

Cross-sectional analysis of cultural values  
of ecosystem services  
Case Study no. 1

12.2021

Services provided by main types of ecosystems in Poland  
- an applied approach

The project 'Services provided by main types of ecosystems in Poland - an applied approach' received funding from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway within the EEA Financial Mechanism 2014-2021 in the amount of 1,489,999 EUR, and from budget of Poland in the amount of 262,941 EUR. The aims of the project are transferring of scientific knowledge on ecosystem services which exists in Europe to the process of mapping and assessment of ecosystem services in Poland, as well as increasing the scientific potential and the ability of administration and interested social groups to Implement this approach in environmental management.

Cultural ecosystem services (CES) are intangible benefits derived by humans from nature. What distinguishes them from other groups of ecosystem services is that the condition for their existence is a direct relationship between humans and their environment. CES are created through subjective interpretation of the surrounding natural world. They are, therefore, relational.

The basic scale for identifying and assessing CES is the local scale, i.e. the one in which direct contact between humans and nature occurs. For this reason, the case study was related to the local scale of spatial planning. The study's main goal was to develop methods and tools enabling the identification and assessment of spatial diversity of cultural ecosystem services at the commune scale.

The study was conducted in the Węgorzewo commune. This commune is characterized by relatively high natural attractiveness and high tourist traffic. The choice of the commune was purposeful. Implementing the methodological goal required carrying out a CES diagnosis for an area where intangible benefits derived from nature are significant and easily noticeable. The study should be treated as a pilot study; the selection of research methods and the design of tools served to collect data regarding the Węgorzewo commune and evaluate these methods and tools critically.