

1 **Title:** An Ecosystem Service-Dominant Logic? – Integrating the ecosystem service approach and  
2 the service-dominant logic.

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4 **Corresponding Author:**

5

6 Brent D. Matthies  
7 University of Helsinki  
8 P. O. Box 27  
9 Helsinki, Finland  
10 FI-00014  
11 Email: brent.matthies@helsinki.fi

12

13 **Co-Authors:**

14

15 Dalia D'Amato  
16 University of Helsinki  
17 Email: dalia.damato@helsinki.fi

18

19 Dr. Sami Berghäll  
20 University of Helsinki  
21 Email: sami.berghall@helsinki.fi

22

23 Dr. Tommi Ekholm  
24 VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland  
25 P.O. Box 1000  
26 VTT, Finland  
27 FI-02044  
28 Email: tommi.ekholm@vtt.fi

29

30 Dr. Hans Fredrik Hoen  
31 Norwegian University of Life Sciences  
32 Universitetstunet 3  
33 1430 Ås, Norway  
34 Email: hans.hoen@nmbu.no

35

36 Jani Holopainen  
37 University of Helsinki  
38 Email: jani.m.holopainen@helsinki.fi

39

40 Jaana E. Korhonen  
41 University of Helsinki  
42 Email: jaana.e.korhonen@helsinki.fi

43

44 Dr. Katja Lähtinen  
45 University of Helsinki  
46 Email: katja.lahtinen@helsinki.fi

47

48 Dr. Osmo Mattila  
49 University of Helsinki  
50 Email: osmo.mattila@helsinki.fi

51  
52 Dr. Anne Toppinen  
53 University of Helsinki  
54 Email: anne.toppinen@helsinki.fi

55  
56 Dr. Lauri Valsta  
57 University of Helsinki  
58 Email: lauri.valsta@helsinki.fi

59  
60 Dr. Lei Wang  
61 Zhejiang Agriculture and Forestry University  
62 Email: waleland@foxmail.com

63  
64 Dr. Rasoul Yousefpour  
65 University of Freiburg  
66 Tennenbacher Str. 4 (2. OG)  
67 Freiburg, Germany  
68 D-79106  
69 Email: rasoul.yousefpour@ife.uni-freiburg.de

70  
71 **Abstract:**

72  
73 Natural and business ecosystems are complex and dynamic service systems that interact through the  
74 utilization of ecosystem service offerings for human well-being. Currently, natural and business  
75 sciences have not developed a shared and common set of service-based terms or concepts for  
76 discussing ecosystem service offerings in the process of value co-creation. In this study, the  
77 ecosystem service approach was compared with marketing science's service-dominant logic. The  
78 terminology and concepts were harmonized, and the two approaches were then integrated into a  
79 service-dominant value creation (SVC) framework. The incorporation of natural ecosystems  
80 includes accounting for the flow of positive and negative impacts through associated value  
81 networks. Therefore, the term *value-in-impact* was proposed to describe these value flows. A case  
82 study of the global forest-based sector was then presented, demonstrating how to discuss current  
83 research challenges using the proposed framework. In conclusion, a shared service-dominant  
84 approach provides an opportunity for deeper inter-disciplinary discussion between natural and  
85 business sciences. This study represents a contribution towards the development of a holistic service  
86 science that includes consideration for natural ecosystems. The SVC framework also addresses  
87 many of the multidimensional challenges noted by previous sustainability frameworks.

88  
89 **Keywords**

90  
91 Service-dominant; Ecosystem service; Service science; Value creation; Ecosystem; Ecosystem  
92 service cascade

93 **1. Introduction**

94 Numerous acute global change pressures are currently being exerted on natural ecosystems  
95 (Rockström et al., 2009). These pressures originate from and are driven by the economic activities  
96 of human societies, and threaten the value co-creation processes between firms and their beneficiaries

97 (i.e., customers) (Carpenter et al., 2009). Within natural sciences, the Ecosystem Service (ES)  
98 approach has emerged to describe the benefits that humans obtain from natural and, in some cases,  
99 semi-natural ecosystems<sup>1</sup> for human well-being (de Groot et al., 2002; Fisher et al. 2009). According  
100 to this concept, natural ecosystems perform several functions that are useful to humans (e.g.,  
101 provisioning of food, biomass, regulating water flows, global and local climate, and contributing to  
102 cultural values).

103 Notwithstanding the use of the term ‘ecosystem services,’ the ES approach has still largely failed  
104 to develop into a truly service-based on the concept. The ES literature defines ‘service’ as “an  
105 ecological function or process that is considered useful to human beings” (Haines-Young and  
106 Potschin, 2010). In service and marketing sciences, the definition of ‘service’ is “the process of doing  
107 something beneficial for and in conjunction with some entity” (Vargo and Lusch, 2008a). Both of  
108 these definitions are highly complementary, and suggest that the ES approach is potentially an  
109 extension of service sciences. Berghäll et al. (2014) and Lusch and Vargo (2014) have previously  
110 identified this connection by noting the similarities between the ES approach and marketing sciences’  
111 service-dominant (SD) logic.

112 The SD logic reinterprets the process of value creation and co-creation, by shifting away from a  
113 goods-dominant (GD) (i.e., neo-classical, production-oriented) view to one based on service value  
114 creation (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). The GD logic view on value creation focuses on a firm embedding  
115 “value in ‘goods’ or ‘services,’ [and] value is ‘added’ by enhancing or increasing attributes” to the  
116 ‘good’ or ‘services’ (Vargo and Lusch, 2008a). In the GD view, value is measured in terms of nominal  
117 value exchanged (i.e., price for the ‘services’ or value-in-exchange). By contrast, the SD logic argues  
118 that value is co-created between all human actors (i.e., firms, individuals) through the value of using  
119 a ‘service’ (i.e., utilization or value-in-use) and determined individually through experience of the  
120 beneficiary (i.e., phenomenologically determined).

121 The ES approach has also sought to recognize a broader definition of value beyond only the  
122 monetary valuation of ‘goods and services’ (e.g., Polasky and Segerson, 2009; Spangenburg et al.,  
123 2014). Thus, the SD logic and ES approaches appear highly complementary; the main difference  
124 being the differing focus on service value flows. Within the ES approach, the focus is placed on flows  
125 between natural ecosystems and socio-economic networks, while the SD logic focuses largely on  
126 flows within socio-economic networks. Despite the similarities between the two approaches, the ES

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<sup>1</sup> This distinction has been made given that this study also incorporates business literature where it has become common to use the terms “ecosystem” to refer to a ‘service ecosystem’ or a ‘business ecosystem’.

127 literature often adopts a GD logic view on value creation to address service provisioning challenges.  
128 For example, ES offerings are frequently referred to as ecosystem ‘goods and services’ (e.g., Wilson  
129 and Hoehn, 2006; Müller and Burkhard, 2012). Alternatively, the lack of an ES contribution to the  
130 ongoing discourse in service sciences means that the complex socio-ecological relationship tends to  
131 become oversimplified within the SD logic (e.g., Lusch and Vargo, 2006; 2011).

132 Bridging these two bodies of literature is timely and important. A common set of terminology and  
133 concepts could facilitate a shared approach to addressing the impacts of companies on ES offerings,  
134 and improve their value co-creation processes (Whiteman et al., 2013; Waage and Kester, 2014;  
135 D’Amato et al., 2014). A shared lexicon would also facilitate the discussion about ES trade-offs and  
136 multi-level governance challenges that firms and ecosystem managers both face (Heuer, 2011;  
137 Whiteman et al., 2013).

138 The purpose of this study, therefore, is to establish a service-based understanding of value creation  
139 with respect to ES offerings. To start, a review of the SD logic and ES approaches is given in Section  
140 2, and conflicts and gaps in terminology and concepts are resolved. The two approaches are then  
141 integrated into a conceptual framework for service value flows between the economy, society, and  
142 the environment in Section 3. The proposed service-dominant value creation (SVC) framework acts  
143 as a guide for future inter-disciplinary discourse on the ES value creation processes. The  
144 multidimensional (i.e., temporal and spatial) nature of the SVC framework made it difficult to ignore  
145 the obvious connection to sustainability science (i.e., sustainable development) (e.g., Lozano, 2008).  
146 Therefore, the implications that a SD approach has for that field of study are also discussed. Also, in  
147 Section 3 the term *value-in-impact* is proposed for discussing the positive and negative ES  
148 provisioning impacts throughout business ecosystems and value networks. Finally, a case application  
149 of the SVC framework is provided for the global forest-based sector in Section 4. A perspective from  
150 this sector is highly applicable, as it offers cases of environmental self-regulation and a history of  
151 continuous engagement and integration of stakeholder groups (Aaltonen and Kujala, 2010; Prakash  
152 and Potoski, 2012; Toppinen et al., 2014).

