



# Preparing to Use Ecosystem-Based Management Tools

## **Ecosystem-Based Management Tools Network**

Attn: Sarah Carr, PhD  
Network Coordinator  
NatureServe  
1101 Wilson Boulevard  
15th Floor  
Arlington, VA 22209  
T 703.908.1892  
F 703.908.1917  
ebmtools@natureserve.org  
www.ebmtools.org

This list of questions is designed to help potential EBM tool users figure out what they want to get out of tool use, what resources they have available to use tools, and how they will use tools within their management decision making process. Having discussions about these questions among all the relevant stakeholders prior to starting to use tools will help a project make more informed decisions about which tools to choose for their project and how they use those tools.

- What are the specific natural features in your region that your project is interested in protecting, improving, and/or restoring? Natural features can include terrestrial, freshwater, or marine species, habitats, or ecosystems. There may be a lot of important natural features, so it is best to focus on the most critical features such as the ones that are most important to the community or ecosystem, the most threatened, or the ones for which you have the best chance of influencing their status.
- What are the specific social and economic features in your region that your project is interested in protecting, improving, and/or restoring? Social and economic features can include community or cultural values, human health, the "look" of your landscape or seascape, and recreational or commercial opportunities. Again, there are probably a lot of important social and economic features, so it is best to focus on the most critical features such as the ones that are the most important to the community, the most threatened, or the ones for which you have the best chance of influencing their status.
- Why did you choose these natural, social, and economic features? For example, are they threatened by current or proposed activities, in poor condition, particularly vulnerable, rare, legally protected, or have particular social or religious importance? Are there any time limits to your ability to preserve or improve these features? For example, are there plans to develop a rare habitat?
- What staff time and computing and financial resources do you have available for using tools and acquiring training? Who would be using the tools? For example, would it be internal staff or outside consultants and would all tools be used by a central technology center or by a number of partner organizations? What is the scientific and technical background of any staff that you have available?
- What data sets do you have available that could provide input into tools? Datasets include information about the local community (including community composition and economic status) and terrestrial and marine ecosystems and species.
- Are there local experts available who could serve as community and scientific consultants on the project, including validating data sets and providing expertise where no data sets are available?

- Stakeholders include anyone who will be influence, be affected by, or be carrying out management actions. Who are the major stakeholders in your EBM project and what is their role or interest? Are the government and community organizations that make and enforce land use and natural resource management decisions currently involved in your project? If so, are they mandated to be there or there out of interest? If not, do you know why they are not participating? Is there an existing structure for involving other stakeholder groups such as local residents in making management decisions?
- What is your sense of how stakeholder groups will react to using technology tools for analyses? For example, do you anticipate that they will be receptive or apprehensive of using tools at first? Will they want to participate in actually using technology tools? Will there be problems communicating with some stakeholder groups because of language or cultural differences or physical isolation?
- How do you envision analyses or results from EBM tools being used in the management process? Do you have specific tasks for which you know that you want tools? Is your primary interest in using tools to generate defensible analyses for decision making for a specific project or incorporating them into your longer term management process?
- What is your timeframe for getting started using tools and generating analyses or results? Do you have a specific deadline that you need to meet or a limited duration of funding?