

Ecosystem services can be considered final in a way that they are the outputs of ecosystems (whether natural, semi-natural or artificial) that most directly affect the well-being of people. A fundamental characteristic is that they retain a connection to the underlying ecosystem functions, processes and structures or intermediate ecosystem services that generate them (Haines-Young & Potschin 2013, p. 9) ¹⁾. Final ecosystem services are also relevant for economic accounting of ecosystem services. They are considered the appropriate entity for the valuation of ecosystem services to avoid duplicated assessment and ensure a parsimonious system of accounting (Boyd & Banzhaf 2007; Staub et al. 2011) ^{2) 3)}. Furthermore they are a matter of perspective. The provision of clean surface water might be a final service in regards to drinking purposes but may also be an intermediate service (See the opposite, [intermediate services](#)) providing a suitable habitat for fish. In this perspective the provision of wild aquatic animals as a source of nutrition is the final service (Boyd & Banzhaf 2007) ⁴⁾.

Final ecosystem services are in the focus of the AlpES project, but for an integrated environmental governance also intermediate services should be considered and made aware of for strategic reasons.

AlpES project

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Haines-Young, R. & Potschin, M. (2013): Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services (CICES). Consultation on Version 4, August-December 2012. Report to the European Environment Agency (EEA/IEA/09/003), checked on 3/18/2016.

²⁾ , ⁴⁾

Boyd, J. & Banzhaf, S. (2007): What are ecosystem services? The need for standardized environmental accounting units. In: Ecological Economics of Coastal Disasters - Coastal Disasters Special Section 63 (2-3), p. 616-626.

³⁾

Staub, C.; Ott, W.; Heusi, F.; Klingler, G.; Jenny, A.; Häcki, M. & Hauser, A. (2011): Indikatoren für Ökosystemleistungen. Systematik, Methodik und Umsetzungsempfehlungen für eine wohlfahrtsbezogene Umweltberichterstattung. Ed. by Bundesamt für Umwelt (BAFU). Bern (Umwelt-Wissen, 1102).

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