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Environmental Conservation Themed Issue on *Payment for Ecosystem Services in Conservation: Performance and Prospects*

There has been a remarkable proliferation of interest in payments for ecosystem services within conservation in recent years. The prospect of raising funds from currently unvalued services provided by nature could substantially alter conservation practice. In the area of tropical forest conservation, the hundreds of millions of dollars that could flow into conservation if REDD+ schemes are realized have been particularly alluring. Influential think tanks like The Economics of Ecology and Biodiversity (TEEB) are making extensive resources available to thoroughly document potential value of ecosystem services. Large NGOs are devoting resources to quantifying and capturing ecosystem financial values.

At the same time there are enduring doubts as to the ethics, and wisdom, of 'selling nature to save it' as well as contests over the notions of value and ecosystem employed. Observers have noted an element of fad and loss of critical thinking in the current enthusiasm for payments for ecosystem services. They call for careful evidence-based evaluations of their performance, limitations and prospects. It is even possible that opposition to payments for ecosystem services may unite quite different critics – social scientists who are concerned as to the (social) exclusions these payments can entail and ecologists alarmed by the forms and values of nature that might be left out.

The purpose of this themed issue is to strengthen the evidence-base through a collection of papers addressing diverse aspects of the performance of payments for ecosystem services in environmental conservation. Submitted papers may target, but are not limited to, the following issues and questions:

The ecology of payments for ecosystem services:

- What sorts of nature are produced by payments for ecosystem services?
- What conservation goals do they advance, ignore and stymie?

The economics of payments for ecosystem services:

- How can ecosystem services be valued?
- How are ecosystem services measured and monitored and how might they be co modified?
- What businesses and business models have arisen to fund conservation from payments for ecosystem services?

The political economy of payments for ecosystem services:

- How are markets created and demands realized?
- How, and to whom, do these payments distribute fortune and misfortune?
- What are the consequences of the financialization of ecosystem services?
- Whence derives the current popularity of payments for ecosystem services?

Papers may take the form of case studies of individual schemes, comparative studies, or thematic or geographical reviews. The editors will prioritize strong empirical studies.

Managing Editor

Dan Brockington (Manchester University, UK)

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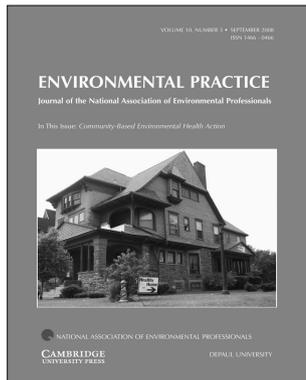
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Manuscript submission deadline: 31 October 2010

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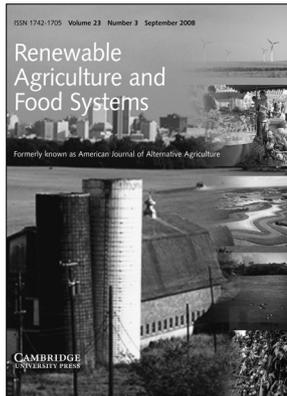
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