, we surveyed existing

Client

Swiss Federal Office for the Environment

Facts

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Project Country	Switzerland

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financing instruments and compared their potential to potential future needs. We also identified ecosystem beneficiaries and detractors as possible sources of future funding. By way of closing out our investigations, we carried out an in-depth examination of the possibility of monetarizing two selected ecosystem services.
We completed the project together with the INFRAS Research and Consulting Firm.