

The Ecosystem Approach

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Ecosystem Approach

- **Convention on Biological Diversity**

“.....a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.....

..... It recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems.”

The CBD Ecosystem Approach is underpinned by the 12 “Malawi Principles” - some extracts

- objectives of management of resources are a matter of societal choice.
- a need to understand and manage the ecosystem in an economic context.
-conservation in order to maintain ecosystem services, should be a priority target....
- should seek the appropriate balance between, and integration of, conservation and use of biological diversity.

Defra's approach

www.defra.gov.uk

Securing a healthy natural environment:

An action plan for embedding an ecosystems approach



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs

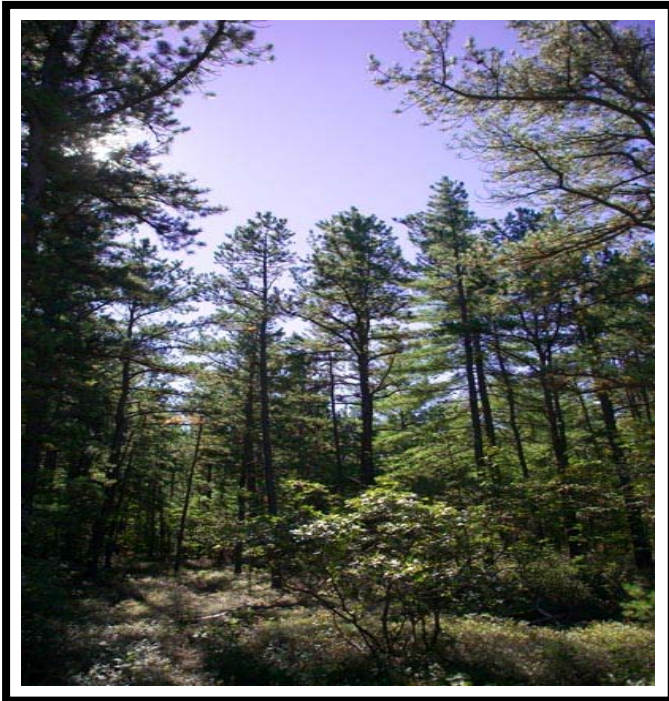
“....core lies in integrating and managing the range of demands placed on the natural environment in such a way that it can indefinitely support essential services and provide benefits for all.”
(p10)

Ecosystem Approach & Sustainable Development

- *Human economic development depends on a range of ecosystem services.*
- *Ecosystem services are supported by stocks of natural capital within ecosystems.*
- *For economic development to be sustainable, the flow of ecosystem services must be maintained, by.....*
- *....maintaining stocks of natural capital within ecosystems.*

