

National Ecosystem Services Partnership

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**PARTNERSHIP DEMOGRAPHICS
&
SUMMARY OF SURVEY**

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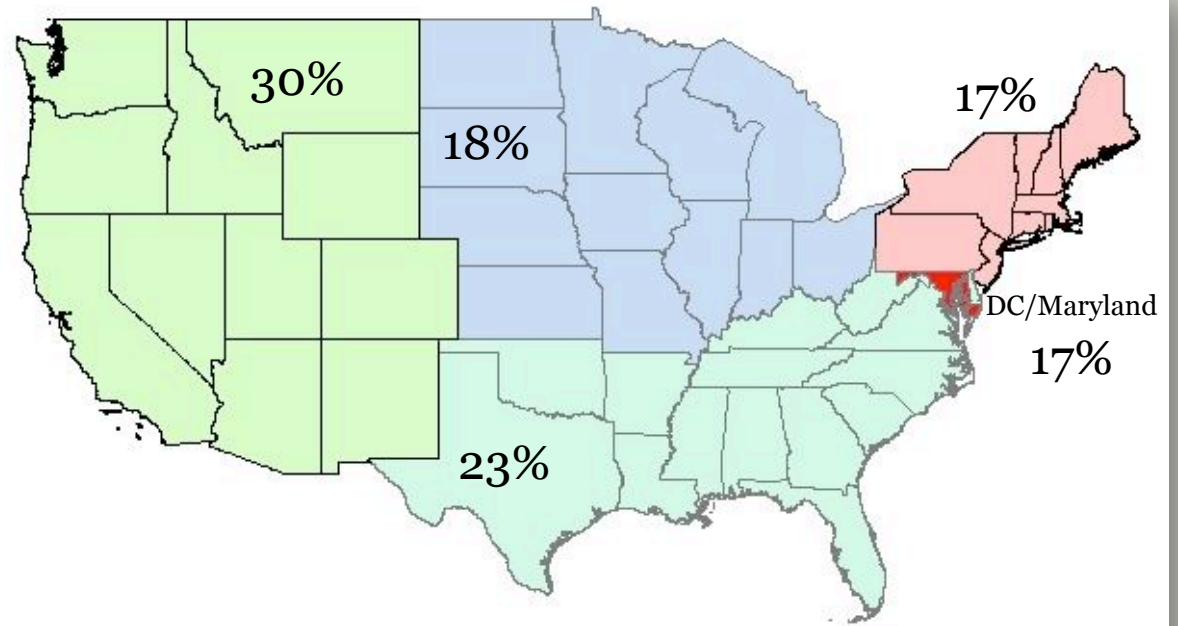
Partnership Demographics

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- **235** interested parties

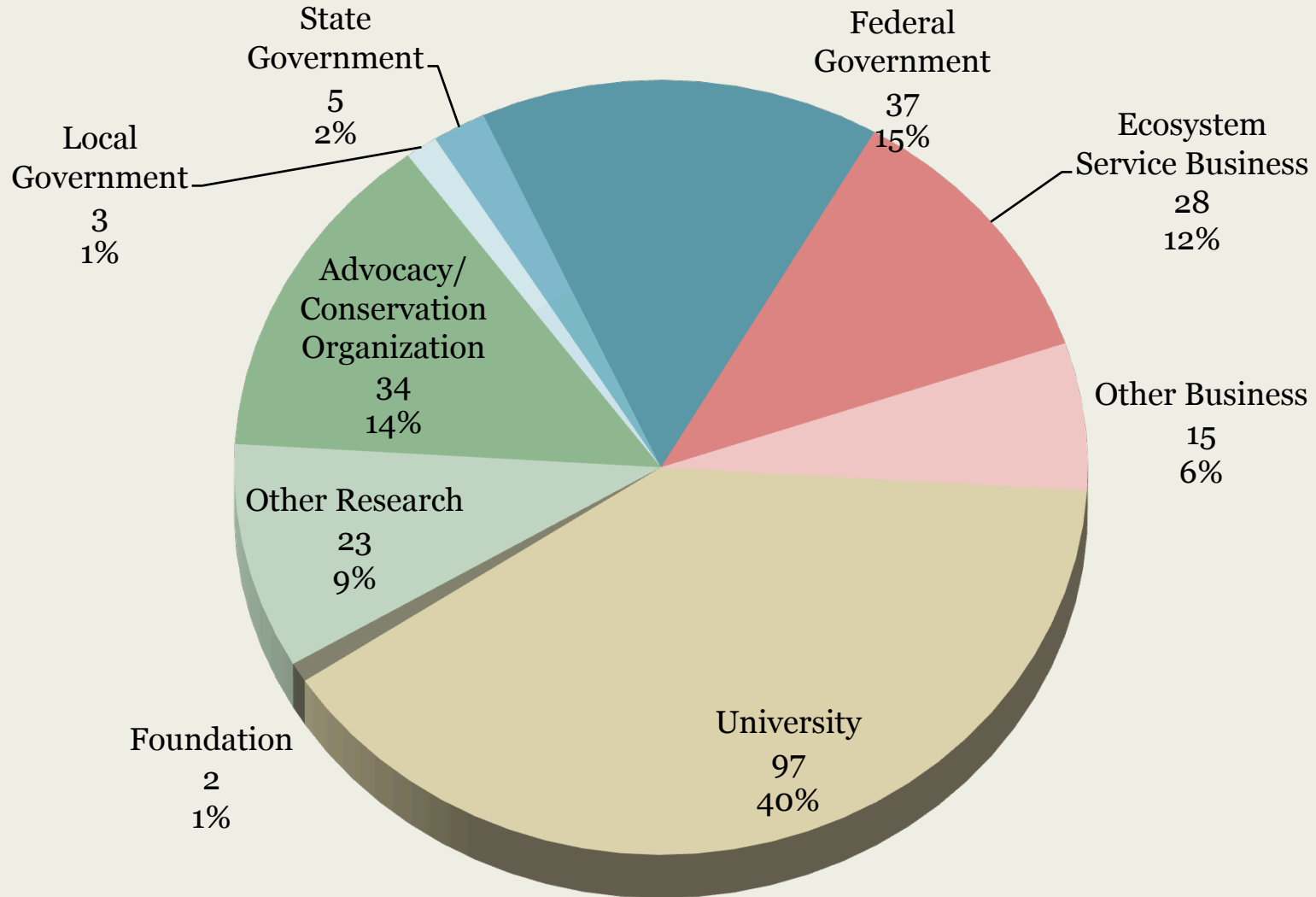
- **81** participants active in working groups

- **5%** International



Who's Involved in the Partnership?

