

COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative

United Nations Development Programme
Environment and Energy



Issue No. 1 July 2012

Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

This newsletter is produced by the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project, implemented by UNDP and funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund. It provides updates on a range of topics including the status of ongoing country programmes, landscape performance indicators, project impacts and results, and noteworthy announcements.

For more information about the COMDEKS project and latest news, please visit our blog at www.comdeksproject.com

Welcome to the first issue of our Newsletter! In this edition, we highlight:

- (1) Brief overview of COMDEKS, including its vision, objectives and components;
- (2) Updates on the implementation of COMDEKS;
- (3) Participation of COMDEKS to the Satoyama Initiative side event at Rio +20;
- (4) Stories from COMDEKS participating countries - Ethiopia, Ghana, Nepal and Slovakia.

Quick Glance at COMDEKS Country Programmes (July 2012)



Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS)



In June 2011, the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), the United Nations University (UNU), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) agreed to support the Community Development and Knowledge management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS), as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI). The Satoyama Initiative is a global initiative to promote sustainable use and management of natural resources in socio-ecological production landscapes with the aim of maintaining, rebuilding and revitalizing them.

Funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund setup within the CBD Secretariat, the COMDEKS project is implemented by UNDP, and delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), allowing for a fast, flexible, and proven mechanism to reach communities and civil society at the local level.

As part of COMDEKS, small grants are provided to local community organizations with the overall long term objective to enhance socio-ecological production landscape resilience by developing sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities to maintain, rebuild, and revitalize landscapes. COMDEKS grant making is expected to generate key lessons on community-based best practices to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes toward the realization of "societies in harmony with nature", as defined as the vision of the Satoyama Initiative.

The Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) is currently implemented in 10 countries: Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia and Turkey.

COMDEKS Inception Workshop



Inception workshop participants

The COMDEKS inception workshop took place in Accra, Ghana on September 24-26, 2011. The workshop was opened by Prof. Alfred Oteng Yeboah, the Chair of the IPSI Steering Committee and a member of the National Biodiversity Advisory Group of Ghana.

The COMDEKS inception workshop brought together representatives of SGP Country Programmes from the first group of participating countries with the aim of accomplishing three broad objectives: 1) to become familiar with the concept of the Satoyama Initiative and integrated management of SEPLs, as well as the COMDEKS implementation strategy; 2) to gain technical knowledge and learn about tools and resources for operationalizing the concept of the Satoyama Initiative in COMDEKS project landscapes; 3) to share expectations and tools for knowledge management, build strategies for implementing COMDEKS in each of the participating countries, and establish action plans and guidelines for post-workshop collaboration and project implementation.

Please click [here](#) to read the complete workshop report.

Implementation Status

Goal

To develop sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities to maintain, rebuild, and revitalize socio-ecological production landscapes (SEPLs)

Countries

First Phase: Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Grenada, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia, and Turkey

Timeframe and Budget

Japan Biodiversity Fund contributing with 2 million USD a year starting in 2011, with the scope of expanding to a 5-year partnership programme

Status

First phase: currently under implementation in 10 countries

The COMDEKS project launches its own blog!



The COMDEKS team has launched its new blog - www.comdeksproject.com.

The project blog has been set up serving as an internal portal for information sharing, exchange of experience on lessons learned and discussions among national coordinators. The blog provides a dynamic and user-friendly structure with multimedia options; with an appealing user interface and inter-active feature such as commenting, uploading documents, photos, videos; etc.

The blog currently hosts powerpoints, photos and reports from the inception workshop, guidance documents and toolkits, and country profiles describing the scope of each country programme and responsible personnel in each country.



Capturing resilience in socio-ecological production landscapes (SEPL)



As part of an ongoing collaboration with UNDP, UNU-IAS along with Bioversity International have developed a set of socio-ecological production landscape indicators which are currently being applied and tested in the COMDEKS project sites to help measure and understand the resilience of target landscapes.

Experiences and lessons learned to be gained through the practical application of the indicators during the landscape-wide baseline assessments are envisaged to be compiled and analyzed for further improvement of the indicators. This piloting exercise will help UNDP and other IPSI members to refine the overall approach and methodology for measuring landscape resilience.

A copy of the booklet “Indicators for Resilience in Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes” is available for download [here](#). This project is led by the United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies and Bioversity International as a Collaborative Activity under the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI).

COMDEKS Project featured at Rio +20 Side Event



On 18 June 2012, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Government of Japan held a Side Event on “the Satoyama Initiative and the Green Economy”. The Side Event was organized by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and the IPSI Secretariat (UNU-IAS).