## 153 **2. Harmonizing the Ecosystem Service and Service-Dominant Approaches**

154 By harmonizing the language used in business and natural sciences, there is an increased  
155 opportunity for collaboration and communication between those fields of study. To facilitate this  
156 process for readers unfamiliar with one or both of those approaches, a brief overview of the  
157 differences between the GD and SD logics and the ES cascade framework are provided. It is not

158 possible, however, to extensively summarize each of the approaches here. A more in-depth overview  
 159 of the SD logic is provided by Lusch and Vargo (2014). Moreover, Fisher et al. (2009) and Haines-  
 160 Young and Potschin (2010; 2011) both provide important discussions on the definition and  
 161 classification of ES. For ease of reference, all acronyms and terms that were used throughout this  
 162 article have been compiled in Tables 1 and 2 respectively.

163 **Table 1. A list of acronyms used in this article.**

Acronym	Term
CSR/CR/CS	Corporate Social Responsibility/Corporate Responsibility/Corporate Sustainability
CSV	Creating Shared Value
DPSIR	Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, Response
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Ecosystem service
GD	Goods-Dominant
GISCAME	Geographic Information System, Cellular Automation, Multi Criteria Evaluation
PES	Payments for Ecosystem Services
SD	Service-Dominant

164  
 165 **Table 2. A list of key terminology and definitions from the Ecosystem Service and Service-**  
 166 **Dominant approaches.**

Term	Definition	Source
Service	<i>From ES approach:</i> An ecological function or process that is considered useful to human beings. <i>From SD approach:</i> The application of specialized competences by one entity through deeds, processes, and performances to create benefit for the entity itself or another entity. The singular term ‘service’ is used to reflect “the process of doing something beneficial for and in conjunction with some entity”. This contrasts with the plural form ‘services’ (see next definition).	Haines-Young and Potschin, 2010; Vargo and Lusch, 2008a
Services	The “intangible output of the firm” or “intangible goods”. Commonly used in the GD logic.	Vargo and Lusch, 2008a
Service System	Dynamic and self-reconfiguring system, interacting over various different temporal and spatial scales, loosely arranged using either hard and/or soft contracts, and entailing both value co-creation and -integration by different actors and their natural environment.	Vargo and Lusch, 2011
Sustainability	“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Depending on the classification and definition, it consists of three or four dimensions: economic, environmental, social, and cultural.	WCED, 1987
Creation of Shared Value (CSV)	“Generating economic value in a way that also produces value for society by addressing its challenges... by reconceiving products and markets, redefining productivity in the value chain, and building supportive industry clusters at the company’s locations.”	Porter and Kramer, 2011
<b>Ecosystem Service Approach</b>		
Natural ecosystem	“A dynamic complex of plant, animal and microorganism communities and their nonliving environment interacting as a functional unit.”	MA, 2003
Natural capital	“The stock that yields the flow of natural resources.” We augment this definition in Section 3 to be: the stock of potential value held by natural ecosystems for human utilization.	Daly, 1994
Biological diversity (i.e., biodiversity)	The “variability among living organisms from all sources including, <i>inter alia</i> , terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.”	Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992

Ecosystem service(s)	Benefit(s) obtained by people from natural or semi-natural ecosystems that contribute to human well-being.	Fisher et al., 2009; Haines-Young and Potschin, 2010
Ecosphere	The “sum total of life on earth together with the global environment and the earth’s total resources” or “that part of our sphere in which there is life together with the living organisms it contains.”	Cole, 1958; Gillard, 1969
<b>Service-Dominant Approach</b>		
Business ecosystem	A complex network of relationships based on service flows and organizational evolution (i.e., a whole ecosystem influencing/interacting with the actors – extension to the Service System definition).	Moore, 1996; Iansiti and Levien, 2004
Operand resource	Those resources that are acted upon – e.g., wood.	Vargo and Lusch, 2004
Operant resource	Those resources that act upon other resources – e.g., knowledge and skills.	Vargo and Lusch, 2004
Resource Integration	Application of operant resources or competencies to operand resources via four resource categories: people, technology, value propositions connecting internal and external service systems, and shared information (e.g. language, laws, measures, and methods).	Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Spohrer et al., 2007
Service ecosystem	A “relatively self-contained, self-adjusting system of resource-integrating actors that are connected by shared institutional, logical, and mutual value creation through service exchange.”	Lusch and Vargo, 2014
Value network	Any purposeful group of people or organizations creating social and economic good through complex dynamic exchanges of value. Also referred to as a value constellation.	Normann and Ramirez, 1993; Allee, 2009
Value-in-exchange	“Is required for value creation” and acts to mediate and monitor value-in-use. It provides a “way of measuring relative value within a context of surrounding systems.”	Vargo et al., 2008
Value-in-use	“Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary” leading to a more holistic recognition, collection and definition of value originating from the interaction of different service systems.	Vargo and Lusch, 2006
<i>Value-in-impact</i>	<b>A spatially and temporally dynamic component embedded in value-in-use and exchange, which represents the co-creation and co-destruction of potential value (positive and negative impact) attributed by actors to how ES are managed, facilitated, and utilized by human-based service systems in the value network.</b>	<b>Presented in this study.</b>

167 The four axioms and six additional foundational premises of the SD logic (Vargo and Lusch,  
168 2004, 2008b; Lusch and Vargo, 2014) state that:

- 169 1. “Service is the fundamental basis of exchange”
  - 170 a. “Indirect exchange masks the fundamental basis of exchange”
  - 171 b. Goods are a vehicle or “distribution mechanism for service provision”
  - 172 c. “Operant resources are the fundamental source of competitive advantage”
  - 173 d. “All economies are service economies”
- 174 2. “The customer is always a co-creator of value”
  - 175 a. “The enterprise can only make value propositions”
  - 176 b. “A service-centered view is customer oriented and relational”
- 177 3. “All economic and social actors are resource integrators”
- 178 4. “Value is always uniquely and phenomenologically determined by the beneficiary”

179 These axioms contrast with the GD logic, where value-in-exchange is the basis for estimating the  
180 value of ‘goods’ or ‘services’ and value is produced by firms and brought to a market through the

181 exchange of other goods or money (Table 3) (Vargo et al., 2008). The GD logic identifies ‘final’  
 182 customers as the receivers of value, and interactions in the market occur mainly between ‘producers’  
 183 and ‘consumers’ (Lusch and Vargo, 2014). Value is embedded in a produced good, and the focus is  
 184 on the supply and demand of goods via price (Vargo and Lusch, 2011). Therefore, value is created  
 185 by firms (i.e., production) and destroyed (i.e., consumed) by the ‘consumer’ (Plé and Chumpitaz  
 186 Cáceres, 2010).

187 **Table 3. A comparison of value creation concepts from the Goods-Dominant logic and the**  
 188 **Service-Dominant logic (Adapted from Vargo et al. (2008)).**

	<b>GD Logic</b>	<b>SD Logic</b>
Value driver	Value-in-exchange	Value-in-use or value-in-context
Creator of value	Firm, often with input from firms in a supply chain	Firm, network partners, and beneficiaries*
Process of value creation	Firms embed value in “goods” or “services”, value is “added” by enhancing or increasing attributes	Firms propose value through market offerings, beneficiaries* continue value-creation process through use
Purpose of value	Increase wealth for the firm	Increase adaptability, survivability, and system well-being through service (applied knowledge and skills) of others
Measurement of value	The amount of nominal value, price received in exchange	The adaptability and survivability of the beneficiary system
Resources used	Primarily operand resources	Primarily operant resources, sometimes transferred by embedding them in operand resources (i.e., goods)
Role of firm	Produce and distribute value	Propose and co-create value, provide service
Role of goods	Units of output, operand resources are embedded with value	Vehicle for operant resources, enables access to benefits of firm competences
Role of customers	To ‘use up’ or ‘destroy’ value created by the firm	Co-create value through the integration of firm-provided resources with other private and public resources

\*Vargo et al. (2008) use ‘customers’ here, but we have changed this to beneficiaries.

189 The process of value creation and purpose of that value, in the context of the SD logic, is described  
 190 as created jointly, or co-created, by service systems either for or with beneficiary systems (Table 3)  
 191 (Vargo et al., 2008). This is done through a network constituting of interactive sets of experiences  
 192 and activities (i.e., interactions and resource integration between different individuals and firms) to  
 193 improve the beneficiaries’ well-being (Maglio and Spohrer, 2008; Spohrer et al., 2008; Grönroos,  
 194 2008). The interactions are based on voluntary mutual exchange between different service systems  
 195 (Payne et al., 2008).

196 Co-creation of potential value is accomplished via four resource categories: people, technology,  
 197 value propositions connecting internal and external service systems, and shared information (e.g.,  
 198 language, laws, measures, and methods) (Spohrer et al., 2007). Resource integration involves  
 199 applying operant resources or competencies to operand resources (Vargo and Lusch, 2004). This  
 200 network of value co-creators can be referred to as a ‘value network’ of ‘service systems’ (i.e.,

201 individuals, firms, actors) (Table 2). In the value network, there are only actor-to-actor interactions  
202 where human actors can form their own service system or contribute towards a larger multi-individual  
203 service system (i.e., employees in a firm) (Ramirez, 1999; Peppard and Ryland, 2006).

204 Furthermore, value is perceived by the beneficiary based on the processes that contribute towards  
205 the potential value of a given service. If a firm tries to maximize “the lifetime value” of its  
206 beneficiaries, then superior value propositions must be provisioned to maximize the total potential  
207 value that is co-created with them (Payne and Frow, 2005; Payne et al., 2008). Lifetime value is  
208 derivative of superior knowledge of the beneficiaries’ value creation process, which requires  
209 understanding of the structure of those processes.

