

Ecosystem typification and mapping at the national level. The case of Italy

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Abstract

The definition, spatial representation, and extent assessment of ecosystem types (ET) represent the basic and crucial phase for the overall Ecosystem Accounting (EA) process within the SEEA framework. Moving from a land use/land cover lens to a more comprehensive perspective, based on structural, compositional and functional features of ecosystems, allows in fact to dispose of more suitable inputs for ecosystem condition and services assessment and monitoring. In turn, such a backbone could better support the subsequent alignment between EA outcomes and other nature conservation and restoration policies at multiple levels. The hierarchical typology set out in the EU Regulation 2024/3024 is explicitly intended to facilitate these cascading activities and is useful at the national level, especially in very heterogeneous countries.

Therefore, the workshop represents a valuable occasion for sharing and discussing the rationale and methodological choices adopted by the Interinstitutional Working Group in charge for the EU regulation implementation in Italy, which involves technical and scientific experts from different public bodies and research institutes (e.g., among others, ISPRA, CIRBISES, CNR, CREA, AGEA), besides the national statistical one (ISTAT). Available input data and preliminary results (referred to the year 2021) will be shown and reasoned, with a special emphasis on strengths and weaknesses of the adopted procedure with respect to the continental level guidelines. Further considerations will concern the opportunity provided by the process for advancing ecosystem knowledge, experimenting additional typological and thematic accounts, and harmonizing different strategic and regulatory targets concerning biodiversity, nature and sustainable development.

Keywords:

ecosystem typification rules, multi-disciplinary approach, nature conservation and restoration

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