

COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative

United Nations Development Programme



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Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

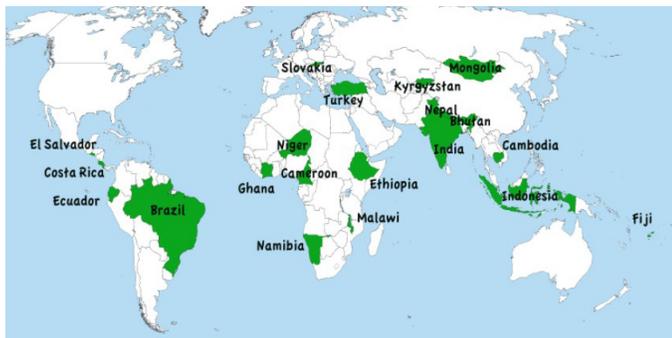
This newsletter is produced by the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project, implemented by UNDP and funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund. It provides updates on a range of topics including the status of ongoing country programmes, landscape performance indicators,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

Welcome to the twenty-fifth issue of our Newsletter!

In this edition we highlight:

1. Upscaling of livelihood opportunities in India
2. Supporting landscape resilience in five Protected Areas in Bolivia
3. Landscape-wide baseline assessments conducted in Egypt
4. Community micro-lending in Costa Rica
5. Portfolio updates: Indonesia and Namibia
6. Videos on Resilience Indicators in Spanish

COMDEKS Country Programmes: September 2018



Upscaling of climate-friendly livelihood opportunities in the Indian Himalayas

In the hilly state of Uttarakhand, located in the Western Himalaya region, deforestation has contributed to increased surface runoff and soil erosion, resulting in reduced fodder and water availability that is threatening the livelihoods of local communities dependent on agriculture, horticulture and forest products. This has led to families being forced to reduce the number of their livestock, impacting local incomes and availability of manure for soil fertilization, further reducing agricultural yields in this already challenging terrain. The NGO Chattrasal Sewa Sansthan (CSS), has been partner-

ing with SGP and COMDEKS since 2006 and 2013, respectively, to promote ecosystem conservation and climate-friendly livelihood activities among rural communities in this region, particularly by supporting women self-help groups (SHGs). To protect forests and create alternative livelihood opportunities, supported initiatives have invested in biogas units, which help to reduce wood consumption, produce biogas slurry to be used as fertilizer, and require training of local masons. Through 58 biogas plants and 428 smokeless cook stoves, daily wood consumption per family has been reduced by about 5-7 kg, which has saved over 1,605 MT of wood and about 3,049 MT CO₂ emissions over the last three years.



Women collecting pine needles

Photo: CSS, India

Through the landscape approach supported by COMDEKS, further partnerships were fostered between CSS, the local government, the private sector and other CSOs. As a follow-up activity to COMDEKS, the Oil and Natural Gas Cooperation Limited (ONGC) has been supporting CSS with nearly 75,000 USD as part of their corporate social responsibility program (CSR), funding the project 'Women-led Pine Needle Briquetting Enterprises' in Tarikhet Block, Uttarakhand, to upscale CSS's activities promoting clean energy alternatives. This project started in September 2017 and has facilitated local production of briquettes made from pine needles, contributing to conserving about 80 ha of forest. Eleven additional women SHGs have been supported to raise local women employment and incomes. From 41 supported women SHGs



(Continued from page 1)

in 2018, 33 have been engaged in the collection of pine needles. Three briquette production units have been set up so far, each employing 17 women and generating a monthly revenue of about USD 600 by producing 5-6 tons of briquettes.

Contributed by Prabhjot Sodhi, India Senior Programme Coordinator, UNDP, and Jaison Varghese, Programme Coordinator, Center for Environment Education, GEF SGP, UNDP

Supporting landscape resilience in five diverse Protected Areas in Bolivia



Baseline assessment in El Palmar

Photo: Bolivia

Under the current GEF Operational Phase (GEF-6), SGP Bolivia has adopted a landscape approach, building on lessons and best practices from COMDEKS' pilot landscapes and SGP country programmes that have previously implemented a landscape approach. The overall objective of the current SGP Operational Phase in Bolivia (2017-2020) is to strengthen the capacities of local communities in and around five Protected Areas (PAs) spanning across the three ecoregions Chaco, Chiquitania and Pantanal to improve their livelihoods by conserving natural habitats, restoring degraded ecosystems and reinforcing sustainable production for their socio-ecological resilience. Five landscape strategies were developed in 2017 in collaboration with one representative community in each Protected Area using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators and actively promoting engagement of women and youths. Each PA represents a different type of landscape, posing diverse challenges and threats for local communities and ecosystems. The landscape "El Palmar", for example, covers 8,795 ha and a population of 90 families and is characterized by endemic "janchicoco" palm forests, a wide variety of foods produced and consumed locally, and a rich wildlife composed of deer, jumaris, wild cats, foxes, parabas, and dusky-legged guan, among others. Among the main threats are drought, soil degradation and erosion due to poor management and scarcity of water, unsustainable forest management, and crop pests. The other four landscapes, Serranía del Iñaño, Otuquis, Kaa Iya, and San Matias, face challenges such as rapid urban development encroaching natural habitats and agricultural lands of local peasant communities; low agricultural productivity and a high use of agrochemicals, degrading soils; erosion, floods

