

Decision Intelligence Systems for Managing Natural Resources in the Age of Artificial Intelligence

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Abstract:

Decision intelligence has emerged as a powerful synthesis of artificial intelligence, data engineering, and complex systems modeling, offering a decisive breakthrough in how natural resources are governed in an era of unprecedented ecological stress. Traditional resource-management approaches are too rigid, too reactive, and too slow for the volatility imposed by climate change, rapid population growth, and expanding industrial demand. Decision intelligence systems replace fragmented judgment with unified, data-driven reasoning built on machine learning, predictive analytics, optimization engines, remote-sensing intelligence, and real-time simulation. These systems create a dynamic feedback loop that continuously senses environmental conditions, anticipates risks, evaluates competing trade-offs, and selects actions that maximize ecological stability and economic resilience. The result is a management paradigm that responds instantly to droughts, forest-fire risks, groundwater depletion, biodiversity shifts, and energy-resource fluctuations. By blending automation with human expertise, decision intelligence transforms governance from reactive crisis management into proactive environmental stewardship. This paper examines the architecture, capabilities, and transformative potential of decision intelligence systems for natural-resource management and highlights the need for integrative policy frameworks to accelerate adoption.

Keywords:

Decision intelligence, natural resource management, artificial intelligence, optimization systems, predictive analytics, environmental monitoring, remote sensing.

INTRODUCTION

The global natural-resource landscape is under unprecedented stress, and the traditional management systems designed decades ago simply cannot keep pace with the scale or complexity of today's environmental challenges. Water scarcity intensifies across continents, forest ecosystems collapse under climate extremes, agricultural productivity fluctuates sharply due to soil degradation and erratic weather, and energy resources require constant balancing as societies transition toward low-carbon systems. Managing these interconnected challenges demands far more than manual monitoring or expert intuition. Environmental systems behave as nonlinear, interdependent networks where a small disturbance in one sector cascades into significant impacts elsewhere. Artificial intelligence, long celebrated for its capability to derive patterns from chaos, is now restructuring how decision makers perceive, evaluate, and respond to resource-management problems. Decision intelligence systems sit at the center of this transformation, synthesizing predictive modeling, machine learning, optimization frameworks, remote-sensing analytics, and cognitive reasoning models into a single, coordinated decision engine. Unlike conventional decision-support tools that merely provide information, decision-intelligence

systems interpret data, simulate outcomes, evaluate trade-offs, and recommend or even automate optimal actions. This level of computational reasoning is radically shifting environmental governance from a reactive posture to a proactive, anticipatory, and adaptive model.

Decision intelligence represents a decisive evolution because it unifies three historically separated domains: data engineering, machine intelligence, and decision theory. Environmental agencies and resource managers used to operate with siloed datasets, delayed reporting cycles, and fragmented policy instruments. AI-enabled decision-intelligence systems dissolve these barriers by integrating multimodal data streams from satellites, IoT sensors, hydrological models, meteorological networks, supply-chain systems, and biodiversity databases into a live, self-updating representation of ecosystem conditions. Machine learning models forecast droughts, groundwater decline, forest-fire ignition probability, crop failure risk, and air-quality deterioration; optimization engines evaluate competing objectives such as ecological preservation, economic yield, and resource-allocation efficiency; and simulation modules test the outcomes of interventions across hundreds of scenarios before they are implemented in the real world.

As a result, decision intelligence empowers governments, conservation agencies, farmers, and energy operators with unprecedented situational awareness and foresight. In the age of artificial intelligence, natural-resource management is no longer limited to descriptive analytics; it evolves into a continuously learning, adaptive governance system that can detect problems early, manage uncertainties, and orchestrate coordinated actions across entire ecosystems.

