

Package ‘openNCAI’

May 13, 2026

Type Package

Title Calculates a Natural Capital Assets Index

Version 0.1.0

Date 2026-05-04

Description Calculates a regional natural capital assets index (NCAI) following the methodology designed by NatureScot for Scotland as described in Albon, Balana, Brooker & Eastwood (2014) <<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2025-06/naturescot-commissioned-report-751.pdf>> and McKenna et al. (2019) <[doi:10.1016/J.ECOLIND.2019.105645](https://doi.org/10.1016/J.ECOLIND.2019.105645)>. Processes habitat extent and condition data alongside metadata and weighting systems to produce a yearly single figure indexed relative to a base-year value of 100.

License MIT + file LICENSE

Encoding UTF-8

LazyData true

URL <https://github.com/oharakate/openNCAI>

BugReports <https://github.com/oharakate/openNCAI/issues>

Imports dplyr, janitor, magrittr, openxlsx, readxl, rlang, slider, stats, stringr, tidyr

RoxygenNote 7.3.3

VignetteBuilder knitr

Suggests ggplot2, knitr, rmarkdown, rprojroot, testthat (>= 3.0.0), tibble

Config/testthat/edition 3

Depends R (>= 4.1.0)

NeedsCompilation no

Author Kate O'Hara [aut, cre]

Maintainer Kate O'Hara <k.a.ohara@stir.ac.uk>

Repository CRAN

Date/Publication 2026-05-13 07:20:07 UTC

Contents

create_ncai_template	2
get_ncai	4
ns_between_importance_scores	7
ns_ci_relevance_matrices	7
ns_ci_scores	8
ns_custom_divisor_matrix	8
ns_display_ci_names	9
ns_display_es_label_tree	9
ns_display_habitats_label_tree	10
ns_es_label_tree	10
ns_habitats_label_tree	11
ns_habitat_extent	11
ns_indicator_directory	12
ns_provision_per_unit_scores	12
ns_within_importance_scores	13
ns_year_list	13
read_ncai_template	14
Index	16

create_ncai_template *Create an NCAI Data Entry Template*

Description

Generates a highly formatted, protected Excel (.xlsx) workbook containing the necessary sheets for a user to populate an openNCAI account. The template includes internal logic for habitat and ecosystem service trees, automated styling, and cell locking to ensure data integrity for subsequent re-import. Note that the habitats and ecosystem service label trees passed here may be used to subsequently read in the data with read_ncai_template().

Usage

```
create_ncai_template(
  template_out,
  habitats_label_tree,
  es_label_tree,
  ci_names,
  year_list,
  overwrite = FALSE,
  habitat_extent = NULL,
  provision_per_unit_scores = NULL,
  between_importance_scores = NULL,
  within_importance_scores = NULL,
  ci_scores = NULL,
  indicator_directory = NULL,
```

```

    ci_relevance_matrices = NULL
  )

```

Arguments

`template_out` A string representing the file path where the .xlsx will be saved.

`habitats_label_tree` A named list of character vectors representing the habitat hierarchy. Names: broad habitats, typically EUNIS level 1. Character vector items: typically EUNIS level 2 habitats.

`es_label_tree` A named list of character vectors representing the ecosystem service hierarchy. Names: typically SEEA ecosystem service types. Character vector items: typically CICES-type ecosystem services.

`ci_names` A character vector of condition indicator names.

`year_list` A vector of years (numeric or character) to be included in the account.

`overwrite` Logical. If TRUE, an existing file at `template_out` will be overwritten without warning. Default is FALSE to prevent accidental loss of manually entered data.

`habitat_extent` Optional data frame of existing habitat extent data. Row and column order and dimensions MUST match label trees/year list.

`provision_per_unit_scores` Optional data frame of existing ES Potential Unit scores. Row and column order MUST match lower levels of `habitats_label_tree` and `es_label_tree`.

`between_importance_scores` Optional list of ecosystem service type importance weights. Order MUST match names of `es_label_tree`.

`within_importance_scores` Optional list of lists of weights for specific services. Order MUST match the order and dimensions of the lower level of `es_label_tree`.

`ci_scores` Optional data frame of existing condition indicator scores. Rows and columns MUST match dimensions and order of `year_list` and `ci_names`.

`indicator_directory` Optional data frame of existing indicator salience data. Row order and length MUST match `ci_names`. Column order and length MUST match `es_label_tree` names.

`ci_relevance_matrices` Optional list of existing binary relevance matrices. Matrix list order and length must match `ci_names`. Each matrix row and column order MUST match lower levels of `habitats_label_tree` and `es_label_tree`.

Details

Optional arguments to pre-populate the template with data assume that the passed-in data matches those of the label trees, year list and condition indicator list as relevant. Users are recommended to create an empty template first to verify the required formats before attempting to pass in data.

Value

Generates an Excel file at the specified path and returns a message of success.

Examples

```

# 1. Define the habitat hierarchy
habitat_label_tree <- list(
  'B. Coastal Habitats' = c(
    "Coastal vegetated shingle",
    "Coastal dunes and sandy shores"
  ),
  'E. Grasslands' = c(
    "Dry Grasslands",
    "Mesic Grasslands"
  )
)

# 2. Define the ecosystem service hierarchy
ecosystem_service_label_tree <- list(
  'PROVISIONING' = c(
    "1.1 Cultivated Crops",
    "1.2 Reared Animals And Their Outputs"
  ),
  'CULTURAL' = c(
    "3.5. Existence & bequest"
  )
)

# 3. Define indicators and temporal scope
condition_indicator_list <- c("National Water Quality Index", "AgriSCOR")
list_of_years <- 2020:2025

# 4. Generate the template in a temporary location
# tempfile() ensures a valid path that won't clutter your working directory.
tmp_path <- tempfile(fileext = ".xlsx")

create_ncai_template(
  template_out = tmp_path,
  habitats_label_tree = habitat_label_tree,
  es_label_tree = ecosystem_service_label_tree,
  ci_names = condition_indicator_list,
  year_list = list_of_years
)

message("Template successfully created at: ", tmp_path)

```

Description

This is the primary function for calculating the NCAI. It processes habitat extent, condition scores, and importance weights through the full NCAI pipeline, with options to return intermediate matrices or specific breakdowns.

Usage

```

get_ncai(
  habitat_extent,
  ci_scores,
  habitats_label_tree,
  es_label_tree,
  year_list,
  year_one = NULL,
  provision_per_unit_scores,
  provision_per_unit_divisor = 5,
  custom_divisor_matrix = NULL,
  between_importance_scores,
  within_importance_scores,
  ci_relevance_matrices,
  indicator_directory,
  total_indicator_relevances_constant = 2,
  smoothing_weights = c(0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1),
  return = c("overall_ncai", "by_ecosystem_service_type", "by_broad_habitat",
    "wellbeing_index", "flow_of_es_index", "yearly_ncai_matrices",
    "yearly_wellbeing_matrices", "flow_of_es_matrices", "es_potential_base",
    "wellbeing_potential_base", "flow_of_es_base", "everything")
)

```

Arguments

habitat_extent A data frame of habitat area/extent per year.

ci_scores A matrix of condition indicator scores.

habitats_label_tree
A named list defining the hierarchy of habitats.

es_label_tree A named list defining the hierarchy of ecosystem services.

year_list A vector (character or numeric) of years for the index.

year_one Optional. The baseline year for indexing (where index = 100). Defaults to the first year in `year_list`.

provision_per_unit_scores
A data frame of Ecosystem Service Provision Potential per Unit.

provision_per_unit_divisor
Numeric. A standard divisor to convert Provision Per Unit scores to weights; the number out of which Provision Per Unit scores have been awarded. Default value is 5. Alternatively, a `custom_divisor_matrix` may be provided.

custom_divisor_matrix
Optional. A matrix of divisors specific to habitat/service combinations.

between_importance_scores
Scores representing the relative importance between different ecosystem service types.

within_importance_scores
Scores representing the relative importance within ecosystem service types.

`ci_relevance_matrices`
 Condition Indicator Relevance Matrices list.

`indicator_directory`
 Directory mapping indicators to services/habitats.

`total_indicator_relevances_constant`
 Numeric. The constant used in the Total Indicator Relevance calculation. Defaults to 2.

`smoothing_weights`
 Numeric vector of weights for 5-year trailing smoothing. Defaults to `c(0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1.0)`.

`return`
 Character. Specifies the object to return. Options include:

- `"overall_ncai"`: The standard overall NCAI data frame (default).
- `"by_ecosystem_service_type"`: NCAI broken down by Ecosystem Service Type.
- `"by_broad_habitat"`: NCAI broken down by Broad Habitat.
- `"wellbeing_index"`: The potential wellbeing contribution of the habitats (before weighting by likely flow of services) over the years, indexed.
- `"flow_of_es_index"`: The likely flow of ecosystem services (based on information from condition indicators) over the years, indexed.
- `"yearly_ncai_matrices"`: The overall NCAI in its unaggregated form, expressed as yearly matrices of value per habitat/ecosystem service.
- `"yearly_wellbeing_matrices"`: The yearly wellbeing potential in its unaggregated form, expressed as yearly matrices of value per habitat/ecosystem service.
- `"yearly_flow_of_es_matrices"`: The yearly likely flow of ecosystem services in its unaggregated form, expressed as yearly matrices of value per habitat/ecosystem service.
- `"es_potential_base"`: The Ecosystem Service Potential Base matrix, i.e. the habitat extent weighted weighted by exemplary provision-per-unit scores in year one.
- `"wellbeing_potential_base"`: The Wellbeing Potential Base, ie. year one potential wellbeing matrix.
- `"flow_of_es_base"`: The year one likely flow of services matrix.
- `"everything"`: A named list containing all of the above.

Details

Mandatory Inputs: Users must provide either an `provision_per_unit_divisor` or a `custom_divisor_matrix` to convert potential scores into weights.

Smoothing and Baseline Years: The smoothed index is calculated using a 5-year trailing window. If `year_one` is set to a year other than the first year of the dataset, the `smoothed_index` value for that baseline year will likely not be exactly 100. This is because the smoothing reflects the trend of the preceding 4 years. The `raw_index` will always remain anchored at 100 for the `year_one`.

Value

An object of the type specified by the `return` argument. Typically a data frame or a named list of NCAI components.

Examples

```
# Calculate the NCAI using the bundled NatureScot sample data
ncai_objects <- get_ncai(
  habitat_extent = ns_habitat_extent,
  ci_scores = ns_ci_scores,
  habitats_label_tree = ns_habitats_label_tree,
  es_label_tree = ns_es_label_tree,
  year_list = ns_year_list,
  provision_per_unit_scores = ns_provision_per_unit_scores,
  custom_divisor_matrix = ns_custom_divisor_matrix,
  between_importance_scores = ns_between_importance_scores,
  within_importance_scores = ns_within_importance_scores,
  ci_relevance_matrices = ns_ci_relevance_matrices,
  indicator_directory = ns_indicator_directory,
  return = "everything"
)

# View the final indexed results
names(ncai_objects)
head(ncai_objects$overall_ncai)
```

ns_between_importance_scores

Ecosystem Service Importance Scores (between-service-type)

Description

A set of scores denoting the importance of each type group of ecosystem services to Scotland.

Usage

```
ns_between_importance_scores
```

Format

A named list of scores where values range from 0 to 20, representing the relative importance of each ecosystem service type. Item names are ecosystem service types.

ns_ci_relevance_matrices

Condition Indicator Relevance Matrix List

Description

A set of matrices recording whether or not each condition indicator is relevant to each habitat/ecosystem service combination.

Usage

ns_ci_relevance_matrices

Format

A named list of data frames:

- Names are condition indicator IDs matching ns_indicator_directory.
- Each data frame has habitats as rows and ecosystem services as columns.
- Values are binary (0 or 1) indicating relevance.

ns_ci_scores	<i>Condition Indicator Score Matrix</i>
--------------	---

Description

A matrix containing the raw condition indicator scores over the years of the time series.

