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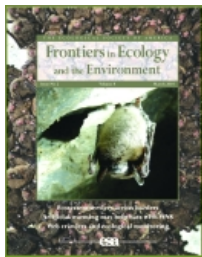
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Reviews

Ecosystem services across borders: a framework for transboundary conservation policy

Laura López-Hoffman^{1,2,3*}, Robert G Varady¹, Karl W Flessa⁴, and Patricia Balvanera³

International political borders rarely coincide with natural ecological boundaries. Because neighboring countries often share ecosystems and species, they also share ecosystem services. For example, the United States and Mexico share the *provisioning service* of groundwater provided by the All-American Canal in California; the *regulating service* of agave crop pollination by long-nosed bats; and the aesthetic value of the North American monarch butterfly, a *cultural service*. We use the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) to elucidate how drivers in one country can affect ecosystem services and human well-being in other countries. We suggest that the concept of ecosystem services, as articulated by the MA, could be used as an organizing principle for transboundary conservation, because it meets many of the criteria for successful transboundary policy. It would frame conservation in terms of mutual interests between countries, consider a diversity of stakeholders, and provide a means for linking multiple services and assessing tradeoffs between uses of services.

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