

Differences in Perceptions, Attitudes, and Use of Ecosystem Services among Diverse Communities in an Arid Region: A Case Study from the South of Jordan

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ABSTRACT The aim of this study was to understand how local people interact with their surrounding ecosystem. The researchers focused on a dry terrestrial environment (Wadi Araba and Aqaba in southwest Jordan) and analyzed an assortment of communities in order to reveal how different groups perceive and use their environment in varying ways. The analytical tools in this study—derived from the social sciences—included preliminary interviews and a field survey of 150 randomly selected respondents from Wadi Araba (rural) and Aqaba (urban). The survey, based on a structured questionnaire, consisted of eight sets of nested multiple choice questions focusing on respondents' perceptions of, and attitudes toward, the surrounding hyper-arid ecosystem. Responses from rural residents reflected a greater average concern of, and awareness toward, their environment than responses from urban residents.