

The 6th Annual International Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP) Conference held in Bali from 26-31 August 2013 focused on the practical application of the ecosystem services concept in planning, management and decision making, and the development of case studies. A number of participants shared their experience with using the TEEB findings and approach in their own projects.



**Keren Klass** is the programme coordinator for Israel's National Ecosystem Assessment (I-NEA, or Hamaarag), which she discussed in detail during a TEEB session on country studies.

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**UNEP-TEEB: How will the I-NEA make nature's values more economically visible, and why is this important?**

**Keren Klass:** There have been several economic valuation studies of ecosystem services done in Israel in recent years, but the national ecosystem assessment will be the first effort to integrate and synthesize existing data into a more complete picture of the economic value of ecosystem services in Israel. Many of our stakeholders have expressed interest in economic valuation of services, and we recognize that in decision making, having value expressed in economic terms is extremely useful, as it allows comparisons with other factors influencing policy and planning. We do also intend to emphasize other methods of valuing ecosystem services with health or social benefits as well, in order to represent a more accurate estimation of their real importance to people.

**Keren Klass: What do you see as the added value of the TEEB approach for Israel?**

**Keren Klass:** The I-NEA is not a TEEB study, but we will definitely be able to benefit from the user guidebook which addresses many of the important challenges and components present in any large-scale assessment, even if we didn't start out using the precise approach outlined for TEEB studies.

**Keren Klass: What lessons learned can you share with others interested in undertaking similar activities, especially towards a full TEEB country study?**

**Keren Klass:** Since we're far from finished with our assessment - we are only just coming to the end of our planning and design phase - I can only speak to lessons learned during the early stages of planning a national ecosystem assessment. The importance of making the project's objectives and target audiences explicit early on in the process cannot be overstated. Additionally, mapping out in advance how the stakeholders will be involved, what will be demanded of them and how they can meaningfully participate in shaping the end product will make things easier once you begin the work of recruiting and involving stakeholders.