and river overflows; oil exploration; and drought, fires and floods, caused by clearing of flora, to name a few. Through the landscape resilience outcomes and typologies of projects determined based on discussions during the participatory baseline assessments, the landscape strategies guide local activities to tackle these challenges in each target landscape. So far, 27 SGP projects have been approved under GEF-6 and are under implementation: 13 related to biodiversity conservation, 7 to climate change, 5 to land degradation, and 2 to capacity development, benefiting 703 families of 54 communities across the target landscapes. Through a second call for proposals, another 29 projects have been selected, which will begin their implementation within the next two months.

Contributed by Ruben Salas, Bolivia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

Landscape-wide baseline assessments conducted in Egypt using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators



Community consultation for Greater Cairo

Photo: Egypt

SGP Egypt aims to strengthen community organizations in Egypt through grant projects for global environmental benefits and sustainable development, enabling them to take collective action towards adaptive landscape management for socio-ecological resilience. Besides from individual grant projects, SGP is developing strategic projects that aim to catalyze and connect local projects, also to other large-scale initiatives, to improve sustainability, scale up impacts and promote participatory landscape governance of local resources. Adopting a landscape approach replicating COMDEKS experiences during GEF SGP's 6th Operational Phase, the project will be implemented in four strategic landscapes: the three rural landscapes Fayoum, Upper Egypt and the Delta; as well as the urban landscape of Greater Cairo. In June and July 2018, all four participatory baseline assessments have been conducted using the SEPLS Resilience Indicators, and landscape strategies are currently being finalized. The landscape baseline assessment conducted for Fayoum highlighted two main priorities: 1) agro-ecological practices and 2) biodiversity protection through awareness raising and capacity building programs, reducing water pollution on Lake Qaroun, and promoting sustainable solid waste management, im-

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proved irrigation, and renewable energies (solar and biogas). Sustainable energy and low-emission technologies are also a core priority in the urban center of Cairo. The first call for project proposals will be launched in September 2018.

Such community-based landscape management experiences will be showcased during the CBD COP 14 taking place in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, 17-29 November 2018. Recognizing SGP Egypt's expertise and impacts of supported initiatives over the past 26 years as well as the extensive experience of the SGP Country Program Manager, Dr. Emad Adly, the Minister of Environment of Egypt has assigned Dr. Adly as the National Focal Point for CSOs and Youth for this conference. Please check the [COMDEKS Blog](#) closer to the date for further information on related events and presentations.

Contributed by Dr. Emad Adly, Egypt Country Program Manager, GEF SGP, UNDP, and Ghada Ahmadein, Egypt Programme Assistant, GEF SGP, UNDP

A community micro-lending scheme opens door to new livelihood opportunities in Costa Rica



Community Credit Committee of Berlin

Photo: Costa Rica

As one of the 15 SGP Upgraded Country Programmes during the GEF SGP Sixth Operational Phase, SGP Costa Rica has been replicating and upscaling the landscape approach piloted by COMDEKS in the Jesus María River Basin to enable community organizations in Costa Rica to enhance livelihoods by restoring degraded forest and production landscapes for socio-ecological resilience. Over three years, the project is supporting 31 community initiatives, including five strategic projects, in the Barranca and Jesus María River Basins covering over 86,000 ha in the Central Pacific Region of Costa Rica. These initiatives aim to improve conservation measures in the buffer zones of protected areas and in the Biological Corridor Montes del Aguacate, benefiting some 2,224 individuals from 39 community-based organizations.

One Strategic Project approved in August 2016 and implemented by the Fundación Integral de Desarrollo Rural del Pacífico Central (FIDERPAC), a local micro-finance agency with more than 30 years of experience, responded to the need to create access to finance through Community Credit Committees (CCC). Ten CCCs have been created and are operating in the communities of Parcelas, San Jerónimo, Peñas Blan-

cas and Labrador within the Barranca river basin, as well as Rincón, Altos de Naranjo, La Guaria, San Francisco, Berlín and Llano Brenes in the Jesus María river basin, three of which are COMDEKS partner communities. This financial mechanism has enabled producers and other community members to strengthen production and conservation efforts.

