

Improving the Living Environment through Economics

RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program addresses critical environmental and policy challenges to provide actionable solutions for the cost-effective management of natural resources. Working at the intersection of ecology and economics, RFF's research and analysis support a thriving economy and society, healthy and productive natural systems, and community resilience to the impacts of climate change.



The Vital Connection between Nature and Society

The natural environment provides the goods and services that shape our world and allow human societies to thrive. For example, the health of forests has implications for water quality, agriculture, and the communities that depend on the ecosystem services of these landscapes. Freshwater systems drive the health of coastal wetlands and fisheries and can strengthen resilience against sea-level rise and extreme weather. RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program is a leader in identifying and analyzing the connections between natural systems and human needs, building on work that has informed critical policy decisions over the course of several decades.

Learn More

For more information, contact RFF Vice President for Land, Water, and Nature Ann Bartuska (bartuska@rff.org) or Program Director for Land, Water, and Nature Michael Zwirn (zwirn@rff.org).

RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program is sustained through the generosity of foundation, corporate, government, and individual donors. For more information on supporting the program, contact RFF Vice President for Development Paula Wolferseder Yabar (yabar@rff.org).

An Interdisciplinary Network of Experts

Managing these living natural resources requires the combined insights of natural scientists, social scientists, and practitioners. RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program connects PhD experts at RFF with partners across academia, government, NGOs, and the private sector to use economics to guide the stewardship of ecological resources for present and future generations.

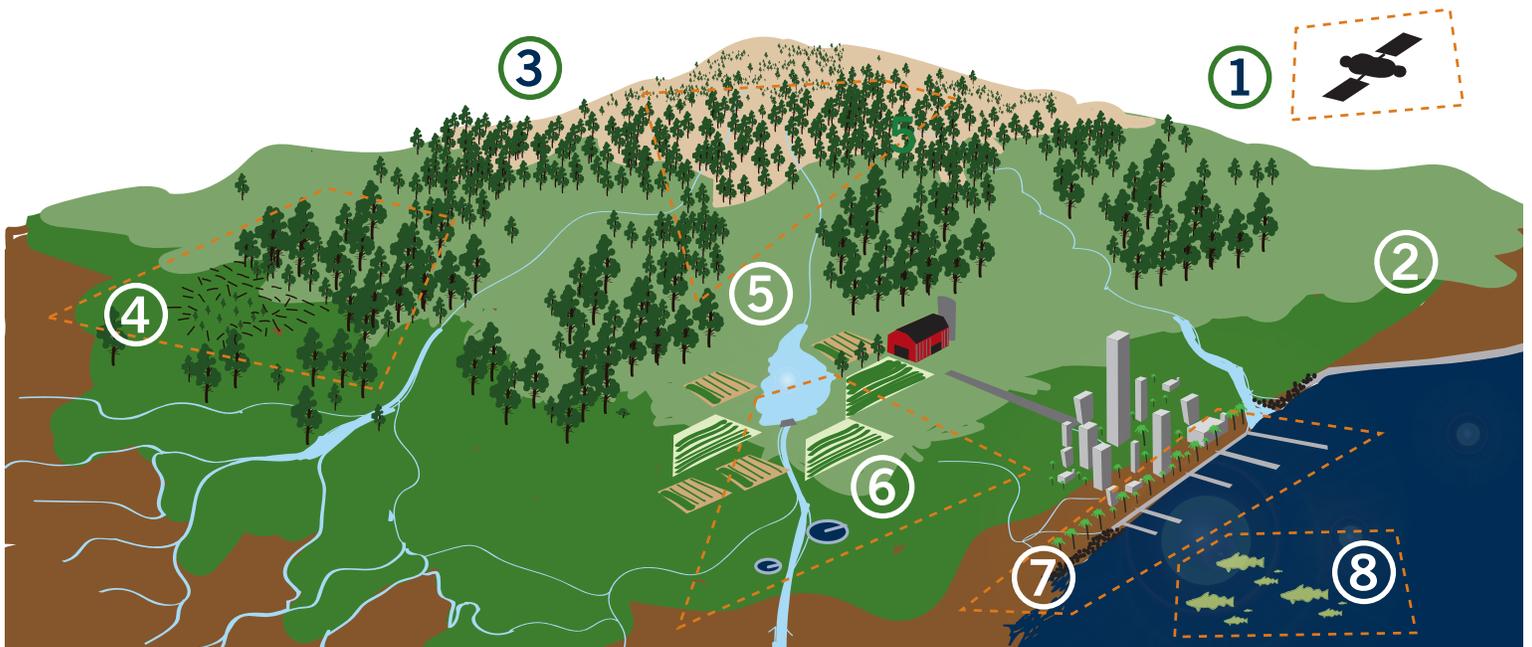
RFF's world-class research employs a wide variety of long-term ecological monitoring data—such as ground cover, species distribution, fisheries abundance, and Earth observations from satellites. Our experts synthesize and couple these ecological data with socioeconomic data and modeling to develop a holistic understanding of human and natural systems. They also incorporate sophisticated analysis of human behavior as influenced by institutions and incentives crafted by policymakers.

An Integrated Approach to Policy Solutions

RFF's Land, Water, and Nature Program delivers research and solutions on a variety of interconnected and critical policy challenges. This work is currently focused in the following areas:

- 1 Earth Observations for Policy**
Leveraging remote sensing technologies with on-site ecological monitoring tools for more informed and effective natural resource, climate, and environmental policies.
- 2 Public Lands and Waters**
Evaluating policy options regarding the future use of the nation's public lands, including national parks, national forests, and other natural areas.
- 3 Ecosystem Services and Return on Conservation Investments**
Measuring the value of the world's ecological wealth for better targeted conservation efforts.
- 4 Forest Management**
Conducting research on US forest resources, including the management of both public and private forest lands, with a focus on sustainable forest production and responding to threats such as invasive species and wildfire.

- 5 Biodiversity and Species**
Helping US policymakers develop a portfolio of cost-effective approaches to combat damaging invasive species and responsibly manage lands to support endangered native species.
- 6 Water Quality and Management**
Designing cost-effective management policies that address water quality and sustainability, as well as considering the economic and equity challenges associated with water rights in natural systems, agriculture, and cities.
- 7 Coastal Adaptation and Resilience**
Assessing how land-use decisions impact flood vulnerability and inundation risks, and how strategic investments in adaptation measures and natural infrastructure can reduce risks and improve resilience to climate change.
- 8 Fisheries**
Exploring the implications of management policies on ecosystems, local economies, and the well-being of fishing-dependent communities in the United States and developing countries, with additional work exploring the implications of seafood fraud in transnational markets.



Resources for the Future (RFF) is an independent, nonprofit research institution in Washington, DC. Its mission is to improve environmental, energy, and natural resource decisions through impartial economic research and policy engagement. RFF is committed to being the most widely trusted source of research insights and policy solutions leading to a healthy environment and a thriving economy.

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