Involvement by Specific Institution Type



Partnership Survey Results

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“Impressed” “excited” “looking forward” “really good idea”
“wonderful idea” “excellent forum” “great job” “thank you”

**76% of respondents said yes interested in participating in NESP,
23% not sure**

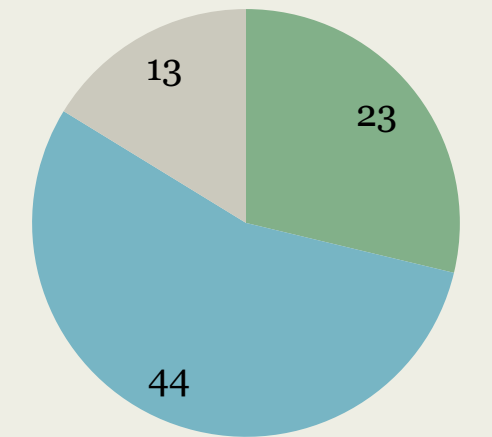
Who Responded?

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Partnership Participants

- **82** Respondents
- **32** responses from original kick-off group
- Only 3 anonymous responses
- 76% are sure they want to participate in partnership

Survey Respondents



- Government
- Non-profit (and Academic)
- Business

Comments:

- “National” is limiting to USA

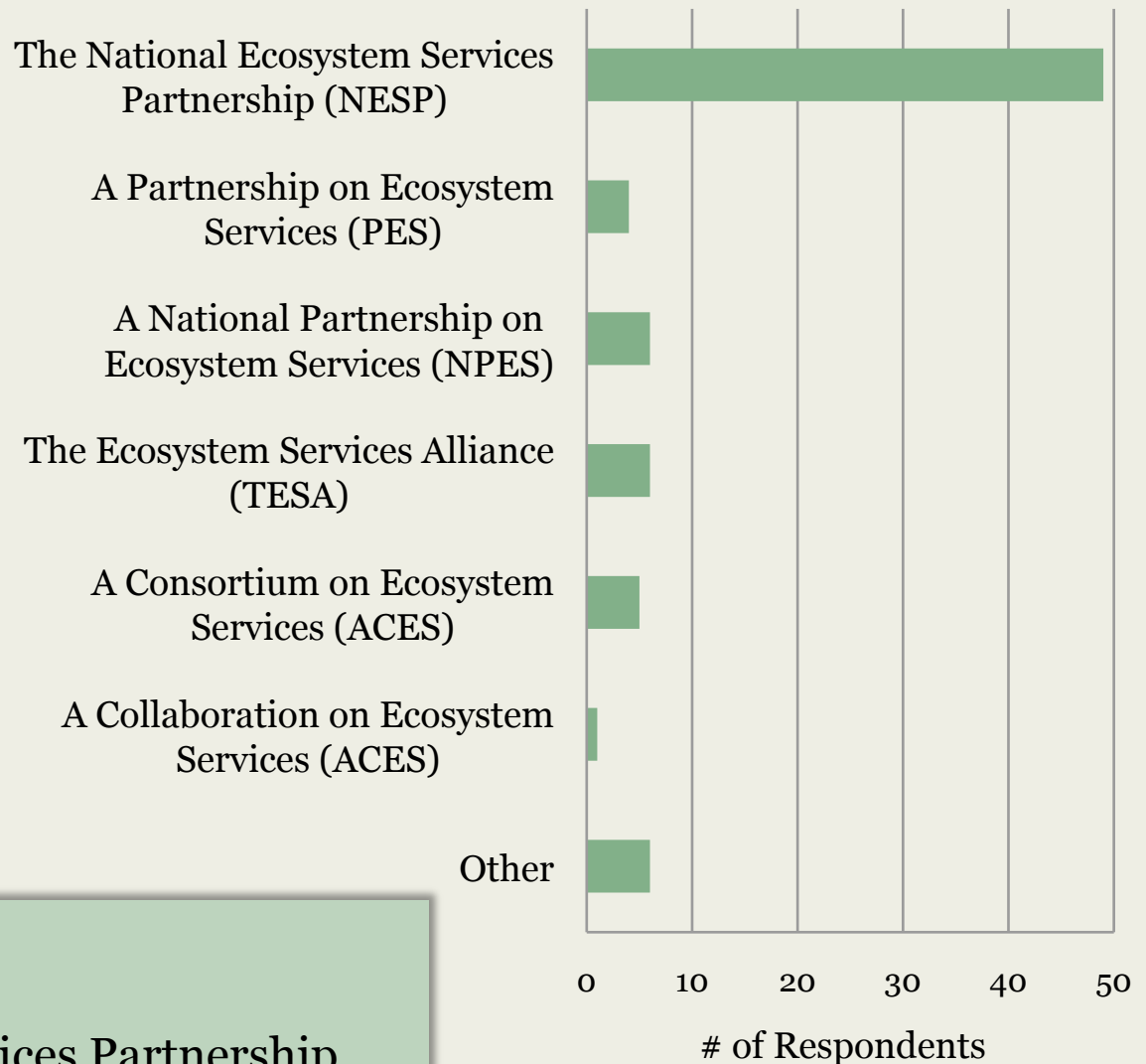
Other suggestions:

- National Ecosystem Services Collaborative (NESC)
- The Ecosystem Values Alliance (TEVA)
- An International Ecosystem Services Partnership (IESP)

