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The Ecosystem Services Concept in EU Policies: A Review of Regulatory Frameworks

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ABSTRACT

This contribution will present the results of a first review and preliminary analysis of policies and regulations at EU level (e.g., CAP and Cohesion Policy, including their emerging reforms) which are expected to have the greatest impact (either direct or indirect) on ecosystem services. Particular attention will be given to initiatives where the concept of ecosystem services plays an important role, such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020, including the forthcoming Green Infrastructure Strategy and the No Net Loss Initiative 2015; but also the Water Framework Directive and Renewable Energy Strategy will be focused on. Emphasis will also be placed on identifying potential synergies and trade-offs – in particular across sectors – between those regulatory frameworks. Based on a document analysis and literature review on selected regulatory frameworks we will focus on the degree of policy integration of the different ecosystem-services-related frameworks and the tensions or trade-offs between them. Finally, the role of those and other regulatory frameworks for driving ecosystem change is addressed.