210 Total potential value of a service is comprised of two components: value-in-exchange and value-  
211 in-use. These components represent value that is actualized by facilitating the service offering to the  
212 beneficiary and their subsequent utilization of it (Gummesson, 2007; Grönroos and Voima, 2013).  
213 Transfers of value are formalized in the market through value-in-exchange (i.e., exchange of money),  
214 which can exist as “multiple singular entities” throughout the value creation process (Grönroos and  
215 Voima, 2013). These exchanges mediate and monitor the value creation process that evolves within  
216 value-in-use (Grönroos, 2008). Value-in-use “is always uniquely and phenomenologically  
217 determined by the beneficiary;” making value idiosyncratically created and evaluated by the  
218 beneficiary (Vargo and Lusch, 2006; Lusch and Vargo, 2014).

219 Value-in-use is based on the collective or individual value of a beneficiary’s utilization  
220 preferences (Vargo and Lusch, 2008b). Given that human experiences can be realized over multiple  
221 temporal and spatial dimensions; the inclusion of value-in-use is an important part of determining the  
222 lifetime value of a beneficiary. Full value-in-use may only be actualized long after the value-in-  
223 exchange is fully realized or occur far away from the physical point of exchange (Payne et al., 2008;  
224 Bocken et al., 2015). Moreover, value creation is a non-linear interactive and dynamic process (Payne  
225 et al., 2008). Experiences can lead to value-in-use that is positive or negative (i.e., greater or lesser  
226 well-being) (Grönroos and Voima, 2013). Thus, value creation by one service system results in  
227 potential value that can be utilized, missed or destroyed by various other actors, processes, and  
228 resources that are part of a service system’s value network (Maglio and Spohrer, 2008; Bocken et al.,  
229 2015).

230 In the SD view, value co-destruction occurs through “interactional process between service  
231 systems that results in a decline in at least one of the systems’ well-being” (Plé and Chumpitaz  
232 Cáceres, 2010). Therefore, value destruction is a consequence of misuse of operant or operand

233 resources and not what is ‘expected’ or ‘appropriate’ according to another service system (e.g., the  
234 beneficiary system). Misuse can be accidental or intentional, and lead to adverse outcomes for some  
235 or all service systems in the value network (Plé and Chumpitaz Cáceres, 2010).

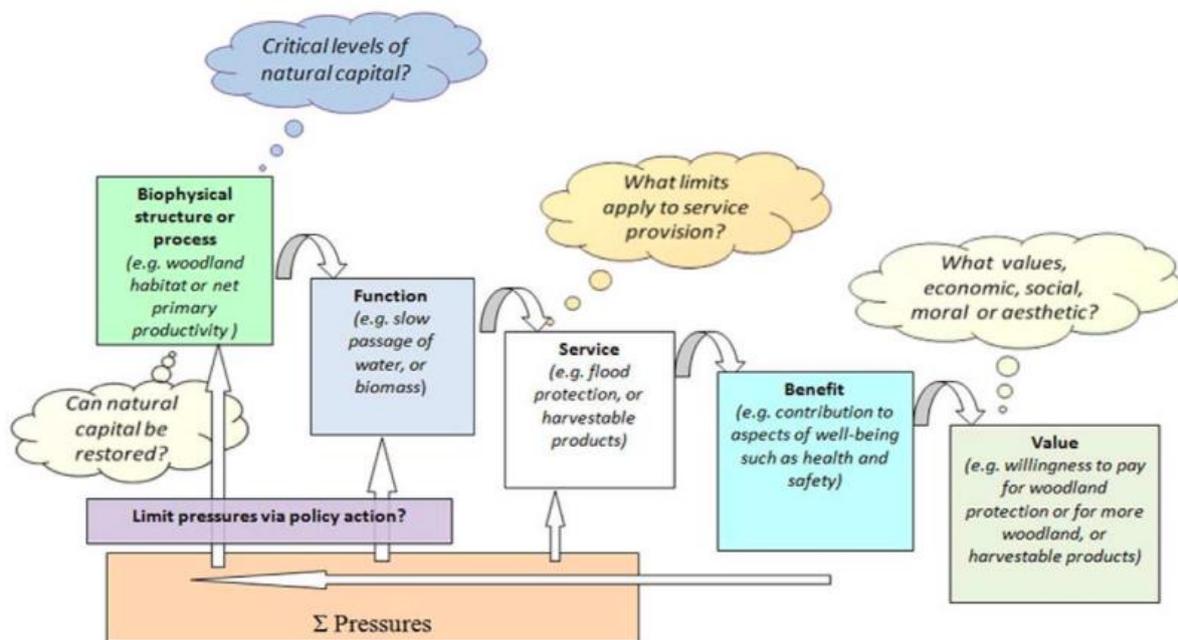
236 Many of the foundational concepts of the SD logic are found implicitly within the ES approach.  
237 Gómez-Baggethun et al., (2010) note that the terms value-in-use and value-in-exchange have a long  
238 history as part of the debate about the societal value of natural ecosystem functions. Ricardo (1871)  
239 discussed that natural ecosystem functions as ‘serviceable’ to human service-systems through value-  
240 in-use. Similar views on ecosystems’ value were also forwarded by Marx (1891), who stated that both  
241 labor and nature were the source of use value, though neither economist suggested that nature  
242 contributed to exchange value (Gómez-Baggethun et al., 2010). In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the  
243 discussion shifted to one focused on the value-in-exchange due through the emergence of the neo-  
244 classical economic paradigm. Pigou (1920) noted that “the range of our inquiry becomes restricted to  
245 that part of social welfare that can be put directly or indirectly into relation with the measuring rod of  
246 money.” This shift in the view on ES value creation severely restricted subsequent analyses to only  
247 those service offerings that had a monetary value (i.e., price) and excluded non-market service  
248 offerings (e.g., regulating ES).

249 More recently, there has been a shift in economics towards a more holistic recognition of ES  
250 offerings using monetary valuation methods (e.g., willingness-to-pay) (Gómez-Baggethun et al.,  
251 2010). The aim of monetization is to price non-market ES offerings and account for them through  
252 various schemes (e.g., payments for ecosystem services (PES)). Still, the use of these policies only  
253 expresses priced service offerings through the exchange value of the service. The recognition of ES  
254 offerings’ value only through market prices often excludes value-in-use. This restricts both the  
255 maximum value potential that is recognized by firms and other resource integrators value co-creation  
256 opportunities.

257 The holistic recognition of both value-in-use and exchange for ES offerings has important  
258 implications for the decisions by human-based service systems to utilize, miss, or destroy value  
259 throughout the network. These missed opportunities can be extended to the creation and destruction  
260 of value from natural ecosystems (i.e., trade-offs between ES offerings resulting from natural  
261 ecosystem utilization and management). By extending the SD approach to ES offerings, then ES are  
262 service offerings that form part of the value creation processes of value networks and are impacted  
263 by resource integration processes over the network. Fully understanding the impacts of resource  
264 integration on the value potential of ES offerings is important. To start, ES offerings should be

265 classified in a manner that facilitates accurate measurement and accounting of their role in value  
 266 creation.

267 The ES cascade was developed (see, Haines Young and Potschin 2010, 2011) for accounting and  
 268 classifying ES (Fig. 1). The cascade describes the integration of resources required to produce service  
 269 offerings by a given natural ecosystem (i.e., natural ecosystem functions and processes). It references  
 270 value creation through both value-in-exchange (e.g., “willingness-to-pay”) and value-in-use (e.g.,  
 271 “what values...social, moral, or aesthetic”) between natural ecosystems and beneficiaries. In the  
 272 cascade framework, the maximum potential value of ES offerings that is available to humans from  
 273 natural ecosystems is constrained based on the sum of pressures on the system. For these reasons, the  
 274 cascade has become an integrated component for various ES and environmental impact modeling  
 275 frameworks that guide natural ecosystem management decisions. These models range from spatial  
 276 impact assessment models (e.g., GISCAME – see Table 1) to the *DPSIR* (*Drivers, Pressures, State,*  
 277 *Impact, Response*) conceptual model for ecosystem management and communication (Müller and  
 278 Burkhard, 2012; Kelble et al., 2013). The exact nature of the aforementioned models is not important  
 279 for this study, but the integration of the ES cascade into planning models does indicate its operational  
 280 potential and adaptability.



281  
 282 **Fig. 1. The Ecosystem Service cascade framework adopted from Haines-Young and Potschin**  
 283 **(2010).**

285 Within the cascade, ‘function’ refers to the “capacity or capability of the ecosystem to do  
 286 something that is potentially useful to people,” indicating the role of the natural ecosystem as a service

287 system providing offerings with potential value (de Groot, 1992; de Groot et al., 2002). In this study,  
288 the term ‘function’ is used to refer to those natural ecosystem processes that lead to service offerings  
289 and well-being for human-beings<sup>2</sup>. Fisher et al. (2008; 2009) regard biophysical structures and  
290 ecological processes or functions (i.e., biocentric part of the cascade starting on the left side) to be  
291 moving from ‘intermediate services’ into ‘final services’ and their associated benefits (i.e.,  
292 anthropocentric part of the cascade starting on the right side). That progression is generally viewed  
293 as a continuum within Fig. 1. Final service offerings directly contribute to an individuals’ well-being,  
294 and ‘intermediate’ service offerings (e.g., primary productivity) enhance well-being indirectly  
295 through a ‘final’ service offering (e.g., constant stream flow) (Johnston and Russell, 2011). The  
296 cascade framework aims to remove the risk of double-counting in ES analysis by only accounting for  
297 service offerings when they are utilized by another service system (Fisher et al., 2009).