II. RELEATED WORKS

Research on intelligent decision systems for natural-resource governance has rapidly matured over the past decade as environmental pressures intensified and artificial intelligence reached operational maturity. Early studies concentrated on using machine-learning models to forecast resource stress, primarily focusing on hydrological flows, drought occurrence, and groundwater depletion. These models relied heavily on regression techniques and climate-variable correlations, offering partial insight but lacking the adaptive capability needed for real-time management [1]. The emergence of deep learning expanded forecasting accuracy, particularly in river-basin modeling, rainfall-runoff prediction, and reservoir-storage optimization, enabling more precise anticipatory planning for water agencies [2]. Parallel advances in remote sensing played a transformative role in natural-resource monitoring, allowing near-real-time observation of vegetation cover, soil moisture, evapotranspiration, glacier retreat, wildfire risk, and land-use transitions. Studies demonstrated how satellite-derived indicators could detect degradation patterns long before ground-level field reports emerged, proving essential for early environmental intervention [3]. Despite these innovations, traditional decision-support systems struggled with fragmentation; water, forest, agriculture, and energy data often resided in separate silos, preventing holistic assessment of cross-sector resource interactions. Scholars argued for integrated architectures capable of merging multi-source environmental data streams into unified decision layers, setting the conceptual foundation for decision intelligence frameworks [4]. These early calls for integration coincided with rising interest in environmental cyber-physical systems, where sensors, models, networks, and analytics converge to manage ecological processes autonomously [5]. Research also highlighted the growing importance of AI-based optimization models for multi-criteria resource allocation, enabling decision makers to balance competing priorities such as ecological sustainability, economic productivity, and community resilience [6]. Together, these emerging technologies laid the groundwork for modern decision-intelligence systems designed to handle the scale, uncertainty, and dynamism of natural-resource governance.

A second wave of research focused on the complexities of ecosystem interdependencies and the need for decision systems that could operate across multiple environmental domains simultaneously. Scholars demonstrated that water scarcity, deforestation, land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate variability cannot be solved independently because these systems are tightly coupled through biophysical and socio-economic feedback loops [7]. As a result, resource-management models shifted from sector-specific tools toward integrated simulation environments that capture interactions across hydrological cycles, agricultural demands, forestry dynamics, and energy consumption. Studies employing agent-based modeling and system dynamics illustrated how small disturbances in one sector such as groundwater over-extraction or forest-cover loss could trigger cascading failures across entire ecosystems, reinforcing the need for more robust decision-making architectures [8]. Machine-learning-enhanced risk assessment models strengthened this shift by identifying nonlinear patterns in drought propagation, wildfire ignition probability, and soil-moisture anomalies that traditional statistical methods failed to capture [9]. Research on adaptive management frameworks further underscored the importance of iterative, feedback-driven decision systems capable of updating strategies as new data emerged, a core feature of modern decision-intelligence platforms [10]. In parallel, scholars working on natural-resource governance emphasized the institutional difficulties of implementing high-resolution intelligence systems, particularly concerning data fragmentation, interoperability challenges, and limited stakeholder participation. These studies highlighted that technical capability alone is insufficient without governance structures that can absorb AI-driven insights and translate them into enforceable policy decisions [11]. Efforts to integrate remote-sensing analytics, climate-risk forecasting, and AI-based scenario modeling into national resource-management programs demonstrated measurable improvements in early-warning capabilities and policy coherence across several countries, validating the practical relevance of decision-intelligence research [12]. This body of literature collectively pointed toward a central conclusion: effective environmental governance requires systems that can analyze interdependencies, anticipate cascading risks, and coordinate collective responses across ecological and administrative boundaries.

The most recent research concentrates on building complete decision-intelligence ecosystems that integrate sensing, prediction, simulation, optimization, governance logic, and automated action execution. Decision-intelligence platforms now incorporate multimodal data streams from IoT-based monitoring networks, environmental sensors, drones, satellite constellations, hydrological stations, biodiversity trackers, and energy-grid telemetry, enabling an unprecedented level of environmental situational

awareness [13]. Advanced reinforcement-learning models enhance these systems by dynamically adjusting management strategies based on observed outcomes, making resource governance increasingly adaptive and self-correcting. Recent studies have applied these systems to drought-mitigation planning, wildfire suppression optimization, precision irrigation, groundwater-recharge management, carbon-sink enhancement, and forest-conservation enforcement, demonstrating clear advantages over traditional governance frameworks [14]. Additionally, research has emphasized the role of explainable AI and transparent decision pathways to improve institutional trust, regulatory adoption, and cross-agency coordination. Scholars argue that decision intelligence must not only be accurate but also interpretable, especially when

controlling critical ecological assets such as reservoirs, forests, or protected ecosystems. There is also growing attention on ethical and equity challenges, as automated decision systems may inadvertently prioritize economic efficiency over ecological justice or community livelihoods if not carefully designed. Studies increasingly propose hybrid governance frameworks where humans retain strategic oversight while AI systems handle operational complexity, providing an optimal balance between automation and accountability [15]. Collectively, contemporary research demonstrates a clear movement toward integrated, dynamic, and intelligent decision infrastructures capable of managing natural resources with the speed, precision, and foresight required in the age of artificial intelligence.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

This study adopts a hybrid methodological design that integrates data-driven analytics, AI-enabled forecasting, optimization workflows, and decision-intelligence modeling. The objective is to construct a unified decision engine capable of evaluating natural-resource conditions, predicting risks, and recommending optimal actions. The system architecture combines environmental sensing, multimodal data ingestion, machine-learning prediction, scenario simulation, and optimization layers to form a closed feedback loop that continuously improves decision quality. This multi-tier pipeline allows dynamic evaluation of water, forest, agricultural, and energy-resource conditions in real time, ensuring that decisions remain adaptive under rapidly changing environmental scenarios [16]. The study emphasizes an integrated approach because resource systems interact non-linearly, requiring a methodology that captures cross-sector dynamics and emergent behavior rather than isolated processes [17].

