

Abstract

This thesis analyzes a drying lake in central western (i.e. Lake Eber) Turkey to comment on the interdependency of agricultural practices and ecosystem services. It selects Lake Eber because the lake faces an imminent threat of completely drying up. Given that the drying of the lake case is a recent phenomenon, the relevant scholarly literature dealing with Lake Eber is slender; this study attempts to fill this gap. The theoretical framing of the argument relies on the literature in ecosystem services. The empirical data relies on: a) official reports and statistics; b) the semi-structured interviews and fieldwork observations done for the purpose of this thesis. The empirical data tells us that, despite a decrease in the annual yield of many crops, the farmers in the Lake Eber region are relying on alternative methods to cover up for their losses. Though the resources that specific farmers have vary, as per which they can make the use of alternative methods, the net effect pressurizes the ecosystem further. Based on such empirical findings, the thesis argues that agricultural practices both obtain services from ecosystems and constitute an intervention into them, and that ecosystems are both dynamic and responsive to agricultural practices. Accordingly, the study emphasizes the importance of taking uncertainty and adaptiveness into account, while one analyzes the dynamic interrelation of ecosystem services and agricultural practices.

Keywords

adaptation, agriculture, biodiversity, drying lake, ecosystem services, Lake Eber, resilience, uncertainty, Turkey