Usage

ns_ci_scores

Format

A data frame:

- Rows represent years in the time series.
- Columns represent condition indicators (e.g., "Adult red grouse density").
- Values are numeric condition scores.

ns_custom_divisor_matrix	<i>Nature Scot Custom Divisor Matrix</i>
--------------------------	--

Description

A matrix containing numbers by which the Ecosystem Service Potential per Unit Scores will be divided to calculate a weight.

Usage

ns_custom_divisor_matrix

Format

A data frame:

- Rows represent habitats matching the habitats label tree.
- Columns represent ecosystem services matching the ecosystem services label tree.
- Values are numeric divisors used for weight normalization.

ns_display_ci_names *Display names of Condition Indicators*

Description

Display name (no string cleaning) list of condition indicator names which is used internally.

Usage

ns_display_ci_names

Format

A character vector where items are the original number and name of NatureScot's 38 condition indicators:

ns_display_es_label_tree
Display name version of Ecosystem Services Label Tree

Description

Display name version (no string cleaning) version of ns_es_label_tree which is used internally.

Usage

ns_display_es_label_tree

Format

A named list of character vectors:

- Names represent ecosystem service types (e.g., "Provisioning").
- Values are character vectors of specific ecosystem services (e.g., "Cultivated crops").

ns_display_habitats_label_tree

Display name version of Habitats Label Tree

Description

Display name version (no string cleaning) version of ns_habitats_label_tree which is used internally.

Usage

ns_display_habitats_label_tree

Format

A named list of character vectors:

- Names represent broad habitat groups (e.g., "Coastal habitats").
- Values are character vectors of specific habitat types (e.g., "Coastal shingle").

ns_es_label_tree

Ecosystem Services Label Tree

Description

A hierarchical tree mapping ecosystem service types to specific ecosystem services.

Usage

ns_es_label_tree

Format

A named list of character vectors:

- Names represent ecosystem service types (e.g., "Provisioning").
- Values are character vectors of specific ecosystem services (e.g., "Cultivated crops").

`ns_habitats_label_tree`*Habitats Label Tree*

Description

A hierarchical tree mapping broad habitat groups to specific habitat types.

Usage`ns_habitats_label_tree`**Format**

A named list of character vectors:

- Names represent broad habitat groups (e.g., "Coastal habitats").
- Values are character vectors of specific habitat types (e.g., "Coastal shingle").

`ns_habitat_extent`*Habitat Extent for Scotland*

Description

A table containing the annual extent (area) of various habitats.

Usage`ns_habitat_extent`**Format**

A data frame:

- Rows represent broad habitats matching the habitats label tree.
- Columns represent years (e.g., 2000 to 2022).
- Values are numeric representing area in hectares.

ns_indicator_directory

Indicator Directory

Description

A table recording the salience of habitat condition scores as indicators of the likely flow of services under each ecosystem service type.

Usage

ns_indicator_directory

Format

A data frame with the following columns:

- ci_id: Unique condition indicator identifier.
- provisioning: Salience for Provisioning services.
- regulation_and_maintenance: Salience for Regulation and Maintenance services.
- cultural: Salience for Cultural services.

ns_provision_per_unit_scores

Provision Per Unit Scores

Description

A matrix of scores denoting the exemplary capacity of each habitat to provide each ecosystem service.

Usage

ns_provision_per_unit_scores

Format

A data frame:

- Rows represent habitats matching the habitats label tree.
- Columns represent ecosystem services matching the ecosystem services label tree.
- Values are numeric scores from 0 (No potential) to 5 (Maximum potential).

ns_within_importance_scores

Ecosystem Service Importance Scores (within-service-type)

Description

Sets of scores denoting the importance of each ecosystem service to Scotland, within its type group.

Usage

ns_within_importance_scores

Format

A named list of named lists of scores:

- Names represent ecosystem service types.
- Names of scores represent individual ecosystem services
- Values are numeric scores (0-20) for specific services within that group.

ns_year_list

Year List

Description

A list of years for which data is available and over which the index will be calculated.

Usage

ns_year_list

Format

A character vector of year labels (e.g., "2000", "2001").

read_ncai_template *Read and Process a Populated NCAI Template*

Description

Imports data from an Excel workbook created by `create_ncai_template`. The function uses the provided label trees to re-align the data and applies automated cleaning to headers to ensure compatibility with internal openNCAI calculation engines. Note that the habitat and ecosystem service label trees should match the labels used in the spreadsheet; typically the same label trees should be used to generate and read the template.

Usage

```
read_ncai_template(path, habitats_label_tree, es_label_tree, ci_names)
```

Arguments

<code>path</code>	String. The file path to the populated .xlsx file.
<code>habitats_label_tree</code>	A named list of character vectors representing the habitat hierarchy. Names: broad habitats, typically EUNIS level 1. Character vector items: typically EUNIS level 2 habitats.
<code>es_label_tree</code>	A named list of character vectors representing the ecosystem service hierarchy. Names: typically SEEA ecosystem service types. Character vector items: typically CICES-type ecosystem services.
<code>ci_names</code>	The original character vector of indicator names used to create the template.

Value

A named list of data structures ready for use in `get_ncai`:

- `clean_habitats_label_tree`: Cleaned version of habitat hierarchy.
- `clean_es_label_tree`: Cleaned version of ES hierarchy.
- `habitat_extent`: Data frame of habitat areas over time.
- `ci_scores`: Data frame of indicator scores over time.
- `provision_per_unit_scores`: Data frame of ES potential per unit area.
- `between_importance`: List of broad ES type weights.
- `within_importance`: List of specific ES service weights.
- `indicator_directory`: Data frame mapping indicators to service types.
- `ci_relevance_matrices`: List of binary matrices for every indicator.

Examples

```
# 1. Define the trees (same as used in create_ncai_template)
habitat_label_tree <- list(
  'B. Coastal Habitats' = c("Coastal vegetated shingle", "Coastal dunes"),
  'E. Grasslands' = c("Dry Grasslands", "Mesic Grasslands")
)

ecosystem_service_label_tree <- list(
  'PROVISIONING' = c("1.1 Cultivated Crops"),
  'CULTURAL' = c("3.5. Existence & bequest")
)

condition_indicator_list <- c("National Water Quality Index")

# 2. Create a temporary template to read back in
# This ensures the example is self-contained and runnable.
tmp_path <- tempfile(fileext = ".xlsx")

create_ncai_template(
  template_out = tmp_path,
  habitats_label_tree = habitat_label_tree,
  es_label_tree = ecosystem_service_label_tree,
  ci_names = condition_indicator_list,
  year_list = 2024:2025
)

# 3. Read the template
# Even though it's empty, the function will process the headers and structure.
ncai_data <- read_ncai_template(
  path = tmp_path,
  habitats_label_tree = habitat_label_tree,
  es_label_tree = ecosystem_service_label_tree,
  ci_names = condition_indicator_list
)

# 4. Access the cleaned data structures
# Show the first few rows of the imported habitat extent matrix
head(ncai_data$habitat_extent)
```

Index

* datasets

- ns_between_importance_scores, 7
- ns_ci_relevance_matrices, 7
- ns_ci_scores, 8
- ns_custom_divisor_matrix, 8
- ns_display_ci_names, 9
- ns_display_es_label_tree, 9
- ns_display_habitats_label_tree, 10
- ns_es_label_tree, 10
- ns_habitat_extent, 11
- ns_habitats_label_tree, 11
- ns_indicator_directory, 12
- ns_provision_per_unit_scores, 12
- ns_within_importance_scores, 13
- ns_year_list, 13

create_ncai_template, 2

get_ncai, 4

- ns_between_importance_scores, 7
- ns_ci_relevance_matrices, 7
- ns_ci_scores, 8
- ns_custom_divisor_matrix, 8
- ns_display_ci_names, 9
- ns_display_es_label_tree, 9
- ns_display_habitats_label_tree, 10
- ns_es_label_tree, 10
- ns_habitat_extent, 11
- ns_habitats_label_tree, 11
- ns_indicator_directory, 12
- ns_provision_per_unit_scores, 12
- ns_within_importance_scores, 13
- ns_year_list, 13

read_ncai_template, 14