Final Partnership Name:

The National Ecosystem Services Partnership (NESP)

Survey Results on Partnership Name

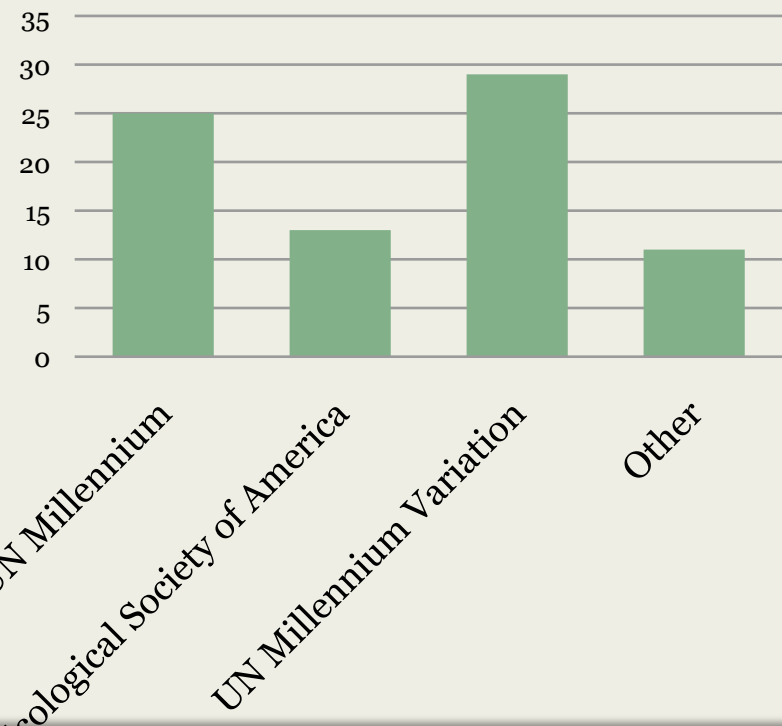


Defining Ecosystem Services

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1. Ecosystem services are the benefits that people obtain from ecosystems, categorized into provisioning, regulating, cultural, or supporting services. (*UN Millennium Assessment*)
2. Ecosystem services are the processes by which the environment produces resources upon which humans are dependent. (*Ecological Society of America*)
3. Ecosystem services create the benefits that people obtain from nature, such as clean air and water, natural resources, and the enjoyment of natural areas
(*Variation on UN Millennium Assessment*)

For the purposes of the partnership, how should we define Ecosystem Services?



Final Definition of Ecosystem Services:

Ecosystem goods and services are ecological processes, products, and qualities that directly or indirectly improve human welfare; for example, clean air and water, biological diversity, wetlands, nutrient cycling and hydrologic regulation.

Vision, Mission, and Audience

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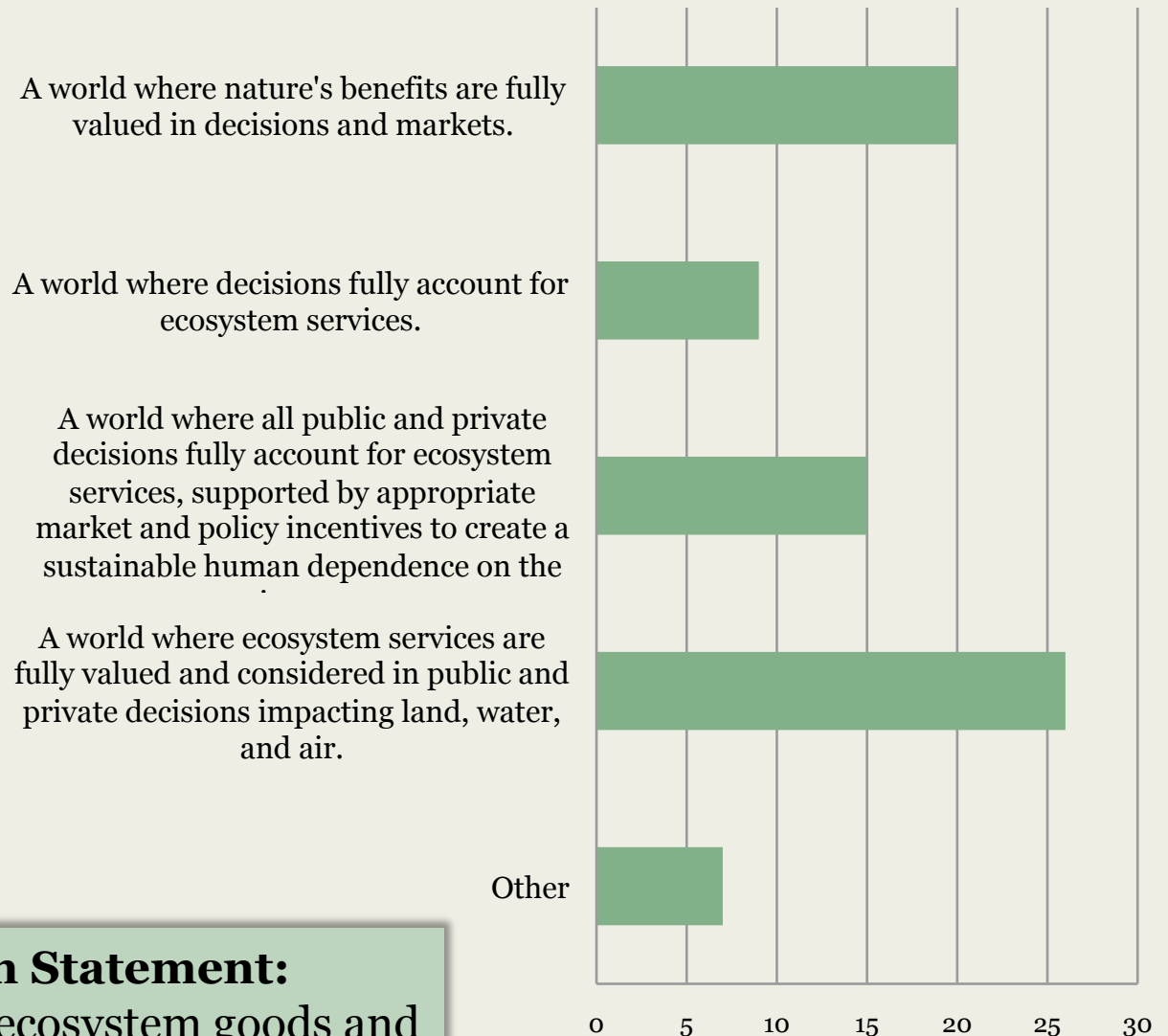
Comments:

- “Nature’s benefits” more inclusive and has broader appeal
- Partnership should **avoid** taking stance on **policy**
- Add “for the **long-term benefit** of humankind”
- “**Full**” valuation and consideration is **unrealistic**
- **Simple** is best
- Should be **inclusive** of all decisions
- Missing fish and wildlife

Final Partnership Vision Statement:

We envision a world where ecosystem goods and services are valued and considered in public and private decisions.

Survey Results on Vision Statement



Modifications to #1:

- Transforming ... with “scientific” information...
- ...approaches that allow us to value and manage ecosystem services for human health and well being and preserve our natural systems.

Modifications to #3:

- ...for human health and well being.

Modifications to #4:

- Improving human health and well being by providing and disseminating credible and innovative research to enhance decisions about ecosystem services.

Survey Results on Mission Statement

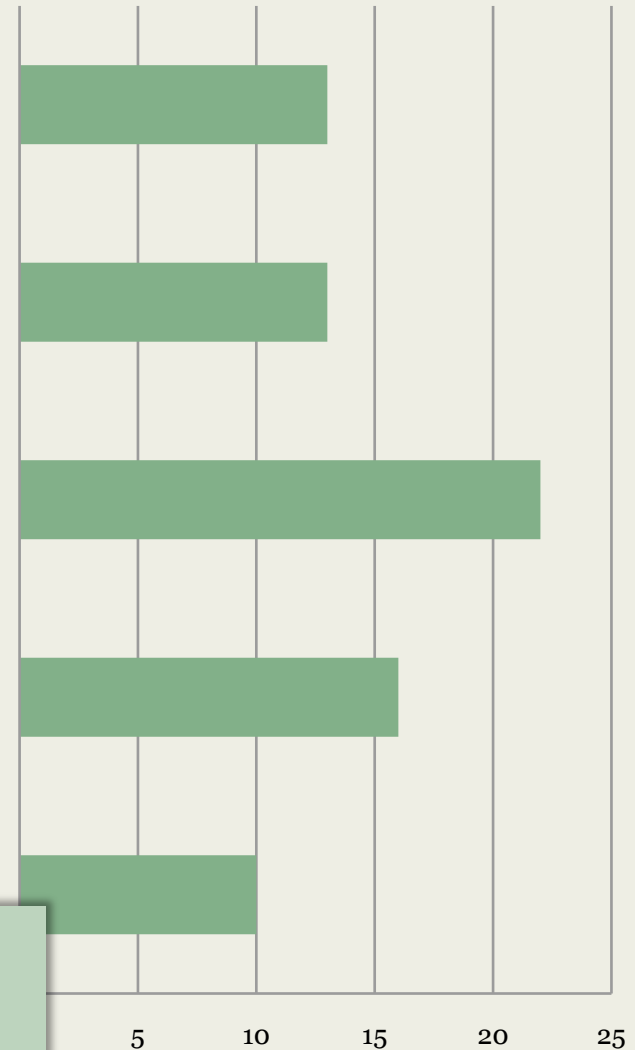
Transforming decision making with credible information and innovative approaches to create a more sustainable human dependence on the environment.

Transforming decision making to incorporate ecosystem services through development and distribution of credible information and the creation of new solutions driven research.

Enhancing the effectiveness of ecosystem services research, markets, and decision making.

Transforming the way decisions are made by facilitating the development and dissemination of interdisciplinary knowledge for valuing and managing ecosystem services for human health and

Other



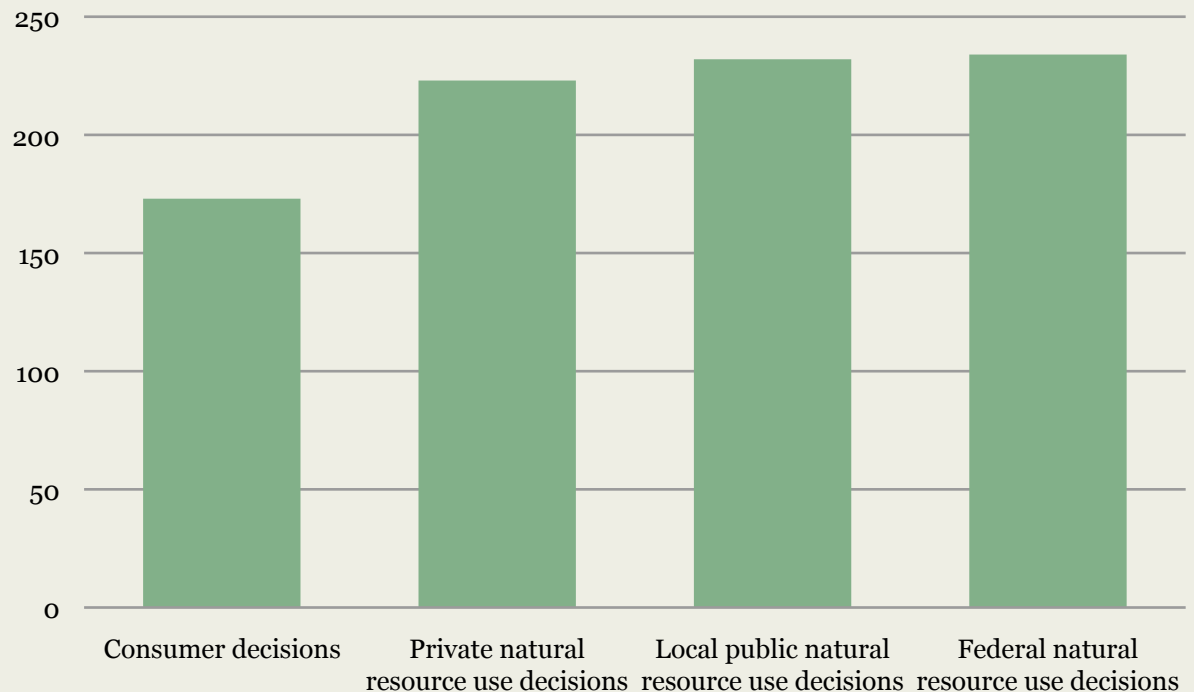
Final Partnership Mission Statement:

The mission of the NESP is to create and communicate useful and credible information and tools to improve public and private decisions affecting ecosystem goods and services and the sustainability of their provision.

• Scores for “Local public” decisions and “private decisions” may have been underestimated due to confusion:

- Local public was meant primarily to mean local government
- State level was included in Local decisions
- Private decisions included business and NGO decisions

What types of decisions are most important for the partnership to influence through their activities?



Though Federal decisions were most often ranked highest (5), almost all decision types received approximately equal overall scores.

Objectives and Activities

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More Objectives:

- Develop **national policies**
- Facilitate the development of **markets**
- Develop **analysis tools** and sources of **valuation data**
- Build regional capacity through **demonstration projects** of tool systems and supporting databases (e.g. GIS)
- Coordinate **national and international ES** initiatives
- **Remove barriers** to innovation
- Manage and support **joint research** activities

What should be the main objectives of the partnership?

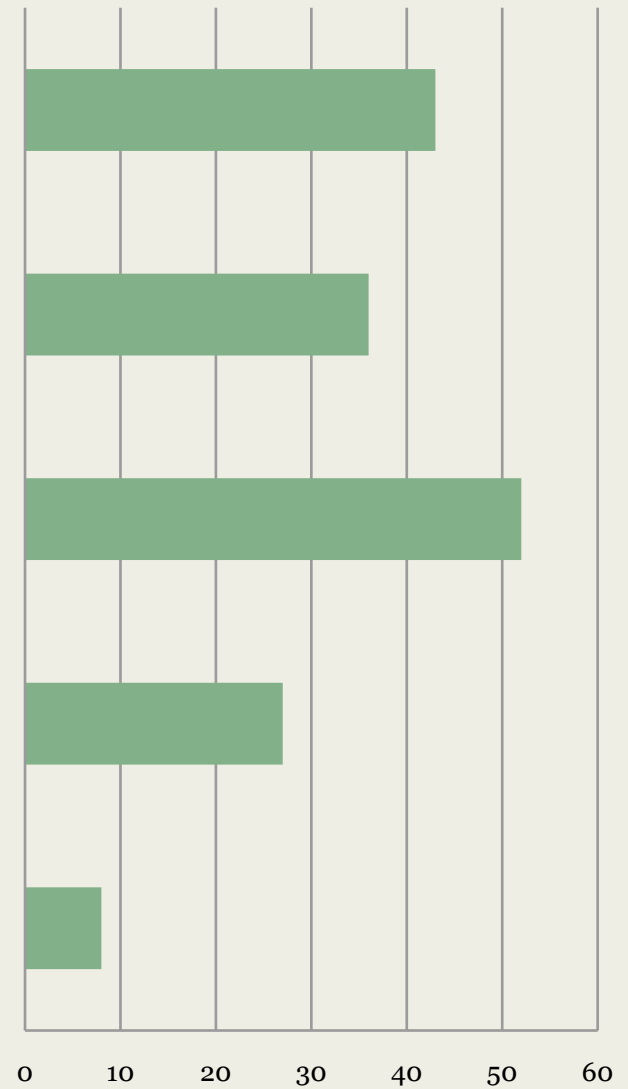
Facilitate new solution-driven collaborations to create transformative information and innovation on ecosystem service markets, research, policy, and outreach. The new solution driven

Enhance collaborations and efficiencies in the use of human and financial resources through improved communication, and assessments of needs and gaps.

Support public and private decision making through the provision of relevant, timely, and credible information about ecosystem services.

Streamline public and private regulation and incentives for ecosystem service consideration (e.g., across federal agencies).

Other



Final Partnership Objectives

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1. **Building a network** of researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers that establishes a direct and interactive connection between the research community and the needs of user groups (e.g., working with ongoing efforts, and via a web portal, email lists, meetings).
2. **Increasing communication, collaboration and alignment** within and among public and private organizations working on ecosystem service policy, management, and practice.
3. **Evaluating, synthesizing and creating information** (data, models, policy instruments, management approaches etc.) on the biophysical basis of ecosystem service production; the valuation of ecosystem services; and policy and market frameworks for sustaining ecosystem services. - all in the context of end user needs;
4. **Communicating this information effectively** by packaging it in user-friendly forms (toolkits, annotated case studies, “best practices” guides, etc.) and making it available freely, quickly and efficiently (e.g., via web portals) to inform researchers on needs and user communities on the latest research.

