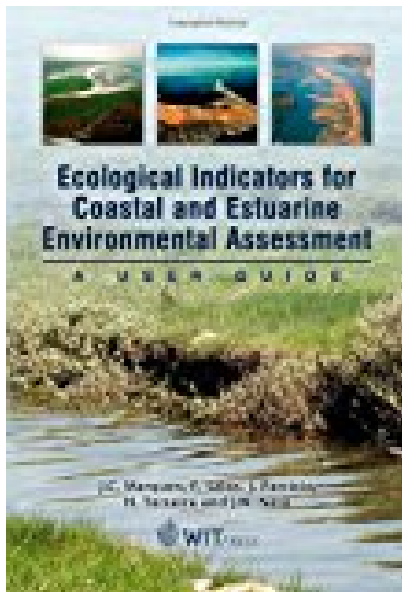


Ecological Indicators for Coastal and Estuarine Environmental Assessment - A User Guide



BOOK DETAILS

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BOOK SYNOPSIS

Ecological indicators address ecosystems structure and/or function and are commonly used to provide synoptic information about their state. Through quantitative representations of either the forces that steer ecosystems, responses to forcing functions, or of previous, current, or future states of an ecosystem, indicators are expected to reveal conditions and trends that will help in development planning and decision making processes. Ecological indicators combine numerous environmental factors in a single value, which may be useful in terms of management and in the development of ecological concepts, compliant with the general public's understanding. Nevertheless, their application is not exempt of criticisms, the first of which is that aggregation results in an oversimplification of the ecosystem under observation. Ecological indicators must therefore be handled following the right criteria and in situations that are consistent with its intended use and scope; otherwise they may drive to confusing interpretations of data.

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