Ecosystem Approach Stocks and Flows

capital stock of soil and trees

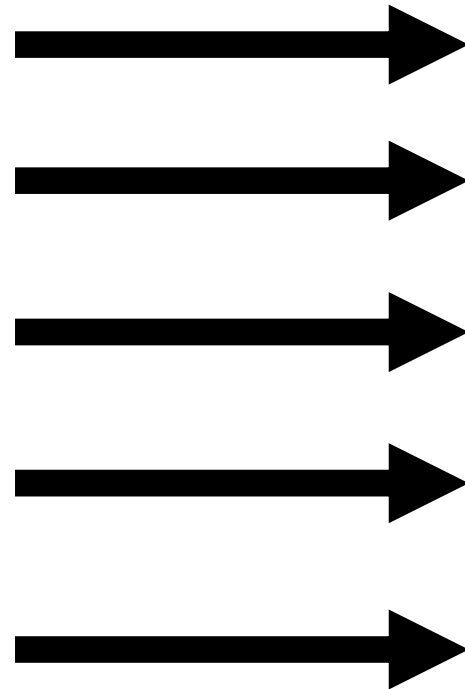


Ecosystem Approach Stocks and Flows

capital stock of soil and trees



flows from stock



benefits or **services**

timber

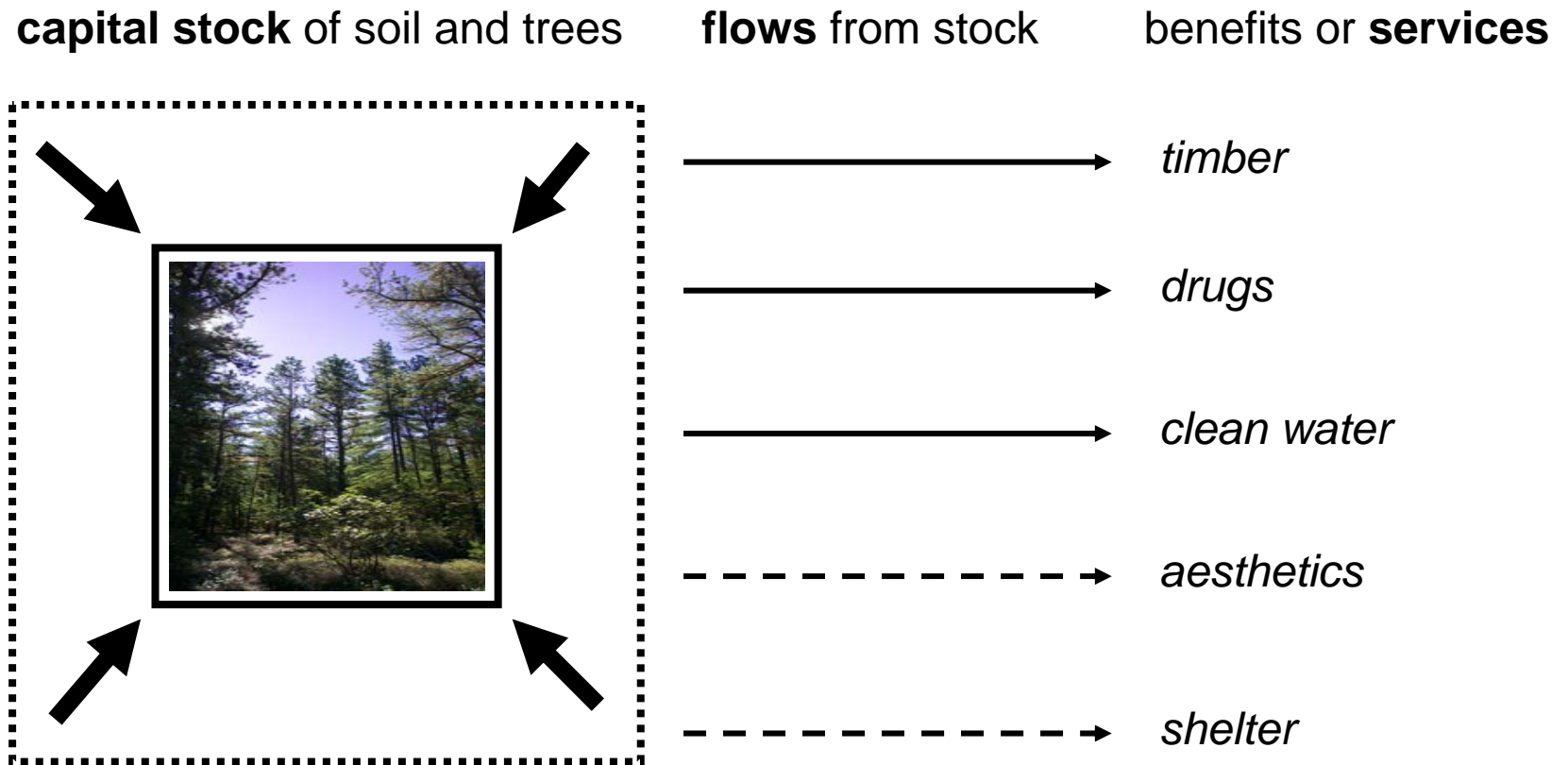
drugs

clean water

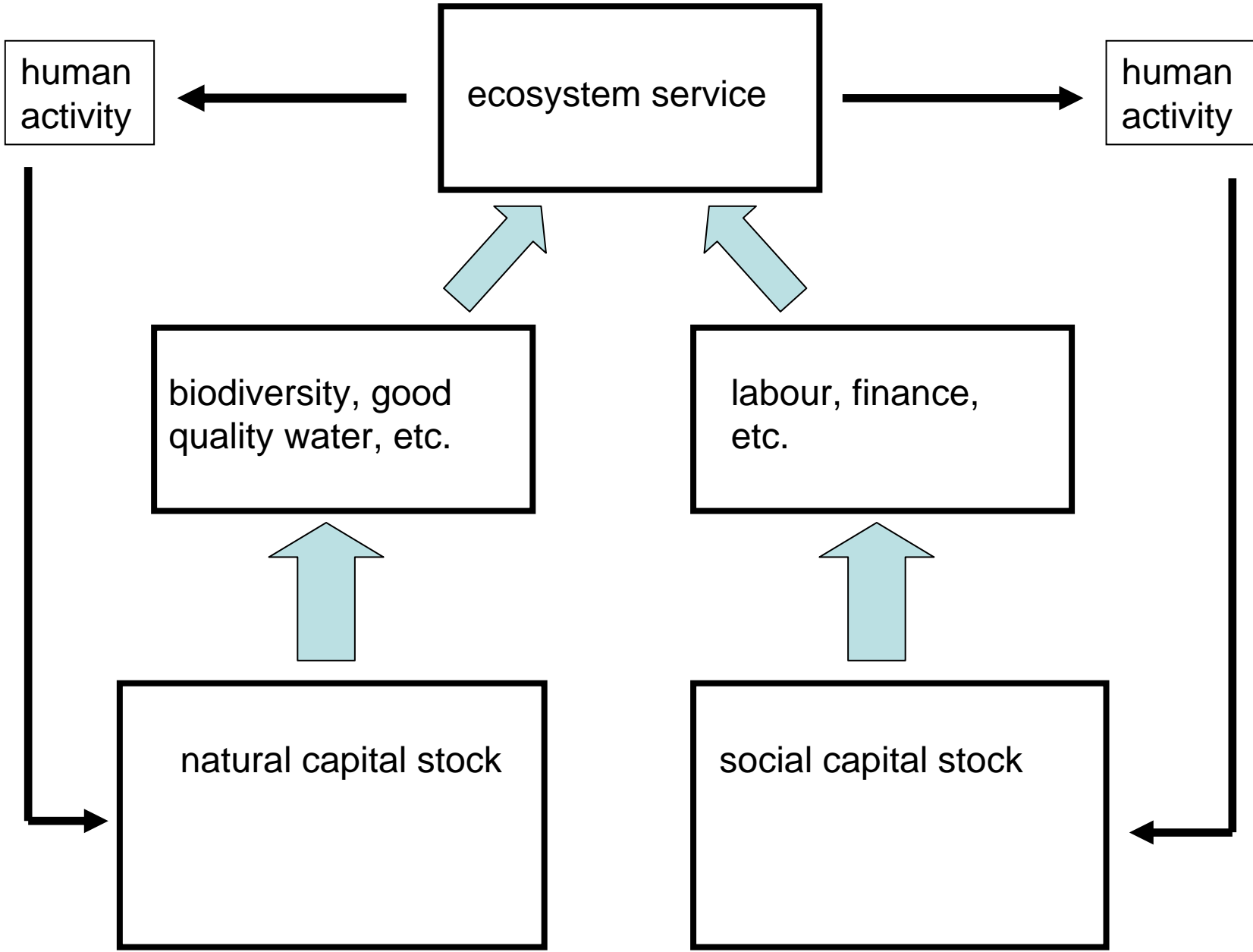
aesthetics

shelter

Ecosystem Approach Stocks and Flows



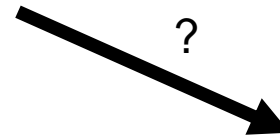
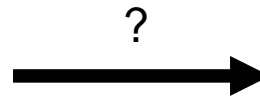
Environmental degradation changes stock and reduces flows and benefits



Ecosystem Approach & Sustainable Development

- Sustainable development requires healthy ecosystems which can continue to deliver the flows of services of benefit to society.
- Healthy ecosystems require good stocks of :
 - natural capital
 - social capital

The Ecosystem Approach in practice



Challenges to implementing the Ecosystem Approach

- Is this just eco-babble or a real paradigm shift?
(Tom Tew, FRESH 4th Sept 2009)
 - win-win solutions?
 - another policy lurch?
- Most people have never heard of ecosystems, services or the approach.
 - educational outreach ?
- Do we have the tools and the interdisciplinary teams required?
 - valuation?
 - decision support frameworks?
 - flexible and responsive policy instruments?