

## **Rwandan Population's Willingness to Pay Ecosystem Services Provided by Forest Ecosystems**

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### **Abstract**

Forests worldwide are known to be critically important habitats in terms of the biological diversity they contain and in terms of the ecological functions they serve. The values of forests therefore embody the values of the biological diversity they contain since it seems unlikely that the vast majority of the biological resources in question could occupy non-forest habitats. The ecological services provided by forests ecosystem are similarly many. Ecosystem services are the benefits people obtain from ecosystems, and they are often public goods. Public goods are an example of market failure, because consumers can enjoy the benefits without paying. Almost everyone agrees that ecosystem services are valuable, but there are few tools for private action that account for the public's values. Ecosystem valuation can be a difficult and controversial task, and economists have often been criticized for trying to put a "price tag" on nature. Therefore, this paper aimed at assessing Rwandan Population's Willingness to pay ecosystem services provided by Forest Ecosystems. The study was carried out in five provinces of Rwanda represented by six districts and collected data were arranged and manipulated using Microsoft Excel covered 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013. The results indicated that over 75% of the study population has knowledge of functions of forest ecosystem services and the most valuable forest ecosystem service in Rwanda is erosion control and sediment retention.

**Keywords:** *Forest; Ecosystem Services; Rwanda; Population*