Urban Resilience and Adaptation for India and Mongolia
curricula, capacity, ICT and stakeholder collaboration to support green & blue infrastructure and nature-based solutions
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URGENT Project – Available Training Courses

Title:	Economic Valuation of Ecosystem Services
Based on:	Training developed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) (www.aboutvalues.net)
Trainer:	Arjan de Groot (Martin-Luther University of Halle-Wittenberg)
Available for:	Students of URGENT Partner Universities, Staff of URGENT Partners, Members of URGENT SIP

1. Training Structure

This training course offers a general introduction to basic economic concepts, gives an overview of some principles of environmental economics, and provides a general understanding of different economic valuation methods with their advantages and disadvantages. Moreover, the training course discusses how valuation can be integrated into various projects and how it can be used to improve policies and measures. The training is designed for a one to two day period and is based on the Harvard Case Methodology, and as such consists of expert input through lecture format followed by interactive group exercises by the participants. All modules of the training follow a similar sequence, consisting of the following crucial elements:

- An Introduction given by the trainer, providing the necessary theoretical background for the group work.
- The Group work, giving participants the opportunity to apply the theoretical knowledge gained to practical work while showcasing interesting scientific tools and methods
- A Presentation of the results, allowing participants to showcase their results to the plenary and fostering a discussion.
- A Reflection after the presentation, enhancing the lessons learned and allowing participants to reflect on their own experiences in their respective fields of work.

2. Background

The 2008 study on The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) highlighted the immense value that nature provides to the economy and reflected on the economic costs of ecosystem degradation. It made the case that conserving biodiversity and ecosystems is not only an ecological or biological concern, but is also crucial for human wellbeing and development. Two years later the links between biodiversity and economic wellbeing were further prioritized when the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The plan´s vision states that “biodiversity [should be] valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.” The Aichi Biodiversity Targets associated with this plan explicitly flag the need to increase awareness of biodiversity

values as well as to develop measures to integrate values into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies, planning processes, national accounting and reporting systems

3. Rationale of the Training

The training is based on a training course developed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and teaches participants how to design, manage and apply processes to assess the economic value of ecosystem services, and to use the results effectively and convincingly to strengthen conservation and develop better decision-making. It is important to emphasize that the training does not provide an in-depth technical explanation of how to apply and conduct various valuation methods. Instead, the focus is on imparting general knowledge of various methods and how to design and obtain credible, relevant and practical ecosystem service assessment results.

4. Objectives

The training course introduces the theoretical and practical starting points for applying economic valuation and aims at imparting an understanding regarding various popular economic valuation methods. The key learning goals for participants are:

- To understand the basic economic concepts, principles and terminology underlying economic valuation,
- To identify why, when and how economic valuation studies can be useful, and when they can instead be harmful or have an unintended negative effect on conservation efforts,
- To inform about commonly used economic valuation methods for valuing ecosystem services
- To share experiences, lessons learned and best-practices of applying ecosystem valuation within the real-world decision-making processes.