

# 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-third issue of our Newsletter!

In this edition we highlight:

1. Toolkit on sustainable agriculture technologies published by SGP Costa Rica
2. Replication and upscaling of the Landscape Approach in Peru
3. Green Haat organized with SGP and COMDEKS partners in India
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### COMDEKS Country Programmes: March 2018



### Toolkit on sustainable agriculture technologies published by SGP Costa Rica

The COMDEKS target landscape in Costa Rica, the Jesús María river basin, was identified as the most degraded watershed in Costa Rica by the National Action Program (NAP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Land Degradation (UNCCD) in 2004. Since 2011, SGP in collaboration with the Advisory Commission on Land Degradation (CADETI) has worked with local CSOs in the river basin to reverse the high level of soil degradation and create alternative livelihood opportunities

for rural communities. Starting in 2014, SGP's project portfolio was complemented by community-based initiatives under the landscape approach supported by COMDEKS.

Together with the Ministry of Environment (MINAE), the Ministry of Agriculture (MAG), and CADETI, SGP Costa Rica has placed great effort to gather and disseminate knowledge and experiences from initiatives to improve landscape resilience, conserve biodiversity and revive local sustainable production landscapes to stimulate replication and upscaling of successfully piloted practices and technologies.



In line with this knowledge sharing objective, SGP Costa Rica, CADETI, MAG and MINAE have developed a comprehensive toolkit on sustainable agriculture technologies in Spanish ("Manual de herramientas sobre tecnologías de producción agropecuaria").

The toolkit is structured in four sections: Soil conservation, Water Resources, Sustainable livestock and silvopastoral systems, and Organic agriculture. Each section contains a description of sustainable practices and technologies for small-scale farmlands, details on socio-economic and environmental benefits, costs and contact details of specialists for implementation support. Numerous pictures and examples of successful practices compiled from COMDEKS projects in Costa Rica complement the technical guidelines.

As part of SGP's Sixth Operational Phase, SGP Costa Rica is currently supporting additional communities in the Jesús María



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river basin as well as in Barranca to improve resilience of their socio-ecological production landscapes by implementing a landscape approach based on previous experiences and lessons from COMDEKS and SGP. The published toolkit will be instrumental in further reversing soil degradation and increasing agricultural yields for improved rural livelihoods.

To download the toolkit, please click [here](#).

*Contributed by Charles Dixon, Costa Rica National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP, and Paula Zuñiga-Diaz, Costa Rica Programme Assistant, GEF SGP, UNDP*

## Replication and upscaling of the Landscape Approach in four target landscapes in Peru



Local farmers with alpaca herd Photo: Enrique Castro-Mendivil, UNDP Peru

SGP Peru has adopted a landscape approach under the current GEF operational phase (GEF-6) between 2017 and 2020, harnessing and building on experiences and lessons learned from COMDEKS' pilot landscapes and other SGP country programmes that previously implemented landscape approaches. During the Sixth Operational Phase of the GEF Small Grants Programme, SGP Peru will support community-driven initiatives aiming to strengthen landscape resilience in four target landscapes in the high Andean, which are part of the regions Arequipa, Cusco, Puno and Tacna. The landscape strategies have been developed based on identification of local environmental and socioeconomic challenges as well as resilience objectives using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators during participatory baseline assessments.

During the first call for proposals in September 2017, 120 proposals for community projects were received. Of these, a first set of 19 projects was selected to receive technical implementation support. The selected projects aim to revitalize and maintain the socio-ecological production landscapes from various angles, which include the recovery of ancestral irrigation channels and installation of solar energy powered irrigation solutions, combining traditional practices with modern sustainable technologies; production of textile crafts from organic alpaca wool in an effort to promote alternative livelihoods for local women; sustainable management of alpacas and llamas as well as revegetation of degraded land;

breeding of Andean fish species through innovative technologies; creating value added for local crops such as potatoes and wild fruits; and promotion of community tourism.

On 11 January 2018, community leaders from the four target landscapes attended the kick-off workshop for these projects at the UNDP office in Lima, exchanging information on the initiatives and objectives in their landscapes, and discussing opportunities for further knowledge and technology exchange. For more information, click [here](#).

*Contributed by Manuel Mavila Loli, Peru National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP*

## Green Haat organized with SGP and COMDEKS partners in India

On the occasion of the visit by the CEO and chairperson of the Global Environment Facility, Ms. Naoko Ishii, SGP India in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF&CC), UNDP and the Center for Environment Education (CEE) hosted a "Green Haat" from 31 October to 6 November 2017 to provide a market place for rural communities whose livelihoods depend on ecosystem services to showcase and market their biodiversity products crafted with support from COMDEKS and SGP projects. By creating a platform for vulnerable communities to display their products from rural production landscapes that highly depend on a sustainable relationship between livelihood activities and the environment, communities are socially empowered and encouraged to conserve biodiversity and reduce land degradation.



Ms. Naoko Ishii purchasing local products

Photo: India

Together with Ms. Ishii, high-level guests included Hon. Dr. Mahesh Sharma, MoEF&CC Minister of State, and other officials from the Ministry and UNDP encouraging the mainstreaming of grassroots innovations. Among the 22 local producers offering their produce, COMDEKS partner Chhatrasal Sewa Sansthan displayed its organic pulses, ginger, garlic, spices, and pickles. The event also displayed the achievements of COMDEKS-supported initiatives through an impressive 'Gallery-Walk', which illustrated numerous pictures from project sites as well as short videos capturing the successful impacts of these community-led projects.

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This event was a significant opportunity for rural producers to sell and market their sustainably generated products. Within seven days, the event saw more than 12,000 visitors and revenue from sold produce reached around 400,000 rupees (about USD 6,060). Additionally, such events are powerful platforms to sustain and strengthen partnerships between local communities and NGOs, donors, and implementing agencies beyond projects.

*Contributed by Jaison Varghese, India Programme Assistant, GEF SGP, UNDP*

## Landscape Strategy developed for the Indus Delta using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators, Pakistan



Baseline Assessment participants

Photo: Pakistan

The Indus Delta was selected as the target landscape in Pakistan for SGP's Sixth Operational Phase to be implemented from 2017 to 2020, adopting a landscape management approach. In June/July 2017, SGP Pakistan conducted community consultations and the participatory Baseline Assessment with 130 stakeholders from the Indus Delta using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators. The Baseline Assessment identified a number of critical issues and threats in the Indus Delta, which include the vulnerability of and losses to the area through natural disasters, biodiversity loss, degradation of cultivable land due to salt water intrusion, coastal erosion through rapid seas, 80% of the coastal population of Sujawal/Thatta and Badin below the poverty line, limited fresh water availability, lack of an environmental governance body to prevent land degradation through salt-water intrusion and unsustainable practices, depleting fish stocks and increase of unsustainable fishing practices, loss of indigenous seed varieties due to increased dependence on hybrid varieties, causing spread of diseases, and loss of riverine forests.

Findings and perspectives of this Baseline Assessment and the consultations formed the basis for developing a comprehensive Landscape Strategy for the Delta, which defines the overall objective to "build the social, economic and ecological resilience of the landscape through community-based activities." While this will be a living document that will continue to be refined based on experiences and lessons learned

over time, supported community-led initiatives will strive to promote four concrete landscape outcomes: 1) Strengthen or restore degraded landscapes and ecosystems of the landscape area for enhanced ecosystem services and conservation of biodiversity; 2) reduce pressure on ecosystems, landscapes and natural resources by increasing productivity and sustainability of agro-ecosystems resulting in increased food security; 3) enhance livelihood and income generation opportunities; and 4) strengthen organizational, governance and knowledge management capacity of community and landscape-level institutions.

In line with these landscape outcomes, supported initiatives may, for example, include plantation of resilient mangrove species, which are critical for erosion control of coasts, income generation activities, biodiversity conservation, and local food security; rainwater harvesting; protection of indigenous rare or high value livestock breeds; promotion of alternatives for timber and wood products to reduce deforestation; enhancing sustainability and productivity of smallholder agro-ecosystems; expansion of livelihood opportunities, particularly for women; and support for measures that build upon and replicate prior SGP innovations/models, such as energy efficient (EE) and low carbon housing, stoves, brick kilns, solar products, and eco-tourism.

For the SGP Pakistan Landscape Strategy, click [here](#).

*Contributed by Masood Lohar, Pakistan National Program Manager, GEF SGP, UNDP*

## Portfolio Updates

### Cambodia



Monthly savings group meeting

Photo: Cambodia

In the Steung Siem Reap Watershed in Cambodia, recent estimates of upstream forest loss were at 75 percent, and downstream areas have been affected by the resulting change in water flows. Forests in the upper watershed area have been degraded by hunting, conversion to agriculture, and other sources of fragmentation. This is compounded by little or ineffective patrolling and enforcement in the watershed, and overlapping authorities in charge. The seven COMDEKS

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projects in this landscape have, therefore, focused on: 1) rehabilitating flooded forests; 2) promoting agroforestry and reforestation; 3) establishing 15-year management plans for forests, protected areas, and fisheries; and 4) enhancing environmental governance by strengthening community organizations for environmental conservation and livelihood improvement, so that they can help reduce illegal logging, hunting, and slash-and-burn agriculture.

In this context, supported initiatives strengthened the capacities of key community-based organizations, including 13 saving groups, 14 self-help groups, 6 water user groups, 5 rice banks, 1 cow bank, 11 community forestry organizations, 2 community fisheries organizations, as well as the 5 community protected area organizations that are responsible for management decisions in these community assets. Patrolling and forest demarcation have allowed communities to decrease the level of illegal logging. Water access was improved through canal, piping, and reservoir systems, with impacts including higher water supplies to gardens (allowing vegetable crops), decreased time collecting water, and more water available for livestock.

As part of a larger initiative to protect flooded forest and fish habitats, three villages were supported to conserve 5,480 ha of flooded forest, reduce vulnerability to storms by introducing ecosystem-based management, and promote sustainable livelihoods. Through project support, more than 700 women now generate additional income through paddler boat services to tourists visiting Angkor Wat. This has also benefitted local communities by raising their incomes through restaurant services and trips to fish conservation areas, achieving higher prices by direct sale to tourists.

Contributed by Navirak Ngin, Cambodia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

## Ecuador



Knowledge sharing workshop

Photo: Ecuador

The Napo River watershed, the COMDEKS target landscape in Ecuador, is a zone rich in biodiversity and ecosystem services. Its inhabitants retain many traditional methods for sustainable resource management and ancestral knowled-

ge of biodiversity. One of the unique forms of agricultural production and subsistence economy that have arisen from indigenous knowledge of the Napo River watershed is known as the “Kichwa chakra system,” in which a biodiverse mixture of local crops are grown together in a single field.

The landscape approach in Ecuador has made the revival and expansion of the use of the Kichwa chakra system a central theme in its work to encourage sustainable agriculture and improve local food security. Reviving and expanding this chakra system has resulted in restoration of indigenous knowledge, income generation, particularly for women and indigenous communities, and conservation of the tropical forest. The COMDEKS projects supported under the landscape approach have expanded the area under the chakra system by 152 ha, involving 226 families from 26 communities.

Resilience in socio-ecological production landscapes in the Napo River watershed is evident when communities disseminate this ancestral knowledge and strengthen their capacities to implement sustainable activities through local associations and federations that link producers across the landscape. During SGP’s Sixth Operational Phase (OP6), SGP Ecuador will further build on the concept of BioCorridors for Living Well and the landscape approach supported by COMDEKS to strengthen ecological connectivity, sustainability of production landscapes and social partnerships, and expand its project portfolio to additional three target landscapes across Ecuador. Integrating traditional knowledge with innovative sustainable practices to improve livelihoods and conserve biodiversity will continue to play a central role for supported initiatives in these landscapes.

Contributed by Ana Maria Varea, Ecuador National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

## A Video from Ghana



Click on the image above to access a video from Ghana

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

Please click [here](#) for previous Issues of the COMDEKS Newsletter