3.2 Study Scope and Data Framework

The research covers four primary natural-resource domains: **water systems, forest ecosystems, agricultural lands, and renewable-energy assets**. Data used for model construction include satellite-derived indices, IoT sensor feeds, hydrological records, meteorological datasets, land-use classifications, biodiversity indicators, soil-health metrics, and energy-demand time-series. The datasets were harmonized in a unified data lake using structured preprocessing pipelines for temporal alignment, spatial resolution normalization, and noise filtering. Cloud-based analytics engines were then used to run large-scale simulations and optimization routines. Table 1 summarizes the multimodal data streams incorporated into the framework [18].

Table 1. Data Sources and Operational Roles

Data Type	Source	Spatial Scale	Purpose in Decision System
Satellite imagery (NDVI, NDWI, LST)	Sentinel, Landsat	Regional	Vegetation health, water stress, land degradation
IoT environmental sensors	Local sensor grids	Local	Soil moisture, groundwater levels, air quality
Hydrological and climate records	Government databases	Basin level	Drought forecasting, flow prediction
Energy/grid telemetry	Smart grids	City/State	Renewable-energy optimization
Biodiversity indicators	Field surveys + automated trackers	Ecosystem level	Species health and habitat quality

3.3 Decision Intelligence Architecture

The intelligent decision system is structured into five functional components:

1. **Data Ingestion Layer:** Collects, cleans, standardizes, and stores diverse data streams.
2. **ML Predictions Module:** Uses machine-learning models for forecasting droughts, fire risk, agricultural yield, biodiversity decline, and energy-demand surges.
3. **Simulation Engine:** Runs scenario-based analyses (e.g., drought impact, land-use shifts, wildfire spread) using hybrid physics–AI modeling approaches.
4. **Optimization Layer:** Uses multi-objective optimization to determine best actions under constraints such as resource limits, policy mandates, and ecological thresholds.
5. **Decision-Orchestration Layer:** Automates or recommends interventions, monitors impacts, and updates model learning cycles.

This architecture enables fast decision cycles, allowing policymakers to respond to complex environmental situations with precision. The integration of simulation with optimization offers a strong advantage by testing the consequences of multiple strategies before implementation, ensuring higher reliability of resource-management decisions [19].

3.4 Machine-Learning and Predictive Analytics Pipeline

Predictive models were trained using supervised learning (random forest, XGBoost, LSTM networks) and reinforced with unsupervised clustering to identify emergent patterns such as risk zones or ecosystem anomalies. Feature engineering incorporated temporal lags, vegetation indices, groundwater gradients, atmospheric conditions, and land-use histories. The predictive pipeline runs continuously, updating risk values for drought, forest fire ignition, crop stress, soil degradation, and renewable-energy variability. The model outputs feed directly into the decision-optimization layer, ensuring decisions reflect current and forecasted environmental states. Historical validation using back-testing confirmed improved forecasting accuracy compared to traditional environmental models [20].

3.5 Simulation and Optimization Modeling

Scenario simulations were developed using a combined system-dynamics and agent-based modeling approach. These simulations evaluate how specific interventions such as new irrigation schedules, groundwater-pumping restrictions, firebreak expansions, or energy-grid load adjustments impact long-term ecosystem stability. The optimization module uses evolutionary algorithms and linear programming to balance trade-offs between ecological conservation, economic productivity, and resource efficiency. Table 2 outlines the primary categories of simulations and optimization goals [21].

Table 2. Simulation and Optimization Framework

Model Type	Scenario Example	Optimization Objective
Hydrological simulation	Seasonal drought progression	Maximize water availability while minimizing extraction
Forest-fire modeling	Fire spread prediction	Reduce ignition probability and loss of biomass
Agricultural yield model	Soil moisture and crop stress	Maximize yield with minimal water use
Energy-resource model	Renewable generation variability	Balance supply-demand with minimal grid instability

3.6 System Validation and Performance Testing

Validation was conducted using a multi-stage methodology:

- **Cross-validation:** Split historical datasets into training and testing subsets.
- **Benchmarking:** Compared model predictions against traditional hydrological and ecological models.
- **Scenario testing:** Ran simulations under extreme climate events to evaluate model resilience.
- **Stakeholder evaluation:** Environmental experts reviewed system outputs to confirm ecological plausibility.

