

COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative

United Nations Development Programme



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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.

Welcome to the twenty-second issue of our Newsletter!

In this edition, we highlight:

- 1) COMDEKS side event at SBSTTA-21 and launch of a booklet on Aichi contributions
- 2) New publications on Landscape Governance guidance and experiences
- 3) Organizations from COMDEKS partner countries join IPSI membership
- 4) Sustainable livelihoods through a Village Savings and Loan Scheme in Ghana
- 5) Portfolio updates: Ethiopia and Turkey
- 6) Video from Namibia

COMDEKS Country Programmes: December 2017



Community Action to Achieve the Aichi Targets: COMDEKS side event at CBD SBSTTA-21 in Montreal

From 11-14 December 2017, the 21st meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-21) took place in Montreal, Canada. The SBSTTA was established by the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) to advise the Conference of the Parties (COP), providing assessments of the status of biological diversity and the types of measures undertaken.

During this conference, UNDP, the United Nations Univer-



sity Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ) jointly hosted a side event on 14 December 2017 to share experiences and best practices from the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) Programme. Speakers from UNDP, GEF SGP, MOEJ, UNU

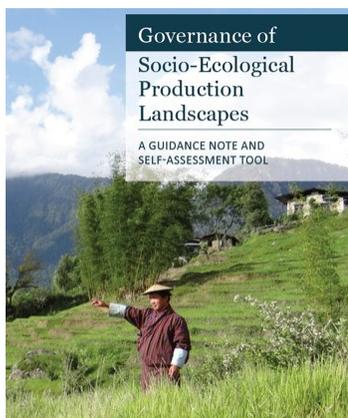
-IAS, and the CBD Secretariat discussed issues, best practices and lessons learned related to COMDEKS' contribution to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including the use of the Indicators of Resilience of Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS) in a participatory approach to building landscape resilience by promoting sustainable livelihoods and biodiversity conservation.

The side event was an opportunity to launch a booklet highlighting COMDEKS' contributions to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as the critical role that local communities play in ecosystem protection and biodiversity conservation. The publication has two parts. Part 1 introduces COMDEKS and its community-based landscape approach for conserving ecosystems and biodiversity and promoting sustainable livelihoods. It outlines the rationale for why community action is vital to conserving biodiversity in rural landscapes outside of Protected Areas. Part 2 highlights how COMDEKS has contributed to achieving all five of the Strategic Goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and many of the individual Aichi Biodiversity Targets, showcasing a variety of best practices and results from supported projects.

Please [click here](#) to download the full publication.



New Landscape Governance publications: A guidance document and case studies from Ecuador, Ghana, and Indonesia



Local communities are the residents, custodians, and everyday users of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. They are the primary agents of landscape change, and can be prime movers in rebuilding landscape resilience. However, in order to do so communities and their organizations must be able to participate effectively in the decision-making processes that affect their landscapes. A resilient landscape system needs institutions and processes that are collaborative and flexible, and which bring together actors from various levels and sectors.

As landscape-level approaches to natural resource management are gaining momentum around the world, it is crucial to take into account the often complex governance issues that influence how resources are allocated, used and conserved in a landscape. With support from Natural Justice, an organization working at the intersection of human rights and environmental law, COMDEKS has developed two new publications in this regard. The publication [“Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes: A Guidance Note and Self-Assessment Tool”](#) provides guidance to organizations involved in landscape approaches on how to understand and improve the governance setting of the landscape, with a focus on the community perspective. It contains two parts: Part 1 of the document is a general guidance note that provides an overview of the importance and challenges of governance in socio-ecological production landscapes; guidance on how to integrate governance into the planning and execution of strategic landscape processes; and examples of measures to support local communities in their efforts to improve the governance of their socio-ecological production landscapes. Part 2 is a governance self-assessment tool that communities and their supporting organizations can use to understand and analyze governance processes in their landscape, and to reflect on possible actions.

The case study collection “Landscape Governance in Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes: Experiences from the COMDEKS Programme in Ecuador, Ghana, and Indonesia” presents experiences from successful on-the-

ground actions to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes with particular respect to landscape governance, drawing on supported projects in Ecuador, Ghana and Indonesia. It is divided in three principal parts. The introduction briefly outlines the importance of governance in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. Three case studies describe the socio-ecological landscape and its governance structure at the onset of each project, the COMDEKS landscape strategy and activities, developments in governance during the project, and finally lessons learned and challenges ahead. Finally, the conclusions attempt to sum up the lessons learned and successful approaches from these COMDEKS experiences with respect to landscape governance.

Please [click here](#) to download the full publications.

Further organizations from COMDEKS partner countries join IPSI membership



IPSI Steering Committee meeting group photo

Photo: IPSI

A number of organizations committed to sustainable development and environmental protection from COMDEKS partner countries were confirmed to join the body of members of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI) during the Twelfth Meeting of the IPSI Steering Committee (SC-12), held in October 2017 in Kanazawa, Japan. Among the new IPSI members are the Accelerated Rural Development Organisation (ARDO) from Ghana, the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute, the Mongolian Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET), and the South Asian Forum for Environment (SAFE) from India.

Since its launch at CBD COP 10 in 2010, IPSI has grown its global membership to over 200 diverse member organizations, which include national and local governments, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, universities, private sector organizations and others. These organizations share a common vision for biodiversity and sustainable development through work in landscapes and seascapes where human

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production activities and nature coexist in harmony. IPSI coordinates and supports related activities, including on-the-ground activities, policy development, and various knowledge sharing activities. Working with local and national governments is an important priority for IPSI, and the partnership is a valuable platform for communication and coordination with a diversity of organizations working from local to global levels. As part of its knowledge-sharing activities, members also have the opportunity to showcase relevant initiatives in their country at global, regional, and national events, and share valuable experience.

