



Mainstreaming Nature in Policy and Investment Decisions

Project Overview

The project

The Stanford-based [Natural Capital Project](#) (NatCap), the [Inter-American Development Bank](#), the [Asian Development Bank](#), and the [World Bank](#)'s Biodiversity, Ecosystems, and Landscape Assessment (BELA) Initiative are collaborating with 16 pilot countries to co-develop rapid natural capital approaches that directly inform policy and investment decisions, to achieve both development and conservation goals. By sharing lessons across these countries and beyond, the project aims to scale up these approaches around the world.

The need

Despite growing recognition that healthy, functioning ecosystems are fundamental to achieving food and water security, poverty reduction, and sustainable development, the values provided by nature are not widely integrated into policy and investment decisions. Mechanisms that facilitate this integration and mobilize resources for nature protection, restoration, and sustainable use are a critical component of effective human development programs.

Much promising work has been done through natural capital assessments and accounting. These 'natural capital approaches' quantify the values of ecosystems and biodiversity to different sectors, livelihoods, and human cultures under different management and climate futures, to inform policy and finance decisions.

Through a process of co-creation with diverse stakeholders, natural capital assessments quantify and map natural capital stocks (natural resources like soils and water) and the ecosystem services flowing from them (like crop production or clean drinking water).

Natural capital accounting involves tracking these stocks and services over time using a standardized, replicable approach to evaluate the impacts of climate change, or of policies and investments.

Natural capital approaches can inform diverse decision contexts, including: multi-sector development planning, payment schemes for watershed benefits to people, regenerative agricultural production, disaster risk reduction, results-based finance instruments such as green or blue bonds, or nature-based approaches to enhance tourism, among many other applications.



The plan

The project team — including experts from NatCap, multilateral development bank leaders, local governments, and local experts — is **co-developing natural capital approaches in each pilot country** in order to inform specific priority policy or finance decisions. These will help to secure each country’s natural capital in support of their development goals.

The pilot countries, supported by the project teams, are further **developing technical and policy capacity across their governments** and other relevant institutions for implementing natural capital approaches in ongoing work.

The multilateral development banks are in turn **advancing their operational support and finance** opportunities for mainstreaming natural capital approaches within countries.

The project team is developing a standardized **framework, training curricula and customizable tools** for global application of rapid natural capital approaches, demonstrating and sharing different pathways for policy and finance interventions.

The countries



For more information, please visit the [project page](#).
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