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Availability: October 2008

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Scoping agriculture– wetland interactions

Towards a sustainable multiple-response strategy

Agriculture–wetland interactions (AWIs) are increasingly important as rising demand for food and fuel production exacerbates pressures on wetlands. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment identified agriculture as the main cause of wetland degradation and loss. Using a drivers, pressures, state changes, impacts and responses (DPSIR) framework to analyse 90 cases drawn from all parts of the world and all wetland types, this report assesses the character of AWIs and their impacts in socio-economic and ecosystem services terms. Identifying the drivers and pressures that cause “overdependence” on specific and limited provisioning services in wetlands, it shows how these skew ecosystem services and lead to socio-economic and livelihood trade-offs that fuel economic drivers and pressures on the system. It argues that sustainable AWIs require multiple-response strategies that are targeted at: diversified agricultural services and livelihoods; the multitude of ecosystem services, and; policy, management and technical measures. The report illustrates how the framework can aid in their formulation by presenting its detailed application in five diverse cases.

ISBN 978-92-5-106059-9 ISSN 1020-1203



TC/M/10314E/1/09.08/2100