298 Having summarized the main concepts and terms, it is important to note that there are still gaps  
299 and conflicts between the SD logic and ES approaches. To address these gaps and conflicts some of  
300 the current terminology and concepts in both approaches need to be re-evaluated. Four necessary  
301 shifts were identified that are foundational to harmonizing the ES and SD logic approaches.

302 First, the SD logic makes a clear distinction between the use of the singular term ‘service’ and  
303 GD logic-based ‘services’ (Table 2). Vargo and Lusch (2008a) provide an in-depth discussion of the  
304 similarity of usage between these two terms. They define service offerings as the outcome of applying  
305 “specialized competences” or operant resources “through deeds, processes, and performances for the  
306 benefit of another entity or the entity itself” (Table 2). We believe that this is the intended definition  
307 of ecosystem ‘services’ given by Fisher et al. (2009) and applied in the various ES classification  
308 schemes. In the current ES literature, the plural of ‘service’ or ‘services’ is used interchangeably with  
309 the GD ‘services,’ but these two terms have very different meanings within the discussion on value  
310 creation. They are not interchangeable, but rather the same term for two definitions. Therefore, we  
311 adopt the singular form ‘service,’ and the plural form ‘service offerings,’ throughout the remainder  
312 of this text to avoid confusion and draw the distinction with the GD ‘services’. However, we  
313 acknowledge that the use of ‘services’ is well-established within the ES literature. Clarification of the  
314 meaning of ‘services,’ though challenging, is important and will require further efforts and discussion.

315 Second, based on the definition of service system given in Table 2 the natural environment is a  
316 contextual part of, or even a basis of, the definition of service systems (i.e., the term ‘entity’ refers to

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<sup>2</sup> Fisher et al. (2009) note that there is an important distinction between ecosystem ‘function’ (anthropocentrically derived) and ‘functioning’ (biocentrically derived). Value creation is an anthropocentric concept, which justifies our used of ‘function’ over ‘functioning’.

317 all organisms involved in the value creation process). Despite some supportive discussion, the  
318 integration of natural ecosystems as a macro service system within the value network is not a widely  
319 accepted view within the SD logic. The economy, in the hierarchy of embedded service systems, has  
320 previously been identified as the largest service system by Maglio and Spohrer (2008). We propose  
321 instead that the ecosphere is the largest service system and an actor in the value creation process that  
322 human-based service systems interact with and act upon. It would be impossible for any of the other  
323 service systems to integrate resources or co-create value without this system, and human societies  
324 and economies would not exist without the environment that they have evolved within and from. The  
325 ecosphere integrates resources based on competencies that exist through complex ecosystem  
326 functions, which lead to value propositions (i.e., ES offerings) that other service systems utilize and  
327 value.

328 Third, the use of ‘natural resources’ is currently and persistently used to refer to natural  
329 ecosystems’ service offerings in the service literature (e.g., Porter and Kramer, 2011; Grönroos and  
330 Voima, 2013). This term is largely obsolete within the ES literature. The term ‘operand resources’ is  
331 used within the SD logic to describe those ‘natural resources’ that “require some action to be  
332 performed on them to have value;” further potential value and value-in-use are created by human-  
333 based service systems integrating these operand resources (Lusch and Vargo, 2011). The reliance on  
334 further processing of the ‘natural resource’ base, with the intention to utilize potential value, is in  
335 opposition with the ecosphere being the largest macro service system. Rather than being described as  
336 ‘natural resources,’ we propose that ES offerings’ contributions to human well-being mean that they  
337 have potential value regardless of further processing (i.e., by firms or individuals). Then natural  
338 ecosystems can be viewed as actors within the value network rather than commodity repositories.  
339 Value potential that is created by natural ecosystems can then be attributed to them rather than  
340 attributed to firms and individuals who are only facilitating or utilizing those ES offerings.

341 Finally, there needs to be a clear amendment to how service offerings from natural ecosystems  
342 are described and discussed in the ES literature. The terminology ‘goods and services’ is frequently  
343 used despite the widespread use of a ‘service’ approach (e.g., Polasky and Segerson, 2009; Johnston  
344 and Russell, 2011). The lack of a clear SD approach in the discussion of ES, despite the large amount  
345 of service science literature available, impedes debate between natural and business sciences. It also  
346 inhibits the development of a holistic discourse with the ES literature regarding the service value of  
347 ES offerings. As a result, emphasis is often placed only on the exchange value of ES; even though  
348 many authors note the limitations of this approach when discussing the opportunity costs of ES  
349 provisioning (e.g., Wilson and Hoehn, 2006; Spangenberg et al., 2014). Natural ecosystems only

350 provision service offerings and not ‘goods and services,’ which act as the basis of exchange with  
351 other human-based service systems. This means that the focus in the ES literature should shift towards  
352 a holistic view on ES value creation. This viewpoint is not expressly new. The desire for a more  
353 balanced approach to estimating and describing the potential value of ES offerings has been called  
354 for and demonstrated by others (e.g., de Groot et al., 2010; Potschin and Haines-Young, 2011).

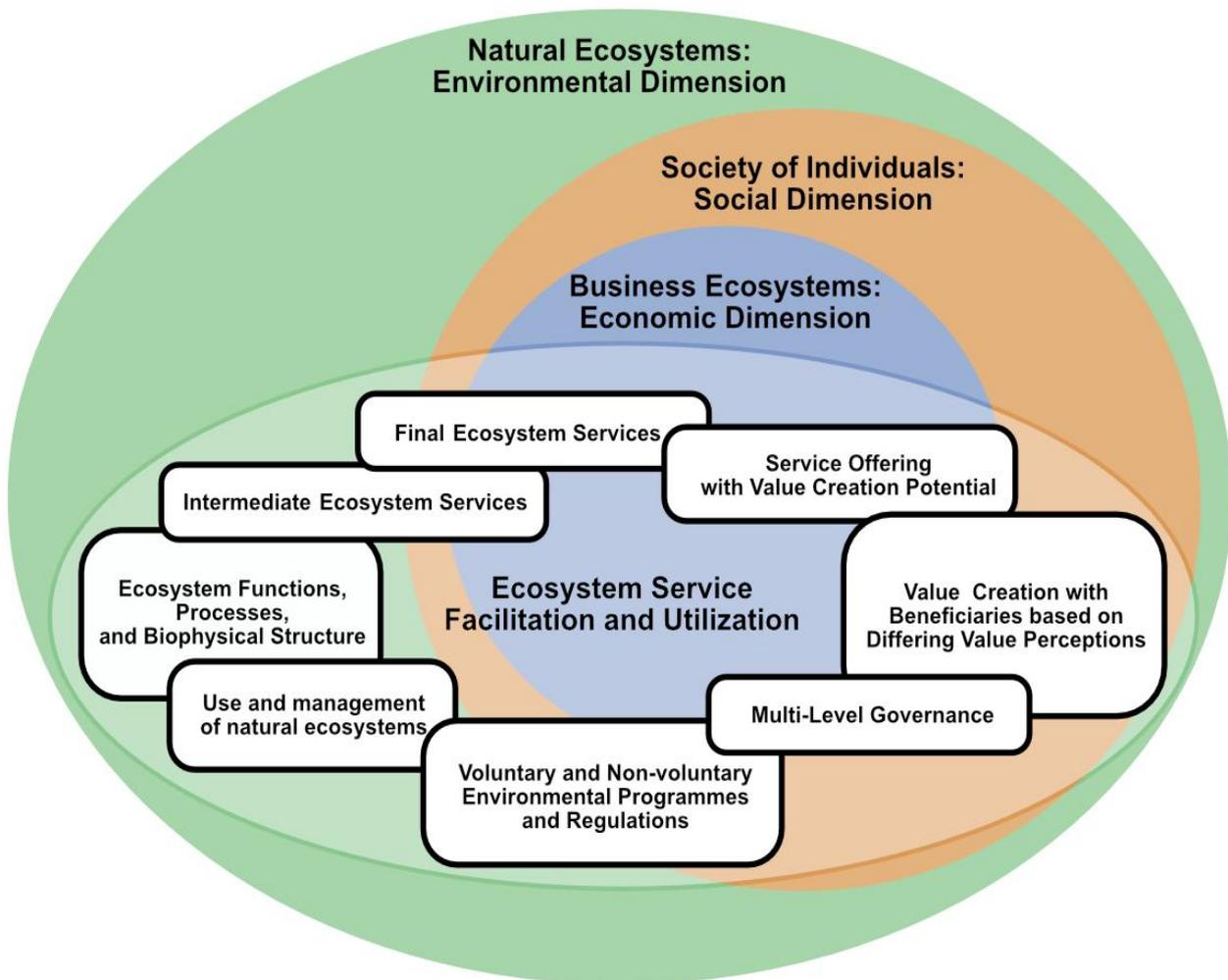
### 355 **3. Towards an integrated Service-Dominant Value Creation Framework**

356 Harmonization of the ES and SD logic terminology and concepts provides the basis for creating  
357 the SVC framework for discussing service value creation. The two approaches together consider  
358 value creation across all three macro service systems or dimensions of sustainability (i.e., economy,  
359 society, and environment). The purpose of their harmonization is, ultimately, to address the global  
360 change pressures being exerted on natural ecosystems, and the associated negative value creation  
361 (i.e., value destruction of ES through adverse trade-offs). Therefore, it is sensible to also note the  
362 main overlaps between the SVC framework and other frameworks proposed within sustainability  
363 science.

