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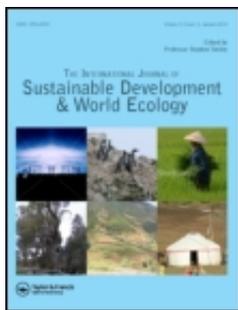
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Linking the concept of ecological footprint and valuation of ecosystem services: A case study of economic growth and natural carrying capacity

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Abstract

Human activities have become so extensive that all ecosystems on the planet have been altered to some extent. The fate of humankind will be determined by how sustainable ecosystems and the renewable resources in them are managed. The implication of this is obvious: humanity must live within nature's carrying capacity. In recent years, humans have recognised that growth of the economy depends on natural capital, and it is important that we now

recognise that we are part of an international ecological economics community, so as to better integrate the economy and ecology. However, there are few successful examples of this. The aim of this paper is to show a method for integrated analysis between economic growth and natural carrying capacity by linking the concepts of ecological footprint and valuation of ecosystem services. When applied to China for the period 1987–2003, the empirical evidence suggests that the size of the Chinese economy surpassed the carrying capacity in 1992. Perhaps, we should abandon our high-growth predilection and initiate a transition to a steady-state economy.

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Keywords

- ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT,
- ECOSYSTEM SERVICES,
- CARRYING CAPACITY,
- GDP,
- STEADY-STATE ECONOMY

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