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S2 ES in Rural landscapes in Brazil

Embrapa research network on ecosystem services in Brazil

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Human pressures have caused degradation of natural resources on the planet with serious consequences to humanity, because of the increasing demands for water, fibers, food, energy and raw material. It is necessary to reconcile economic, social and environmental components in a scenario of climate change. Society can play an important role in this context, looking for mechanisms to change the landscape in order to preserve it, to obtain environmental benefits, and ecosystem services. In this context, studies that clarify the relationship between ecosystem services and human well-being and those focusing on ecosystem services maintenance are very important in current and future scenarios. The formation of research networks and the discussion forums on this subject are relevant alternatives to achieve concrete results, as, by means of them, a work can be promoted in a synchronized and organized way. In Brazil, many data on natural resources were obtained by research, education, government and non-government institutions in recent decades, but few of them have a conceptual and methodological focus turned to ecosystem services. Embrapa, which is the national public agricultural research institution in Brazil, is increasing its activities in this field and already has several research groups focused on ecosystem and environmental services in all Brazilian biomes. A research network entitled Environmental Services in Rural Landscape Arrangement was created in 2014 to integrate and exchange experience among research groups, external partners and farmers. The network identified the reduction and degradation of ecosystem services in rural areas as the fundamental research problem to be addressed and where all the research questions converge. There are great challenges to set forth a network of projects. However, the results that may be achieved will help a lot to expand the scope and importance of the topic, with high potential to benefit Brazilian society.

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