

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES OF THE ATLANTIC FOREST

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This study assesses opportunities for systematic conservation planning to guide conservation initiatives that focus on ecosystem services in Brazil. Two of the world's 15 largest urban areas, Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, are located within the Atlantic Forest - among the most biodiverse and threatened forests in the world. While population pressure and increasing resource use leads to the destruction of the Atlantic forest, human-well being is dependent on healthy ecosystems and the provision of ecosystem services (i.e. all benefits provided to humans by ecosystems). Systematic conservation planning, provides insight into where, how and when limited resources should be allocated to maximize the achievement of defined goals (such as the protection of biodiversity or water provision). We review the literature relating to ecosystem service provision in the Atlantic Forest to assess the current state of knowledge on their distribution. We then map various ecosystem services in the Atlantic forest and assess the synergies and trade-offs between the allocation of funds to protect each service individually. Our study provides insight into improving human well-being within and outside cities while increasing biodiversity conservation.