364 The ES literature describes the socio-ecological system as functioning through a complex and  
365 dynamic set of ‘demand-supply’ relationships based on non-linearities, thresholds, and the influence  
366 of external pressures (Anderies et al., 2004; Folke, 2007). Fig. 2 moves away from that ‘demand-  
367 supply’ relationship found in the ES cascade framework, towards one based on value creation within  
368 a set of dynamic and complex value networks. For example, all aspects of value creation are  
369 emphasized (i.e., use and exchange) rather than only those related to the exchange value (i.e., price)  
370 of ES offerings<sup>3</sup>. Delimiting value assessments into stated monetary preferences (e.g., willingness-  
371 to-pay) that represent total value of the services (i.e., GD logic of value) are not sufficient to  
372 comprehensively communicate about ES value-in-use. As a distinction to Haines-Young and  
373 Potschin’s (2010; 2011) ES cascade framework, a greater emphasis is placed on the value-in-use and  
374 phenomenological determination of value by beneficiaries. The SVC framework better accounts for  
375 value creation by addressing the complex value creation interactions within business ecosystems,  
376 between society and the economy, and between human-based service systems and natural ecosystems.

---

<sup>3</sup> We base this assessment on the discussion by Vargo and Lusch (2008a), who provide a detailed comparison of the terms ‘value-in-use’ and ‘utility’ from economic sciences. Those authors state that in the shift from Adam Smith’s economic philosophy (where he presented the term ‘value-in-use’) to the concept of economic science (based on embedded ‘utility’), means that “value-in-use has been dwarfed and ‘utility’ has morphed into value-in-exchange.” We do not take on this debate in this study, and instead accept Vargo and Lusch’s (2008a) assessment of the difference of these two terms in presenting our integrated approach.



378

379 **Fig. 2. A service-dominant value creation (SVC) framework for ecosystem service offerings in**  
 380 **value co-creation within the socio-ecological system.**

381 An embedded non-concentric circles approach is applied in Fig. 2 to demonstrate the dependent  
 382 relationship between the macro service systems. By placing the macro service systems of society and  
 383 economy within the environment, the reliance of human well-being and societal development are  
 384 intrinsically linked to natural ecosystems (Carter and Moir, 2012; Costanza et al., 2014). In Fig. 2,  
 385 interactions between service systems occur in a bi-directional and non-circular manner. The  
 386 overlapping ‘process’ boxes represent the flow of potential ES value through the macro service  
 387 systems (i.e., economy, society, and the environment).

388 Each of the three dimensions is interlinked through a constellation of dynamic and co-current  
 389 value networks. In each network, economic and social service systems fluidly co-create value with  
 390 each other through voluntary exchanges. Temporally (e.g., intergenerational, over time) and spatially  
 391 (e.g., between service systems, over geographical distance) dynamic interactions are accounted for

392 through the facilitation (i.e., exchange) and utilization of phenomenologically determined potential  
393 value. This flow of service offerings between the three dimensions overcomes the previous critiques  
394 of the embedded circles approach: lack of multidimensionality (i.e., temporal – intergenerational) and  
395 interconnectedness (i.e., spatial – connections between the three dimensions) (Lozano, 2008).  
396 Therefore, we consider an integrated and intergenerational perspective between the dimensions  
397 through the process of value creation.

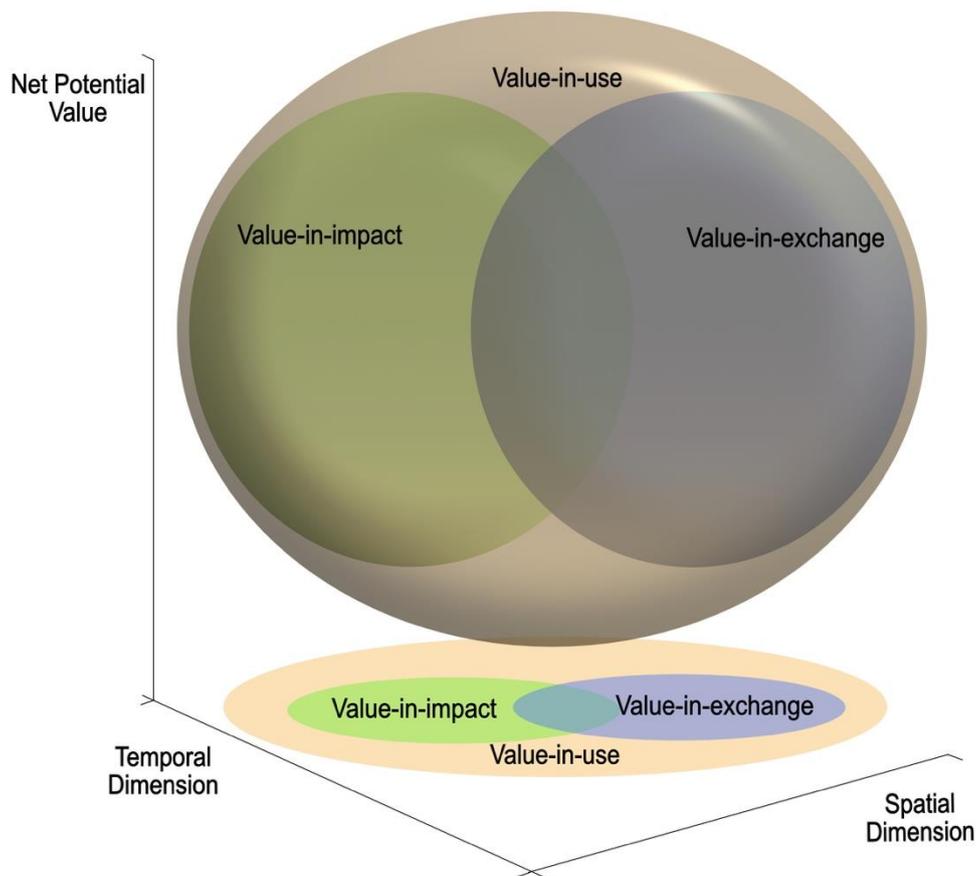
398 An individual can be both a social and economic service system during the same value creation  
399 processes, and the economy is naturally embedded in the society. Human-based service systems rely  
400 on the exploitation of natural capital for continued value creation. The ES cascade overlaps with  
401 human-based macro service systems (i.e., economy and society), and the determination of  
402 ‘intermediate’ and ‘final’ ES offerings is dependent on the level of connectivity to other service  
403 systems and utilization by the beneficiary (Turner and Daily, 2008; Fisher et al., 2009). Moving  
404 clockwise, resource integration processes are applied by other service systems to those ES; aiming to  
405 maximize value co-creation. This means that value is co-created by utilizing and managing potential  
406 value of ES offerings, and by integrating resources to create further value propositions. Therefore,  
407 human-based service systems are co-creators and co-destroyers of potential ES value through  
408 exchanges and interventions with natural ecosystems. Consequently, natural capital represents the  
409 stock of potential value held by natural ecosystems. By integrating natural ecosystems in this way,  
410 positive and negative impacts on ES value creation are accounted for the over an entire value network.

411 Service offerings then directly or indirectly benefit individuals, and a feedback of impacts on  
412 natural ecosystems occurs. These impacts can affect natural ecosystem resilience, which is an  
413 indication of their ability to continue providing further potential value (i.e., co-destruction by human-  
414 based service systems with natural ecosystems). All natural ecosystem management by human-based  
415 service systems constrains the provisioning of some ES over others; potentially resulting in adverse  
416 trade-offs (Polasky and Segerson, 2009).

417 Trade-offs have a pivotal role in value creation for both individual and total service system well-  
418 being (Carpenter et al., 2009; Howe et al., 2014). A change in the level of provisioning for one service  
419 may negatively affect the level of provisioning of another, which often occurs when human-based  
420 service systems are competing for value co-creation opportunities with natural ecosystems  
421 (Rodriguez et al., 2006; McShane et al., 2011). Trade-offs, and the associated ecological impacts, are  
422 particularly important for the management of natural ecosystems, which provision multiple ES  
423 simultaneously (Polasky and Segerson, 2009). Given that both exchange and use values are intrinsic

424 to the concept of ES, all changes to ES provisioning levels are implicitly value-laden (Brauman et al.,  
425 2007, Diaz et al., 2011).