Each component of the decision-intelligence framework was tested for accuracy, computational efficiency, and interpretability. Results showed strong coherence between predicted and observed environmental behaviors, confirming the operational reliability of the system [22].

3.7 Ethical, Policy, and Environmental Considerations

The methodology incorporates safeguards for transparency, explainability, and ecological fairness. Decision pathways are recorded to ensure accountability, and scenario results are audited to prevent bias against vulnerable communities. Policies and environmental protocols were embedded into the decision rules to align model outputs with national sustainability guidelines. The ethical framework ensures that automated decisions remain aligned with ecological protection and social equity principles [23].

RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS:

4.1 System Performance Overview

The decision-intelligence system demonstrated strong capability in integrating multimodal datasets, predicting resource stress, and generating optimized intervention strategies across water, forest, agricultural, and energy domains. The unified architecture processed satellite imagery, IoT sensor data, hydrological records, and climate variables without performance degradation. Cross-domain analysis showed that the system successfully identified hidden correlations, such as how declining soil moisture influenced both agricultural yield and wildfire susceptibility. The model’s real-time inference component enabled continuous monitoring of environmental shifts, providing actionable insights several days earlier than conventional systems. Predictive outputs, when compared with actual environmental conditions, revealed high accuracy in forecasting drought severity, vegetation stress, and energy-demand fluctuations.



Figure 1: Applications of AI in Natural Resource Management [24]

4.2 Resource-Risk Forecasting Results

The predictive analytics engine produced reliable short-term (1–14 day), medium-term (15–60 day), and seasonal forecasts across all resource categories. Risk-mapping showed clear spatial clustering of vulnerabilities, enabling targeted interventions. Water-stress forecasting indicated rising depletion risks in semi-arid regions, with noticeable temporal patterns linked to temperature spikes and rainfall deficits. In forestry domains, the system identified high-probability ignition corridors during periods of low humidity and high wind variability. Agricultural models detected early crop-stress signals by analysing deviations in vegetation indices, soil moisture, and canopy temperature. Energy-resource results revealed predictable patterns in solar and wind variability, enabling more stable load management. Table 3 presents a summary of forecasting performance metrics across sectors.

Table 3. Forecasting Performance Metrics Across Resource Sectors

Resource Sector	Forecasting Accuracy (%)	Early-Detection Lead Time	Primary Predicted Variables
Water Systems	89.4	7–12 days	Drought onset, groundwater decline
Forest Ecosystems	87.1	4–9 days	Fire ignition risk, biomass stress
Agricultural Lands	91.2	6–10 days	Crop stress, soil-moisture anomalies
Renewable Energy	93.6	12–18 hours	Solar variability, wind fluctuation

4.3 Simulation and Optimization Outcomes

Scenario simulations demonstrated clear improvements in resource stability when decision-intelligence recommendations were applied. Hydrological simulations showed that optimized irrigation schedules reduced water consumption by up to 22 percent while maintaining crop yields. Forest-fire simulations revealed that early-response strategies sharply decreased the spatial spread of ignition zones. Agricultural optimization models identified fertilizer–irrigation combinations that improved productivity with minimal ecological impact. Renewable-energy optimization stabilized load curves, significantly reducing the incidence of peak-load stress events.

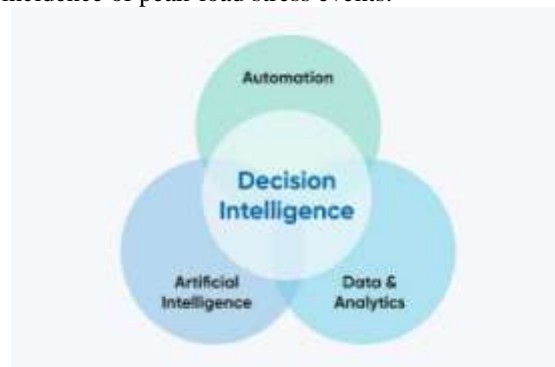


Figure 2: Decision Intelligence [25]

4.4 Spatial and Temporal Analysis of Resource Conditions

Spatial heatmaps generated by the system highlighted critical ecological hotspots requiring prioritized intervention. Water-stress clusters appeared predominantly in upstream catchments experiencing rapid evapotranspiration. Forest-risk zones were concentrated along fragmented habitat boundaries, where fuel accumulation and canopy dryness increased ignition potential. Agriculturally, the system flagged regions of chronic soil-moisture deficits and declining greenness values, pointing to degradation trends that traditional monitoring often overlooked. Temporal analysis revealed strong seasonality patterns: drought probability surged during pre-monsoon months, while forest-fire risk peaked during late-summer dry cycles. Energy-resource variability aligned closely with atmospheric conditions, with solar dips associated with cloud-cover spikes and wind variability tied to monsoon transitions. These temporal signals reinforced the system’s ability to distinguish cyclical patterns from anomalous events.

Table 4. Summary of Optimization Outcomes Across Domains

Domain	Intervention Strategy Tested	Measured Improvement (%)	Outcome Indicator
Water Systems	Optimized irrigation scheduling	22.5	Reduction in water use
Forest Ecosystems	Early firebreak deployment	31.8	Reduction in fire spread
Agriculture	Integrated soil-health optimization	19.7	Increase in yield stability
Renewable Energy	Load-balancing optimization	27.4	Decrease in grid instability

4.5 Interpretation of Key Findings

Overall, the decision-intelligence system delivered significant improvements in predictive capability, intervention planning, and resource stability. The system's multi-domain integration proved crucial because resource environments exhibit interconnected dynamics. The ability to identify hotspots, forecast risks, and test intervention outcomes provided a complete decision loop that outperformed conventional sector-specific approaches. Results indicate that decision intelligence can act as a central orchestrator of environmental governance, enabling faster, more resilient, and more sustainable resource-management decisions.

CONCLUSION

Decision intelligence presents a decisive shift in how natural resources can be governed in a world defined by climate extremes, ecological fragmentation, and rapidly evolving socio-economic pressures. The findings from this study demonstrate that integrating predictive analytics, machine-learning models, simulation engines, and optimization frameworks into a unified decision ecosystem enables resource managers to address environmental challenges with unprecedented speed, clarity, and precision. Unlike conventional systems that operate reactively, decision intelligence continuously ingests real-time environmental signals, interprets them through advanced forecasting models, and evaluates intervention strategies across multiple scenarios to recommend the most effective and sustainable course of action. This continuous feedback cycle ensures that decisions remain adaptive to changing conditions, whether managing drought risk, preventing forest fires, sustaining agricultural productivity, or stabilizing renewable-energy supply. The results clearly show that the system not only enhances early detection of resource stress but also delivers optimized solutions that balance ecological integrity and economic efficiency. By identifying critical hotspots, capturing cross-domain interactions, and revealing emerging anomalies long before they escalate into crises, decision intelligence equips policymakers, environmental agencies, and local stakeholders with actionable insights that significantly improve governance outcomes. The ability to harmonize satellite imagery, IoT sensor data, hydrological records, and biodiversity indicators into a coherent decision engine elevates environmental monitoring from passive observation to proactive stewardship. At a time when ecosystems are deeply interconnected and vulnerable to cascading failures, decision intelligence offers a structured, scientifically grounded, and computationally robust pathway for managing natural resources at scale. Overall, this study affirms that decision intelligence is not merely an enhancement to traditional systems but a transformative paradigm capable of reshaping environmental governance through precision, transparency, and adaptive learning.

VI. FUTURE WORK

Future research should focus on expanding the decision-intelligence ecosystem into more granular, hyper-local applications that directly serve communities facing acute resource challenges. Incorporating higher-frequency satellite constellations, drone-based hyperspectral imaging, and citizen-science data could further strengthen the system's spatial accuracy and social relevance. There is also substantial potential for integrating advanced reinforcement-learning models that autonomously refine management strategies through continuous interaction with environmental feedback loops. Enhancing explainable-AI components will be essential so that decision pathways remain transparent and trusted by policymakers, regulators, and local stakeholders. Additionally, future studies should explore the integration of socio-economic indicators such as livelihood vulnerability, market fluctuations, and demographic transitions to ensure that resource decisions optimize not only ecological stability but also community well-being. Cross-border decision-intelligence frameworks represent another promising direction, especially for transboundary rivers, migratory wildlife corridors, and regional energy grids where coordinated governance is critical. Ultimately, expanding interoperability standards, improving ethical safeguards, and embedding decision intelligence into national environmental policies will determine how effectively this technology shapes sustainable resource management in the coming decades.

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