Partnership Structure

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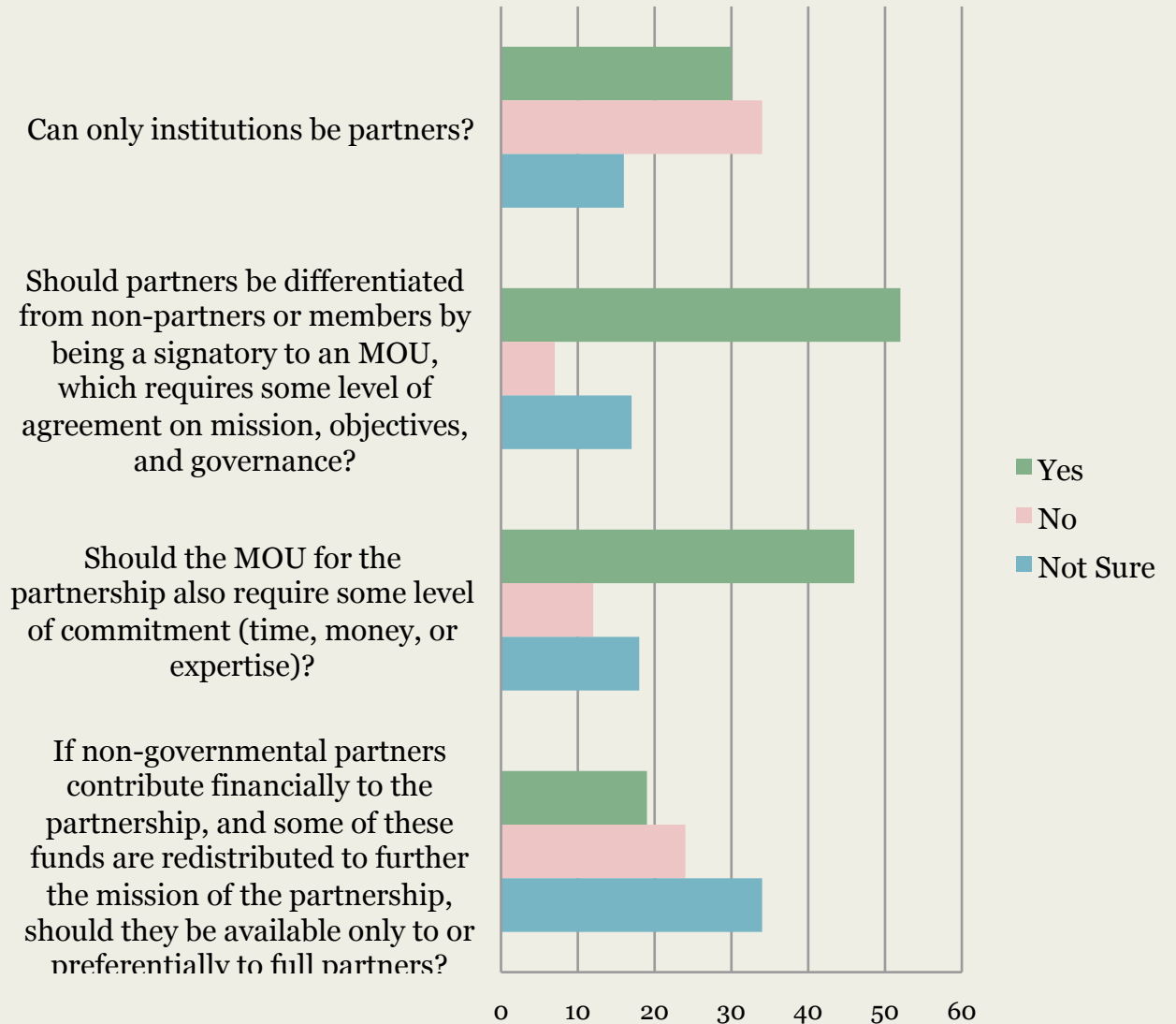
Roles:

- Provide a membership category to engage individuals
- Sponsors who are otherwise not active should not be “partners”

Commitments:

- If need centralized staff, then **direct support is needed** (not in-kind)
- Required financial contribution would **discourage NGOs** from joining
- Must **prove value** of partnership prior to getting contributions
- Have **various levels and types of contributions**, but all confer same privilege

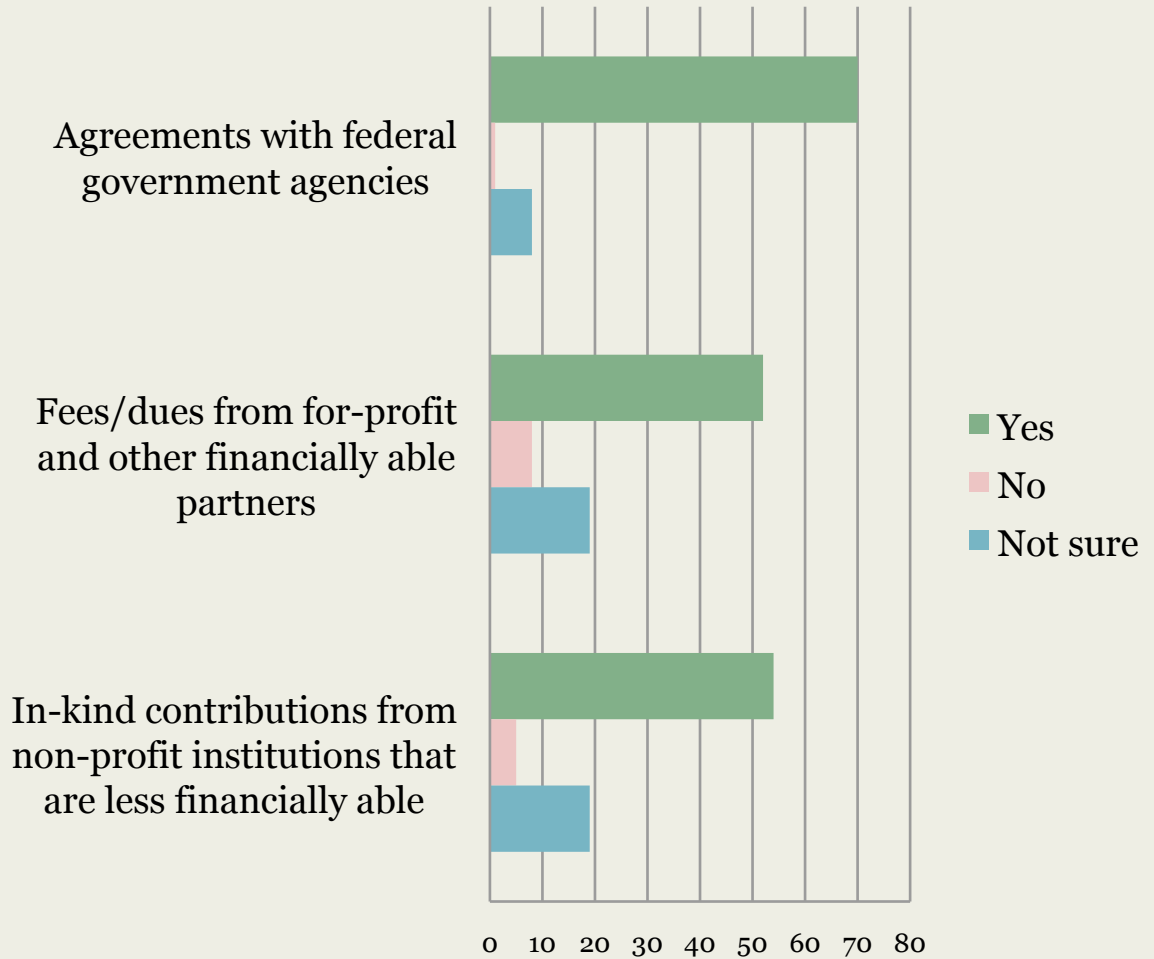
What does it mean to be a partner?



Selected Comments:

- To thrive, a **secure source of funding** is needed, not just year-to-year appropriations
- Allow funders to earmark** where their funding is going
- Decide later:** have a good solid board make these decisions
- Diversify**
- Also from **government research funding**, corporations, **foundations** and financially able non-profits

Sources for operational funds in the long-term should come from:



Comments:

- Have steady operational funding so that special initiative funding is **rarely needed**
- Should have **mix of all**
- NESP staff provides oversight while **major projects occur in centers**, over long term
- Need mechanism to **ensure adherence to mission**
- Leave open the door to fund individual research

What is the partnership's special initiative funding strategy? The partnership staff...



Where We Are: Partnership

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- **Who can be a partner:** All interested parties, whether organizations or individuals, may be a partner.
- **Becoming a partner:** A sign-on document will allow interested parties to endorse the partnership vision, mission, and objectives, and thus become a partner (in development)
- **Funding:** The Partnership will be pursuing multiple forms of support – government agreements, foundation and corporate giving, and member dues.

Appendix

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**MORE DETAILED SUMMARIES OF SURVEY
COMMENTS**

Respondents want NESP to:

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Coordinate

- Access timely and cutting-edge information and tools
- Coordinate activity across regions and scales
- Ensure research is useful to institutions and communities
- Reduce transaction costs due to multiple formal partnerships; have just one

Collaborate

- Find partners for joint projects and alliances
- Student and scholarly internships and exchanges
- Increase efficiency of collaboration and sharing
- Moving results to regulatory sector
- Access to expertise

Create Tools and Guidance

- Promote credible guidance to inform policy
- Create compensation protocol for landowners who conserve
- Make it easy to consider the value of ES in regulatory frameworks

Influence

- Influence programs and policies
- Represent key stakeholders
- Raise national profile of valuation of services provided by the natural environment
- Promote use of markets
- Create incentives for enhancing the environment

Communicate

- Dissemination of research
- Education and outreach
- Aligned to mission, promote organization goals

Fund and Find Funding

- Potential source of funding
- Guide investments by private funders

Specific Knowledge Desired from NESP:

- Policy design and implementation
- Identify research needs, gaps, and priorities
- Analysis methods
- ES within built environment
- Original research on market-based valuation of ES
- Cost-benefit assessments

Concerns:

- Giving any appearance of preferential access to or influence on federal decision-making
- Remember state resource agencies

Roles Respondents Say They Would Play:

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Source of information

- Technical expertise
- Perform research and provide research questions
- Policy recommendations
- Corporate perspective

Networker

- Outreach and education
- Web portal host and resource clearinghouse
- Engage landowners and stakeholders
- Engage international community

Coordinator

- Host or regional hub
- Organizer
- Provide internet platform
- International engagement

Sponsor

- Financial
- In-kind contributions

Information synthesizer

- Translate knowledge to local context
- Publication
- Center of Excellence

Collaborator

- Project-based involvement in Centers
- Provide student and scholarly exchanges
- Regional and topical collaborations

Leadership

- Board of directors
- Advisory role
- Committee participant

Implementation

- Monitoring and evaluation
- Training
- Market and policy design and application
- Testing outcomes

Research Priorities:

1. Quantification and Evaluation of Ecosystem Services

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- **Research on Quantification to:**
 - Quantify joint production of
 - Identify services that can be maintained or restored in disturbed systems
 - Track trans-boundary flows of ecosystem services/disservices
 - Identify variations in services on local, regional and national levels
 - Understand production functions under alternate scenarios
 - Determine minimum requirements for ecosystem functions
 - Determine best indicators
- **Comparisons**
 - Comparison and evaluations of various standards for quantifying and valuing ES
 - Quantitative comparisons of the cost of provisioning benefits thought ES vs. human-engineered solutions
- **Methods and Tools**
 - Improve predictive capability for the ecological processes underlying creation and provision of ecosystem services
 - Develop index of ES health using a suite of indicators
 - Vet assessment approaches
 - Develop methods of valuation that recognize tradeoffs among services (e.g. use equilibrium oriented methods and value suites of services)
 - Create scalable assessment tools
 - Create comprehensive (multi-service) tools
- **Valuation and Costs and Benefits**
 - Value and monetize ES for market development
 - Cost-benefit analysis of management decisions
 - Value at site scale, using models and direct monitoring
 - Include relative human value (not monetary)
 - Increase the accuracy of accounting for natural resource impacts (loss/gain of services) over the 50-year lifetime
- **Long term and inclusive environmental monitoring**
 - Within a project and across multiple projects
 - Quantify the response of ecosystems to human modifications
 - Understand the fundamental biological and geochemical processes that sustain ecosystem services
- **Standardization**
 - Standardize protocols for quantifying ecosystem services benefits and the economic and ecosystem costs of policy positions
 - Develop habitat-, ecoregion-, and services-specific frameworks
 - Prioritize the ecosystems of interest
 - Create formal scientifically-based language for ES
- **Risks**
 - Consider risk of net harm to some ecosystem services from regulatory ecosystem markets ostensibly intended to protect those services from harm.

Research Priorities:

2. Research to identify and address society's barriers to incorporating ecosystem services and values in public and private decisions

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- **Education and Outreach**
 - Develop tools and materials to facilitate education at university level
 - Conduct public surveys of ecosystem services
 - Pursue ecojustice in disadvantaged populations
 - Understand real and predicted behavioral reactions to ES policy options
 - Communicate personal value of ecosystem services, including the services they are getting free
 - Provide guidelines on marketing ecosystem services for NGO use
- **New policy and tools**
 - Develop instruments to internalize ES externalities
 - Easy to interpret dynamic models for decision makers; make accessible
 - Tools for land use management that link to local and municipal land development systems
- **Work with private sector**
 - Develop tools to estimate the effect of incorporating ES into decision-making frameworks on enhanced shareholder value in private sector
 - Business balance sheets and data to inform decision-making
- **Synthesis of best practices**
 - Case studies that highlight success in overcoming societal barriers
 - Explain how best to communicate ES concepts and benefits to the public
 - Compile public, private, and legal perspective
 - Bundle existing research so practitioners can more easily turn science into policy tools
- **New research to:**
 - Address the temporal and spatial disconnect between the benefits people use and the delivery of services
 - Understand why ES values are not factored into decisions
 - Understand what it would take to change behavior
 - Identify site specific factors (culture, socio economic conditions, governance, etc.) that influence behavioral change
 - Incorporate GIS and other existing models into ES research
 - Identify barriers posed by the theoretical literature (for example, additionality and/or conditionality), and how these are overcome in specific socio-political contexts
 - Devise a better accounting of the flow of benefits, including discounting in time and distance-decay in space
 - Develop futures scenarios for different levels of resource use

Research Priorities:

3. Research on market and policy design for ecosystem services

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- **Provide guidance on:**
 - Best practices and design templates for practitioners to use
 - Model policies
 - Effective ways to convey the results and implications of research to decision makers
 - Policy case studies to inform scientific researchers
 - Current pilot studies globally
- **Research on Policy and Markets to:**
 - Understand how to transition incentive-programs to market based programs
 - Identify policies to minimize abuse by financial institutions
 - Provide guidance for government agencies on most effective projects to undertake
 - Determine the appropriate balance between coercive tools and market tools for key industrial sectors
 - Quantify non-market impacts and trade-offs of policies
 - Identify approaches that can scale or accelerate the valuation of ecosystem services
 - Analyze sustainable supply, production and marketing chain
- **Markets**
 - Scale markets to match the flow of benefits and to include the relevant stakeholders
 - Determine who pays what for ES goods and services
 - Value individual services, but regulate and monetize bundled ecosystem credits
 - Develop framework and pilot a market for ecosystem services
- **Recommendations**
 - Achieve a unity of purpose among Federal agencies that allows for mutually consistent policies
 - Reconcile environmental policy with economic needs in a way that provides a common set of metrics
 - Use natural disasters as lessons learned in what might have been mitigated
 - Establish a 'biodiversity standard' for the supply of biodiversity-protected areas
 - Explore incorporating nature's assets into GDP
 - Clarify whether the primary goal is (a) to sustain ecosystem services for human health and well being or (b) to limit harm to ecosystem services from human action

More Comments on Roles of Partners

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Require commitment?

- Required commitment (of any kind) assures active participants
- Have **various levels and types of contributions**, but all confer same privilege
- Obtain philosophical (vision and mission), financial (time, money, resources) and operational (active participation) commitments
- Require *resource* commitment (time, money, or in-kind)

Require financial contributions?

Yes

- If need centralized staff, then direct support (not in-kind) is needed
- Not everyone needs to be a "Partner". Focus on attracting institutions that intend to use ES information in active management or decision making

No

- Be inclusive, avoid **exclusivity**
- Would discourage NGOs from joining
- Require time and sweat equity, but not financial
- Must prove value of partnership prior to getting contributions
- MOUs generally do not require resource commitments
- To get leading thinkers involved, must offer benefits. Requiring contributions in early stage not practical

Role of individuals

- Only institutions should be partners, but need a category for individuals who can benefit by being a member
- Let individual researchers participate and provide minority views
- Engage stakeholders that represent end-users who would not sign an MOU

Decide another way:

- Have summit to encourage diversity and define roles of partners there
- Compromise b/w being inclusive and being effective; make core decisions but allow for adaptive modifications later

Concerns:

- Concerned some participants equate ES valuation with market valuation
- Property rights issues involved in "contributing expertise"?

Possible Roles:

- Partners are doers, members are more passive information sharers
- Partners can be defined organically
- Sponsors who are otherwise not active should not be "partners"

Who should be members?

- Membership should also apply to corporations and cities and states.
- Need representatives of the forest and agricultural land owning communities

Other Suggestions/Comments:

- There is value in having a significant number of fully partnered groups sign on to this initiative
- Partners should have demonstrable and quantifiable experience in ecosystem service markets, studies, policy, etc.
- Hold yearly meeting of partners

Other Models to Look At

Partnership/Membership Roles:

- The Petroleum Environmental Research Forum (PERF) is loosely organized and as projects come forward then individuals sign on to the individual projects. PERF started because API was too formally organized around an annual budget where executives had to agree on the scope rather than technical peers collaborating which is the PERF model.
- How did MEA incentivize partners?

International:

- Include international institutions such as GEO BON or DIVERSITAS

Funding:

- Check out LISS, GOM CME regarding special initiative funding
- Seek funds from corporations who subscribe to Corporate Environmental Responsibility (CER) and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), other sources of green funding including CDM, GEF etc.
- Congressional mandate would allow federal funds to more easily be applied (like in the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation model)