



Pimachiowin Aki World Heritage Project Research Summary Ecosystem Evaluation Study – December 2008

In December 2008 Pimachiowin Aki and the International Institute for Sustainable development jointly released an ecosystem study that showed that a vast tract of boreal forest that straddles Manitoba and Ontario has a conservative estimated economic value of between \$121 and \$130 million a year.

IISD researchers Stephan Barg and Vivek Voora assessed the value of some well-known economic activities in the boreal forest—like hunting and trapping—but also used green economics to put a value on the benefits nature offers, such as clean air and water.

Ecosystem Services means the services nature provides people and takes into account that trees, water, air, animal life and plant life sustain and support human life and that they have a measurable economic value. This study estimated the value looking at specific type of ecosystem services.

Estimating the ecosystem services showed that the value of an intact boreal forest is far more than what the current level of economic activity suggests. Barg and Voora concluded that intact natural environments such as Pimachiowin Aki are becoming increasingly scarce worldwide as a result of human expansion and activity. However applying a dollar value to the area provides an economic reason to preserve and maintain it as an intact area.

They concluded that, “This is an emerging analysis that we know has growing interest around the world. As well, this may lead to some payments in the future for people who preserve, manage and maintain the forest.”

More information about this study is available on the Our News page of the www.pimachiowinaki.org.

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