Biodiversity Conservation and livelihood development through a Village Savings and Loan Scheme in Ghana



Harvesting of eggplant and other vegetables

Photo: Ghana

The activities supported through COMDEKS in the target landscape in Ghana – the Weto Range – have promoted diversification of agricultural landscapes through reforestation, agroforestry, and diversification of production systems through cultivation of more crop varieties and integrated crop-livestock systems. Together with the introduction of improved technologies in low-input agriculture, soil conservation, and improved water management, activities helped to conserve local plant and animal biodiversity and facilitate livelihood enterprise development activities based on the needs of local communities, reducing the need for bush meat hunting.

As one of the exit strategies and to empower local communities to continue their efforts towards improved landscape resilience, the programme has introduced access to finance schemes that sought to mobilize financial resources from within the communities. A village savings and loan scheme (VLS) was promoted to encourage community-level savings and reinvestment within the landscape through loan access on a regular basis. Within this scheme, community

members form associations that register savings, which then become available as loan capital to others. There are about 1,000 registered subscribers to this scheme within the landscape, contributing to continued biodiversity conservation, development of social capital, and establishment of enterprises for alternative income generation.

Enterprises that benefited from this access to finance now engage in honey production, rabbit and pig farming, grass cutter rearing, and agroforestry, for example. Even without external funding, partner communities have continued to foster agroecological practices and livelihood development. Recent studies have revealed that 85% of the women VLS users have been investing the capital from their savings through a sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA). Under the technical guidance of the programme, five rural enterprises have been established to develop sustainable trade initiatives and markets in processing of non-timber forest products (NTFP); integrated livestock and small ruminants rearing (poultry, rabbits, goats and pigs); petty trading in fish, vegetables, cereals and fruits; and production and processing of honey.

For more information on COMDEKS results in Ghana, please view a short video [here](#).

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

Portfolio Updates: Ethiopia



Livestock fattening

Photo: Ethiopia

The twelve supported projects in the Gilgel Gilbe 1 (GG1) catchment area included the construction of physical soil and water conservation measures to reduce siltation and sedimentation, as well as promote practices increasing soil fertility. Overall, almost 1,000 ha in the target landscape have been restored and brought under sustainable management. More than 900 ha of agricultural land have been brought under sound ecological production practices in col-

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laboration with more than 2,800 communities (over 14,000 community members overall). Crop yields have increased by about 15% on average. About 20,000 community members are now engaged in sustainable livelihood activities, including animal fattening, apiculture, aquaculture, and production of fuel saving stoves, multipurpose trees, shrubs and grasses, increasing the average household income by about 10%.

Introducing the stall-feeding system for livestock fattening has proven particularly successful in the target landscape, increasing income for communities as well as helping to restore degraded ecosystems by reducing free grazing. Additionally, degraded grasslands and farmlands as well as gully areas have been closed for rehabilitation and biodiversity conservation. From the 1,100 ha of land officially closed for restoration and brought under sustainable management, about 500 ha of land have been already successfully rehabilitated.

Today, all 20 supported CBOs are still active in the landscape and have increased their membership since. Incomes of families have further improved, productive activities are more diverse, the natural vegetation is regenerating quickly, annual crops are being replaced with permanent shaded coffee systems, and soil erosion and siltation has been reduced. Acknowledging this progress, active partners (local government, University, NGOs) have prepared a comprehensive 5-year strategy to scale up this experience in GG1 to cover the entire water catchment area.

Contributed by Zeleke Tesfaye, Ethiopia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP, and Feleke Bebzha, Ethiopia Programme Assistant, GEF SGP, UNDP

Turkey



Fisherwomen and her daughter

Photo: Turkey

Based on the Landscape Strategy developed for the COMDEKS target landscape, the Datça-Bozburun peninsula in southwestern Turkey, 17 projects have been supported to date as part of Turkey's portfolio of landscape interven-

tions. These projects aimed to promote conservation and diversification of agriculture, sustainable tourism initiatives, activities reducing illegal fishing, as well as the establishment of local working groups, committees and thematic networks to enhance participatory decision-making at the landscape level.

A number of COMDEKS-supported projects have put great effort in protecting marine biodiversity by tackling negative impacts from various angles. Activities included promoting a land-based control mechanism to reduce illegal fishing, including positive economic incentives for responsible fishing, creating awareness among local fishing communities about unsustainable fishing practices, and empowering fisherwomen and their daughters to improve their livelihoods using traditional knowledge. These activities resulted in a concrete policy change, banning hunting of the endangered dusky grouper, and reduced the sale of illegal fishing products from 50% to 20%.

As a direct result of the participatory landscape approach and to further sustain programme achievements and expand community efforts and policy influence, COMDEKS grantee CBOs have established the Balikaşiran network, which has evolved into a multi-stakeholder partnership since and is expanding experiences to other regions. The network and its members have gained significant credibility in the region and local governments and central government organizations now regularly consult it, having tasked the network to coordinate the development process of a long-term sustainable development strategy for the Datça-Bozburun peninsula.

Contributed by Gökmen Argun, Turkey National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

A video from Namibia



Click on the image above to access a video from Namibia

Contributed by Nickey Gaseb, Namibia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

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