426 Currently there are no commonly accepted terms or concepts in service science related to the  
427 identification and discussion of co-creation or co-destruction of natural ecosystem's service offerings.  
428 Consequently, the new concept of *value-in-impact* is introduced to account for and discuss their role  
429 in value creation. *Value-in-impact* is a spatially and temporally dynamic component of value-in-use  
430 and value-in-exchange, which represents the co-creation and co-destruction of potential value (i.e.,  
431 positive and negative impact) attributed by actors to how ES are managed, facilitated, and utilized by  
432 human-based service systems (Fig. 3). It represents the value potential available to and  
433 phenomenologically determined by the beneficiaries of ES offerings over the value network. Total  
434 potential value is constrained based on scarcity of ES provisioning in the socio-ecological system.  
435 One approach to addressing thresholds in the socio-ecological system is evaluating essentiality and  
436 environmental impact of a firm's offering through a sustainable development orientation  
437 (Heikkurinen and Bonnedahl, 2013; Nunes et al., 2015).



438

439 **Fig. 3. A graphical conceptualization of the *value-in-impact* concept represented as a portion**  
440 **of the value-in-use and value-in-exchange of a service offering.** *Value-in-impact* is both spatially and  
441 temporally dynamic, and can be either part of the positive or negative impacts on maximum potential value over the  
442 value network. A two-dimensional reflection of the value space is shown below to demonstrate the interdependency  
443 between the three components of value.  
444

445 In Fig. 3, the net value potential, spatial, and temporal dimensions represent the total potential  
446 and phenomenologically-determined value for a beneficiary. Knowing that total potential value is the  
447 sum of value-in-use and value-in-exchange, *value-in-impact* is a part of both use and exchange value  
448 and does not constitute the entire potential of either. Actions across the value network constrain value  
449 potential by carrying out value destruction; thereby, limiting the net potential value that is available  
450 over spatial and temporal dimensions. Value-in-use is a requirement for an exchange of value to  
451 occur, which is the basis for representing value-in-exchange non-linearly within value-in-use. The  
452 maximum and minimum of all value dimensions are undefined (i.e., they are phenomenologically  
453 determined by the beneficiary and constrained over the value network).

454 By placing *value-in-impact* in the context of ES trade-offs within the SVC framework, actions by  
455 other service systems can result in trade-offs that create or destroy value potential associated with  
456 natural capital. For example, negative value or the destruction of potential value for beneficiaries can  
457 emerge as a result of a firm's impacts on natural ecosystems. Some trade-offs, occurring over spatially  
458 and temporally diverse dimensions, may be irreversible leading directly or indirectly to adverse  
459 impacts on value flows (Howe et al., 2014). The resulting impacts could be an aggregated loss in  
460 value for some beneficiaries or an entire set of beneficiary service systems. The amount of net  
461 potential value still available from utilizing ES offerings represents the impact on value co-creation  
462 by a service system's resource integration processes. These impacts can affect both the lifetime value  
463 of and potential value for a firm's beneficiaries. This provides a more inclusive approach to studying  
464 the relationship between the damage, replacement and avoidance costs noted by Spangenberg et al.  
465 (2014), and their impact on human well-being.

466 *Value-in-impact* can facilitate understanding of how to maximize the potential societal value,  
467 associated with the facilitation and utilization of ES, over the value network (i.e., the economy is  
468 considered to be one aspect of societal organization). Discussing and identifying the maximum  
469 potential societal value associated with *value-in-impact* requires knowledge of ES indicators, impacts  
470 of processing, and trade-offs of ES offerings throughout the value network. There are already various  
471 different decision-making methods that can be used to account for these impacts with differing  
472 outcomes (e.g., Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)). The purpose of *value-in-impact* is not to  
473 create another method or replace existing methods. Rather, it provides service sciences with a

474 contextually appropriate term to discuss ES trade-offs and utilization impacts linked to beneficiaries'  
475 value creation processes.

476 A considerable amount of research on how beneficiaries' value structures are related to their  
477 views on ecological impacts has already been conducted (Stern et al., 1993; Schwartz, 1994; Stern  
478 and Dietz, 1994). The manner in which impacts on ES service provisioning are perceived by  
479 individuals, either more or less positively or negatively, is connected to the value orientations of their  
480 environmental concern: biocentrism, humanism altruism<sup>4</sup>, and egoism. This is a reflection of how  
481 adverse impacts on natural ecosystems, resulting from choices by other service systems within the  
482 value network, ultimately affect those individuals both directly and indirectly (Dietz et al., 2009). The  
483 three dimensional aspect of environmental concern differs between beneficiaries. That difference  
484 ultimately results in diversity in the desirable end states of or behaviors towards value creation  
485 (preferences) and service provisioning. In-order to prevent value destruction, firms need to better  
486 understand how individual beneficiaries' value creation processes are structured.

487 As noted earlier, *value-in-impact* is a temporally dynamic part of value and value structures are  
488 not fixed. Managing the change in lifetime value that emerges due to changes in an individual's  
489 preferences is a value creation risk for firms. Increased awareness of ES impacts for a given service  
490 offering means that *value-in-impact* could form an increasing share of the value creation opportunities  
491 between a beneficiary and other service systems (Dietz et al., 2005). As a result, the shifting value  
492 orientations of beneficiaries are important and should be recognized; something that is increasingly  
493 acknowledged by many firms (The Economist, 2015).

494 Within Fig. 2, trade-offs between different ES and impacts are considered by the connection of  
495 service systems at multiple levels of governance. Multi-level governance interventions aim to address  
496 value destruction and alleviate pressures from managing the provisioning ES offerings. The  
497 governance element is a key component of the ES cascade and earlier ES frameworks (e.g., Turner  
498 and Daily, 2008; Polasky and Segerson, 2009). Policies regarding environmental programs and  
499 regulations, voluntary or mandatory, should act to dictate a safe minimum level of service  
500 provisioning required throughout the value network (Segerson, 2013). Carbon emission controls via  
501 taxes or cap-and-trade, obligatory resource management laws, and corporate sustainability reporting  
502 are a few examples of possible instruments (Gray, 2010; Prakash and Potoski, 2012; Segerson, 2013).  
503 Policies reflect use (e.g., corporate sustainability disclosure based on GRI standards) or exchange

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<sup>4</sup> Altruism is defined by Dietz et al. (2009) as the value of others, including humans and other ecosystems/species. Human altruism can also be referred to as social altruism and environmental altruism can also be referred to as biocentrism (Dietz et al., 2009).

504 (e.g., PES) values attributed to ES (Matthies et al., 2016). Policy makers must evaluate the minimum  
505 service provisioning levels required to maximize value over all of the individual value chains that  
506 constitute the value network (Balmford et al., 2011). A holistic integration of the SD logic in the ES  
507 approach provides for the inclusion of all social and ecological actors to be considered as endogenous  
508 components of the value creation process (Vargo et al., 2008).

#### 509 **4. Applications of the SVC framework to the global forest-based sector**

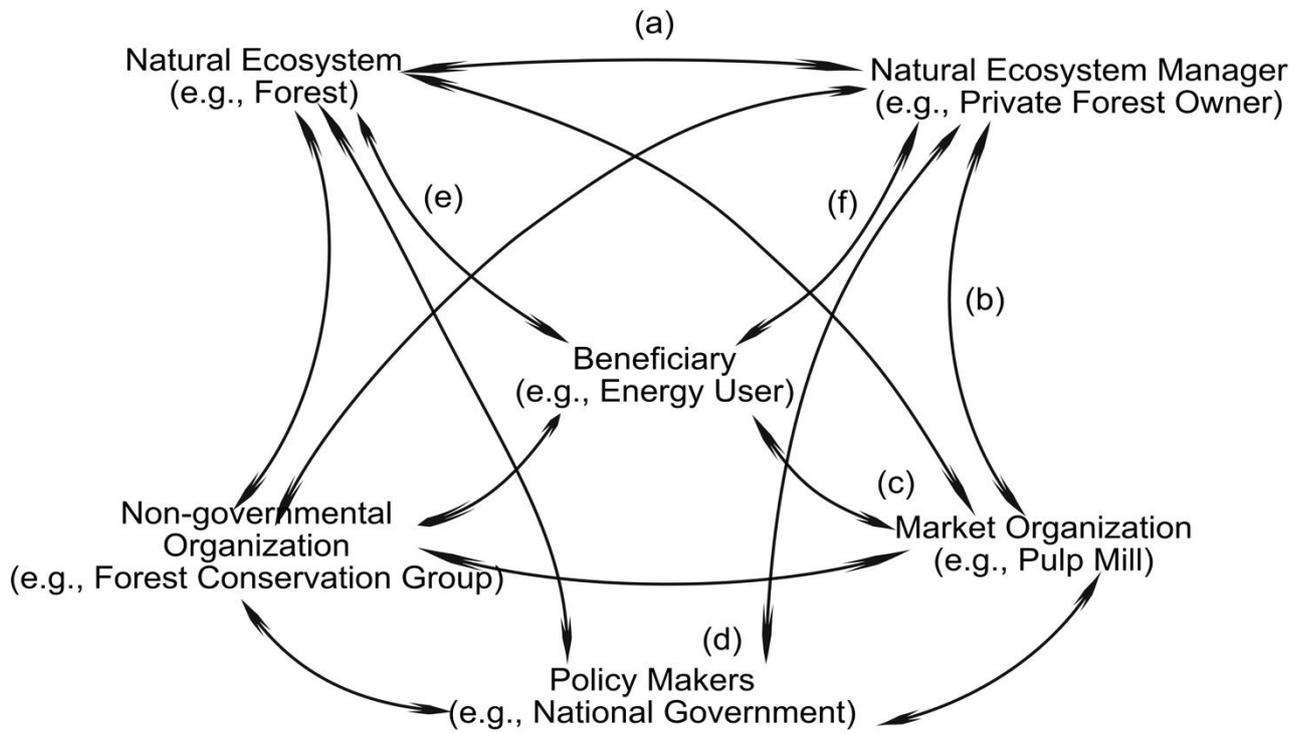
510 We now provide a case application of the SVC framework, and associated shifts in terminology,  
511 for the global forest-based sector. Although we highlight forestry, the concepts presented in this study  
512 are likely to be applicable across a wide range of sectors reliant on interactions with the natural  
513 environment.

514 The global forest-based sector (e.g., forestry producing biomass – e.g., round wood – and  
515 industries processing harvested biomass – e.g., into pulp and paper or dimension lumber) faces  
516 numerous obstacles in accounting for impacts on forested ecosystems. The service systems or actors  
517 involved in value co-creation are both direct (e.g., foragers, recreationalists) and indirect beneficiaries  
518 (e.g., multinational corporations processing pulp and paper for individual utilization). Many strategic  
519 shifts are currently occurring due to societal (e.g., urbanization, technology) and policy changes (e.g.,  
520 sustainable forest management certification) that have had important implications on the types and  
521 volume of ES available from forested ecosystems (Fisher et al, 2008). These factors, along with the  
522 wide range of developmental and sociological contexts that the sector operates in, makes the  
523 associated value networks dynamic, complex and increasingly service oriented (Toppinen et al.,  
524 2013).

525 Arnold (2015) notes that by evaluating all of the stakeholders in the value network, co-creation  
526 processes can be integrated throughout the entire value chain to “minimize negative social and  
527 ecological impacts” or *value-in-impact*. Fig. 4 gives a graphical example of a forest-based value  
528 network map. It includes actors spanning the environment, society, and the economy, which interact  
529 over time and space to co-create value. Below the figure the interactions are discussed using the  
530 previously discussed terms and concepts.

531 Starting at the forested landscape level, ecosystem management with competing objectives can  
532 lead to adverse trade-offs between ES offerings. Depending upon the value structure of the  
533 beneficiaries and their understanding of the resulting trade-offs, the potential value available to them  
534 may also be affected. For those individuals who manage or use the forest directly (e.g., private forest

535 owners), their highly variable ownership objectives, values, and attitudes can have a significant  
 536 impact on the provisioning of different ES and associated value creation opportunities (e.g., Wiersum  
 537 et al., 2005; Häyriinen et al. 2014).



- (a) An ecosystem manager’s objectives act to support or constrain the provisioning of ES offerings from the natural ecosystem. Managers can both co-create value with the ecosystem directly or utilize the ES offerings to co-create value within the value network with other service systems. Therefore, they can be both a beneficiary and a resource integrator.
- (b) Exchanges between the ecosystem manager and the firm. Value is co-created and potential value of ES offerings is facilitated to the firm. Firms apply operant resources to the operand resources with the aim to maximize the lifetime value of the beneficiary. Firm’s resource integration processes affect the positive and negative impacts on natural ecosystems, and the potential for value destruction results from those actions.
- (c) Exchange between the firm and beneficiaries is a value co-creation opportunity. The beneficiary system utilizes the potential value of the service offering. This includes both the aspects of the potential value associated with ES and those associated with the application of operant resources by the firm. The aspects associated with the value of ES can be viewed as the value-in-impact component. The destruction of potential value by the firm, through their impact on natural ecosystems, is transferred to the beneficiary.
- (d) Policy makers are one service system that can determine if governance changes are need to limit value destruction with the macro service system (i.e., economy). Some aims of improved governance are the reduction in trade-offs from natural ecosystem management decisions and the communication of impacts to beneficiaries.
- (e) Interactions between beneficiaries and natural ecosystems can result in direct exchanges of ES between the two service systems.
- (f) The beneficiary and the natural ecosystem manager can be the same actor and service system, which demonstrates the non-linear and dynamic nature of the value network.

538 **Fig. 4. An example of a value network map for the global forest-based sector explained using**  
 539 **service-based terminology and concepts.**

540 For example, emphasis on economic management objectives can have a negative impact on the  
 541 provisioning of ES related to biodiversity or climate change mitigation (Bonan, 2008; Yousefpour  
 542 and Hanewinkel, 2009). This can reduce the value potential available for recreational use of forests

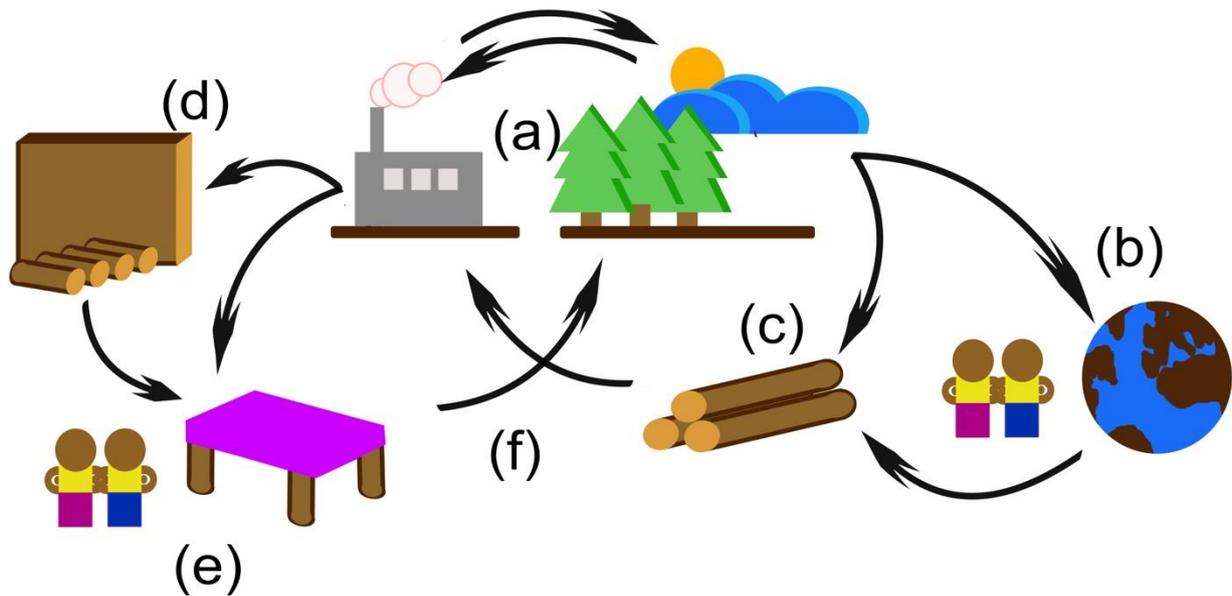
543 or culturally important landscapes, of which the same managers may also be beneficiaries (Pröbstl et  
544 al., 2010; Lähäinen and Myllyviita, 2015). Impacts and trade-offs are then transferred further  
545 throughout the value network. As a consequence, the increasing societal demands for greater  
546 accountability and protection of forest ES offerings are a fundamental challenge (Lähäinen et al.,  
547 2014).

548 Managing the positive and negative impacts of land-use is increasingly complex for all human-  
549 based service systems (e.g., individuals, firms). The value-in-use of provisioning of climatic benefits  
550 might be experienced by beneficiaries well into the future, providing a large lifetime value for the  
551 firm, but only providing a minimal value-in-exchange currently. Also, the purchase of ES offerings  
552 in one country can lead to negative value realization for local communities due to losses in livelihood  
553 opportunities. Nevertheless, it may also lead to value creation opportunities when those service  
554 offerings are utilized and exchanged with beneficiaries in another country. Consequently, spatial and  
555 temporal aspects are important considerations. The breadth of these challenges demonstrates the  
556 importance of a comprehensive view on value creation to allow the firm to better manage  
557 opportunities in their value network.

558 In Fig. 5, one portion of the value network was isolated in a highly simplified example of a  
559 wooden table. The natural ecosystem (forest) provides intermediate ES offerings of climate regulation  
560 through the (a) sequestration and storage of carbon away from the atmosphere. This service is based  
561 on the functions and processes of the natural ecosystem, which are (b) utilized by firms, individuals,  
562 and humanity to improve well-being and allow for the continuation of other service systems (i.e., the  
563 economy, society). When biomass is removed from the natural ecosystem, the (c) regulating service  
564 (e.g., stored carbon) is embedded within the operand resource (i.e., timber)<sup>5</sup>. The timber acts as a  
565 vehicle (i.e., distribution mechanism), but has no value alone without a use by a beneficiary. The firm  
566 or resource integrator applies knowledge and skills to (d) embed further value potential in the ‘good’  
567 (table) for the beneficiary. The firm also acts as a value co-creator (e) by facilitating the use of wood  
568 through: the exchange of the table and customer interactions (i.e., value-in-exchange), interactions  
569 with the beneficiary through table assembly support, climate regulation service offerings (e.g., carbon  
570 storage, substitution effects), and all current and future use value of the table for the family (e.g., for  
571 eating, design, as a gathering point for meals).

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<sup>5</sup> We acknowledge that this is a gross simplification of carbon accounting in forest management. However, for the sake of the example we exclude further climatic and accounting interactions.



572  
 573 **Fig. 5. A simplified diagram of a harmonized service-dominant approach to ecosystem service**  
 574 **offerings.**

575 The firm affects the total potential value that can be co-created by managing the environmental  
 576 impacts of their processes (i.e., *value-in-impact*). The type of material that is processed (e.g., wood  
 577 versus steel), its associated ecosystem management (e.g., sustainable management of the forest), and  
 578 the firm’s greenhouse gas emissions are all a part of the impact on net potential value. The flow of  
 579 and trade-offs between ES offerings can then be addressed (f) by beneficiaries making alternative  
 580 value propositions (e.g., shifting to value networks where sustainably managed ecosystems are  
 581 ensured through certification).

582 The challenge in accounting for and communicating these impacts highlights the importance of  
 583 multi-level governance. Its role is to provide a means of communicating the impacts to beneficiaries  
 584 who phenomenologically determine the net positive or negative potential value that they perceive for  
 585 a given service offering. Beneficiaries then provide feedback through exchanges with other service  
 586 systems, and support efforts to enforce changes in the governance of interactions between natural  
 587 ecosystems and other service systems.

588 One effort to communicate and regulate impacts, and address the resulting trade-offs is through  
 589 forest management certification (e.g., Forest Stewardship Council and Programme for Endorsement  
 590 of Forest Certification). Certification is an example of market-based private governance that aims to  
 591 reduce value destruction by ensuring the same ecological management standards across globalized  
 592 value networks (Humphreys, 2006; Cashore et al., 2007). Evidence suggests that some beneficiaries  
 593 are willing to pay ‘premium profits’ or price premiums for the assurances of certification (Russo and

594 Fouts, 1997; Pitelis, 2009). Premiums are realized through value-in-exchange and -use, and can be  
595 an important component in building a competitive advantage (York, 2009; Cai and Aguilar, 2013).  
596 Thus, value creation extends beyond the ‘price effect’ to include use value. This value-in-use is  
597 realized by choosing a service with a relatively higher net *value-in-impact* than alternatives offer  
598 (Toppinen et al., 2014).

599 Accounting and disclosure of the environmental impacts by firms is another means of providing  
600 beneficiaries with knowledge, which can affect their perception value creation opportunities. This  
601 phenomenological determination of value includes the total net potential value associated with the  
602 *value-in-impact*. Most of the current tools used to account for and report impacts require some form  
603 of qualitative and quantitative indicators of economic or social and environmental performance (EC,  
604 2013). Voluntary guidelines for stakeholder communication and sustainability disclosure exist (e.g.,  
605 Account Ability, 2011; GRI, 2015, ISO 26000), which can be important tools to monitor the  
606 sustainability of the business processes. Strategic benefits of reporting include: enhancing business  
607 opportunities, acquiring responsibility-driven customers and financiers, managing risks with a social  
608 license to operate, and improving a firm’s reputation (Li and Toppinen, 2011; Lozano and Huisingh,  
609 2011).

610 These strategic actions aim to build up a firms’ sustainable competitive advantage and are based  
611 on the value co-creation organizational competencies (i.e., “organizational capabilities necessary to  
612 execute S-D logic in practice”) noted by Karpen et al. (2011). Better consideration for communication  
613 about ES offerings and value co-creation with a firm’s stakeholders and beneficiaries has been  
614 suggested to contribute towards increased overall stakeholder value and to build a basis for a  
615 sustainable competitive advantage (Borck and Coglianesse, 2009; Porter and Kramer, 2011; Karpen  
616 et al., 2011). Firms that shift towards a holistic (non-linear) SD approach could benefit from the  
617 complementarity of holistic service thinking and sustainability. Skálén and Edvardsson (2015) and  
618 Pinho et al. (2014) provide two examples of research related to switching from a GD to SD logic  
619 within a firm and within a complex value network respectively.

## 620 **5. Discussion**

621 Both the ES and SD logic approaches aim to enhance the general understanding of what a service  
622 is and how service value is created. These complimentary approaches have been partially harmonized  
623 in this study to address oversimplification of natural ecosystems in service sciences and encourage  
624 interdisciplinary discussion on ES value creation. A harmonized approach should better facilitate

625 interdisciplinary research between natural and business sciences. It should also clarify the service  
626 orientation of the ES approach. Many of the large gaps between the ES and SD logic approaches have  
627 now been addressed, but there is still a need for further research.

628 For example, harmonization of existing ES classification(s) (e.g., the Common International  
629 Classification of Ecosystem Services (CICES)) with the SD logic would be an important starting  
630 point. Other areas include the service science definitions of ‘service’ or the role of resource integrators  
631 (e.g., Vargo and Lusch, 2008a; Edvardsson et al., 2014). Changing all terms in ES and SD research  
632 was deemed beyond the scope of this study. However, small semantic changes can be made by other  
633 authors in an effort to achieve an appropriate lexicon for discussing ES (Matthies et al., 2015).

634 Shifts in terminology will be challenging and require input from both business and natural  
635 sciences. This is due to the complexity of natural ecosystems, and their differences when compared  
636 other service systems. For example, the term ‘offering’ still represents the proposition of value based  
637 on intent. This is suitable if service offerings from natural ecosystems are regarded as ‘natural  
638 resources’ or they are otherwise ignored. However, the ecosphere, as the largest service system, does  
639 not intend to provide other service systems with value propositions. Also, the ecosphere is not bound  
640 by the same institutional constraints (i.e., normative, regulative, cognitive) as human-based service  
641 systems. It is rather humans managing and utilizing the potential value provided by natural  
642 ecosystems that drive the value co-creation processes with natural ecosystems. This brief example  
643 suggests that not all service systems are governed by the same logics of service value co-creation,  
644 and a more environmentally inclusive conceptualization may be necessary.

645 In order to achieve balanced input from many disciplines, it will also be necessary to address the  
646 connections between this research and other existing approaches. The SD approach to value creation  
647 shares many similarities with the concept of Creating Shared Value (CSV), Corporate Sustainability  
648 (CS), and other similar fields of study (Porter and Kramer, 2011; Amini and Bienstock, 2014). In  
649 accounting for ES trade-offs and the integration of the firm-wide impacts of their utilization, some of  
650 the limitations of the CSV approach noted by Crane et al. (2014) have been addressed in this study.  
651 By not specifically integrating and discussing those concepts, this article did not mean to challenge  
652 or ignore them. Rather the aim of this study was to specifically harmonize the ES and SD approaches.

## 653 **6. Conclusions**

654 In summary, the authors of this article call for the current SD logic to consider the interrelated  
655 system of reciprocal service provisioning between natural ecosystems and human-based service

656 systems. The article also reveals that there are individuals within the ES community who both  
 657 understand the evolving SD logic and aim to join the discourse. Table 4 synthesizes the changes that  
 658 were identified in this article for achieving a harmonized service-dominant approach.

659 **Table 4. A summary of the suggested terminological and conceptual adjustments to create a**  
 660 **harmonized service-dominant approach.**

Adjustment of...	Current approach	Proposed Integrated approach
Ecosystem Service	‘Ecosystem goods and services are the basis of exchange’	Ecosystem service offerings are the basis of exchange, where firms/individuals co-create value with natural ecosystems.
	‘Value for ecosystem service offerings is determined through value-in-exchange’	Value for ecosystem service offerings is the total potential value, exchange, use, and impact value, perceived and realized by each service system through voluntary exchanges.
Natural Capital	‘The stock that yields the flow of natural resources.’	‘The stock of potential value held by natural ecosystems for human utilization.’
Service-Dominant Logic	‘The largest service system is the global economy’	The ecosphere is the largest service system and an actor in the value creation process that human service systems interact with and act upon
	‘Natural resources are operand resources to be integrated by service systems’	Natural ecosystems provide service offerings with potential value that are utilized or facilitated by other human-based service systems.
	‘Service systems integrate natural resources’	Service systems realize and utilize, create further value from, and/or destroy the potential value that is created by natural ecosystems.
Value Network	‘Any purposeful group of people or organizations creating social and economic good through complex dynamic exchanges of value.’	‘Any purposeful group of people, organizations, or natural ecosystems that create benefit for human well-being through complex dynamic exchanges of value.’
Both approaches	N/A	<i>Value-in-impact</i> as a conceptual tool for discussing the positive and negative ES provisioning impacts throughout the value creation process

661

662 There are numerous benefits of developing a multidisciplinary set of terms and concepts to  
 663 address ES value creation. The most obvious are the inter-disciplinary applications within the two  
 664 respective fields of study. The interaction between natural and business ecosystems is indissoluble,  
 665 and should be a vital component of any theory regarding the facilitation, utilization, and provisioning  
 666 of value through service offerings.

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