Each CCC has been supported by SGP through start-up capital and office equipment. Organizational, administrative and technical training, and follow-up and control is provided by FIDERPAC. In total, 112 workshops have been held involving 649 community members, of which 46% were women and 54% men, including many young leaders. The training programme developed by FIDERPAC in each community comprises 12-week sessions with the community members, and four additional sessions with each Board of Directors (BOD). The BODs are in charge of approving loan requests, payment plans and loan recovery.

By June 2018, 199 productive activities had been supported to the same number of individuals, of which 45.2% have been directed to women. A total of USD 153,461 (79.8 million Costa Rican colones) in funds is currently being managed by the 10 CCCs and FIDERPAC reports that an additional USD 34,615 (18 million colones) has been leveraged through co-financing from other sources for three CCCs to increase capital availability and strengthen credit operations.

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

Portfolio Updates

Indonesia



Baseline assessment in Watakobi

Photo: Indonesia

Based on the Landscape Strategy for Semau Island developed in February 2014, eight projects have been implemented in Indonesia as part of the COMDEKS portfolio. Supported initiatives have achieved considerable results and impacts for local livelihoods and ecosystems, promoting reforestation, sustainable agri- and aquaculture practices, organic agriculture and improved marketing through farmer collectives, as well as strengthened institutional governance for participatory decision-making. Environmental forums were established in

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seven villages to connect leaders and other stakeholders to discuss their vision for efforts regarding forest conservation and water consumption, among others, and to develop implementation plans, carry out activities and monitor progress. Under GEF SGP's Sixth Operational Phase, this landscape approach is being replicated and upscaled to three additional target landscapes/seascapes. During this phase, SGP aims to maintain and enhance socio-ecological resilience of one forested and three coastal landscapes through community-based initiatives in Sulawesi, East Nusa Tenggara, and Bali. The project is enabling community organizations and NGOs to develop and implement adaptive landscape/seascape management strategies that build social, economic and ecological resilience based on local sustainable development benefits. The target landscapes and seascapes are a key forest landscape called Nantu Wild Life Reserve (Gorontalo province), as well as the coastal seascapes of Sulawesi (Wakatobi archipelagos); Bali (Nusa Penida island); and East Nusa Tenggara (Semau Island), covering 54,812.18 ha altogether. Baseline assessments and community consultations in the three additional landscapes were conducted between November 2017 and February 2018 to jointly identify key socio-economic and environmental challenges with local stakeholders. More than 172 stakeholders participated in the four baseline assessments overall. The corresponding landscape/seascape strategies were approved by the SGP National Steering committee in February 2018. Based on a subsequent call for proposals, eleven projects have been selected for technical and financial support through GEF SGP and have started their implementation in August.

Contributed by Catharina Dwihastarini, Indonesia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

Namibia



Vegetable cultivation in the Gwanamene San Community Photo: Namibia

Guided by the Landscape Strategy for the Iipumbu-ya-Tshilongo Conservancy, approved in September 2014, eight community-based projects have been supported under COMDEKS by SGP Namibia focusing on land rehabilitation, afforestation, and enhancing food security by promoting the use of indigenous varieties and animal breeds, and the development

of environmentally conscious tourism activities. One central objective of the Landscape Strategy for the Iipumbu-ya-Tshilongo Conservancy was to strengthen the collaboration between government, CBOs, CSOs and traditional authorities.

Water supply in the target landscape was improved by installing pipes to the main water source in the area. A total of 155 farmers have been trained in conservation agriculture tillage, sustainable agricultural practices were implemented on 70 ha of land, and modern micro-drip irrigation systems support vegetable gardening. More than 4.25 tons of pearl millet were harvested in 2017 by 31 farmers through conservation tillage activities despite the drought. Over the last year more than 2,000 tree seedlings were distributed for reforestation, over 2,300 livestock now have access to water through construction of a dam, and micro-drip irrigation systems help to conserve water and encourage food production amidst prolonged dry seasons and the resulting water scarcity.

The ex-post baseline assessment was conducted in June 2017 with support from the Namibia Development Trust (NDT), with 17 participants (10 men, 7 women). Replicating and building on the lessons learned and best practices from COMDEKS-supported initiatives in Namibia, the Environment Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia recently submitted a proposal to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for a USD 10 million project with the title "Building resilience of communities living in landscapes threatened under climate change through an ecosystems-based adaptation approach." This project aims to promote participatory landscape governance and decision-making, as well as knowledge sharing among communities and other stakeholders outside the target landscape. The project proposal is currently under consideration at the GCF.

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

Videos on the Indicators of Resilience in Spanish



Click on the image above to access the videos.

Contributed by the GEF-Satoyama Project (CI Japan, UNU-IAS, and IGES)

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