The side event was opened by Mr. Kazuhiko Takemoto, Senior Adviser to the Japanese Minister of the Environment, and Director, IPSI Secretariat, UNU-IAS. A keynote speech by Prof. Kazuiko Takeuchi, Vice Rector, United Nations University, was followed by a panel discussion led by Mr. Kazuaki Hoshino, Special Assistant to COP10 President, Adviser to the Japanese Minister of Environment; Dr. Yannick Glemarek, UNDP/GEF Executive Coordinator and Director of Environmental Finance; Dr. Tony Simons, Director General, World Agroforestry Centre, and Mr. Makoto Nagasawa, President and CEO, Fruta Fruta, Inc..

The COMDEKS project was featured in the Rio+20 side event as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI). UNDP views the landscape approach as an effective way of mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem functioning while providing local well beings and sustainable livelihoods in low-carbon development that maximizes resilience to climate change. UNDP believes in the importance of the Satoyama Initiative in promoting and supporting socio-ecological production landscapes around the world and engaging communities in local development planning, and COMDEKS will be an integral part of it toward green low emission climate resilient development.

For more information, please read the [full press release](#) posted on the Satoyama Initiative website.

Portfolio Updates

Ethiopia



Gilgel Gibe catchment, Ethiopia

The landscape area for COMDEKS activities in Ethiopia is located in the Oromia regional state in Jimma zone about 260 km South West of Addis Ababa and about 55 km north-east of Jimma. The area, enclosed within four districts, namely Sekoru, Omo Nada, Kersa and Tiro Afeta, is located in the Gilgel Gibe catchment.

COMDEKS funds will be used for projects at the landscape level from selected catchments of Gilgel Gibe 1, aimed at enhancing socio-ecological production landscape resilience through community based-activities. With the support of Jimma University, a local academic institution well known to be the first innovative community-oriented education and research institution in Ethiopia, a landscape-wide baseline assessment of the Socio

-Ecological Production Landscape (SEPL) of the target area was conducted in May 2012 to assess the overall performance of the target landscape. COMDEKS Ethiopia is currently in the process of finalizing the consultation process with landscape communities that will lead to the preparation of a COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy, a comprehensive document that will outline the landscape profile, expected goals and outcomes, and key measures and strategies for community-based actions.

Contributed by Zeleke Tesfaye, National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Ghana



WETO range stakeholders, Ghana

The socio-ecological production landscape being considered for COMDEKS activities in Ghana is the Weto Range, a narrow belt of ridges and hills in Western Ghana which forms part of the Togo-Akwapim ranges (the Atakora Range). The WETO socio-economic ecological production landscape comprises five traditional areas – Goviefe, Nyagbo, Avatime, Logba, and Leklebi in the Volta Region.

The SGP-Ghana Country Programme, in collaboration with the three District Assemblies within the Weto Landscape, held an initiation workshop in Kpeve to discuss the Satoyama Initiative, the concept of integrated management of socio-ecological production landscapes (SEPLs), and to identify the COMDEKS implementation strategy. The workshop, which was funded by the District Assemblies, was attended by over 50 stakeholders, including civil society organizations operating within the landscape, traditional rulers, government socio-economic service providers, opinion leaders, District Assembly members, religious groups and farmers. The participating civil society groups agreed to initiate a WETO platform to galvanize resources to support the implementation of the project.

Contributed by George Ortsin, National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Nepal



Manahan River Catchment area, Nepal

The landscape site for COMDEKS activities in Nepal has been identified as west Makawanpur where indigenous Chepang and Tamangs predominantly practice slash and burn agriculture with very short rotation. The target landscape is located in the watershed area of the Manahari River, one of the most hazard prone landscapes in Makawanpur, Central Nepal.

The goal of Nepal COMDEKS Country Programme is to enhance socio-ecological production landscape’s resilience within 10 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of Western Makawanpur through community led initiatives.

Contributed by Gopal Sherchan, National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Slovakia



Laborec Uh, Eastern Slovakian Lowlands

The landscape selected for COMDEKS activities in Slovakia is a lowland area of some 29,500 ha located within the Latorica River Basin in the Eastern Slovakian Lowlands (Laborec Uh Region) which lie wholly inside the Danube River catchment.

The area, which lies in one of the poorest regions in Slovakia, falls within the Košice administrative region, districts Michalovce and Sobrance. It includes 32 villages, with a total population of about 11,590 inhabitants. Because of the difficult soil fertility and soil moisture conditions, agricultural productivity is significantly low compared to other parts of Slovakia. The selection process for the grantee organization to conduct the landscape-wide baseline assessment is currently ongoing.

Contributed by Andrea Cimborova, National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP