

COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative

United Nations Development Programme
Environment and Energy



Issue No. 6 December 2013

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 sixth issue of our Newsletter!

In this edition, we highlight:

- (1) Landscape baseline assessments ongoing in Phase 2 countries
- (2) COMDEKS mini-regional workshops in Kenya and Mexico
- (3) COMDEKS Fiji featured at the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas
- (4) Video from COMDEKS Turkey "Ghost Net Hunters" Project and new Brochure from COMDEKS Kyrgyzstan
- (5) Testimonials from COMDEKS Ghana
- (6) Portfolio Update: COMDEKS stories from COMDEKS Brazil, Cameroon, and Ecuador, and a Photostory from Fiji

COMDEKS Country Programmes: December 2013



Landscape-wide baseline assessments ongoing in Phase 2 participating countries



Community consultation process with fishermen in Tabalak

Photo: Niger

Landscape-wide baseline assessments and community consultations are currently taking place in the countries participating to the second phase of the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) project. As part of this process, the Resilience Indicators, developed by UNU-IAS and Bioversity International, are being piloted to help measure and understand the socio-ecological resilience of the target landscapes and seascapes. The participatory consultation process in the second phase countries has already led to the approval of Landscape Strategies in Bhutan, Ecuador and Cameroon.

Mini-Regional COMDEKS Workshops in Mount Kenya National Park, Kenya and in Merida, Mexico



COMDEKS National Coordinators from the Africa Region Photo: Mt. Kenya

The COMDEKS Project Manager, and six COMDEKS National Coordinators from the Africa region (Cameroon, Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi, Namibia, and Niger) met in Mt. Kenya in September 2013 on the side of the COMPACT replication workshop, focused on key lessons and results emerging from twelve years of SGP's work in the context of the COMPACT programme (Community Management of Protected Areas for Conservation).

The mini-regional COMDEKS workshop provided a capacity building opportunity for COMDEKS National Coordinators for exchange of experiences, lessons learned and best practices related to their efforts in implementing a community-based landscape management approach, engaging local communities in highly participatory and inclusive activities to enhance landscape and community resilience. The workshop was also an opportunity for countries participating in the second phase of COMDEKS to receive additional guidance on the baseline assessment exercise, the implementation of the Resilience Indicators and related scorecards.



(Continued from page 1)



Field visit to the Celestun Biosphere Reserve

Photo: Mexico

Similarly, in October 2013, COMDEKS National Coordinators from Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, and India, met in Merida, Mexico on the occasion of the Upgraded Country Programme Global Workshop. These countries represent some of the most mature, experienced, and successful SGP country programmes, and among other things, the workshop provided an opportunity for exchange of experiences on the development of focused programmatic approaches, including the community-based landscape management approach.

COMDEKS Fiji featured at the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas

COMDEKS work in Fiji was featured at a side event titled "Challenges and Opportunities for the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI) from Pacific Perspectives" held on 4 December 2013 during the [9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas](#) in Suva, Fiji. The event was co-organised by the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Secretariat of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI).

4th (Wed) 14:00 - Japan Pacific ICT Centre Parallel Session, the 9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas

Session I: The Satoyama Initiative, Partnership and its Activities

Keynote



Mr. Wataru Suzuki
Deputy Director, IPSI Secretariat
United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)



Case Study
Ms. Aya Takatsuki
Programme Officer, IPSI Secretariat
United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS)



Case Study
Ms. Katarina Atalifo
COMDEKS Fiji National Coordinator
The Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme (GEF-SGP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Session II: SEPLS in Pacific Region and Relevant Activities of SPREP

Keynote



Mr. Bruce Jefferies
Terrestrial Ecosystems Management Officer
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Case Study
Mr. Simon John Smale
Gondwana Link Landscape Manager
Bush Heritage Australia





During the side event, two parallel sessions were opened by Mr. Wataru Suzuki, Deputy Director of the IPSI Secretariat, UNU-IAS, and Mr. Bruce Jefferies, Terrestrial Ecosystems Management Officer at the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme SPREP, respectively. They featured case studies on socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes in the Pacific Region, highlighting community-based landscape experiences supported by the COMDEKS Fiji Country Programme in the Natewa Tunuloa Landscape, and landscape activities supported by the Gondwana Link Project in the Global Biodiversity Hotspot of South-western Australia, a project implemented by Bush Heritage Australia.

The parallel sessions were also designed to introduce the IPSI's Strategy, endorsed by the IPSI Assembly during the Third IPSI Global Conference held in Hyderabad, India on 6 October 2012, encouraging a discussion on the IPSI Action Plan and its relevance for the Pacific regional context and Pacific Small Island Developing States, and on the challenges and opportunities in promoting the sustainable use of production landscapes and seascapes.

Contributed by Aya Takatsuki, Programme Officer, IPSI Secretariat

New video from COMDEKS Turkey "Ghost Net Hunters" Project

The Ghost Net Hunters Project is one of nine COMDEKS funded projects working to enhance the resilience of the Datça-Bozburun peninsula, the target socio-ecological production landscape/seascape in Turkey. The Ghost Net Hunters Project aims to raise awareness and educate local fishing communities about the ghost net issue. The project works closely with fishermen to determine the locations of ghost nets and remove them from the marine environment.



Click the image above to access a video from COMDEKS Turkey. In the video, divers from the "Ghost Net Hunters", COMDEKS grantees in Turkey, free a Dusky Grouper from a net in Gökova Bay off the Datça-Bozburun peninsula.

Read more about COMDEKS activities in Turkey [here](#).

Contributed by Gokmen Yalcin, Turkey National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP, and Anna Krueger, COMDEKS Intern.

(Continued from page 2)

New Brochure from COMDEKS Kyrgyzstan

COMDEKS Kyrgyzstan with the support of the Tian Shan Policy Center has produced a two-page brochure in Russian presenting the Satoyama Initiative and the COMDEKS project in Kyrgyzstan.



The landscape area selected for COMDEKS activities in Kyrgyzstan is Lake Issyk-Kul, the world's second largest high-altitude lake and a major biological and economic asset for the country. The landscape-wide baseline assessment workshop with the local communities living in the area took place in Karakol, a city of the Issyk-Kul province in October 2013. Based on the discussion that took place during the workshop, COMDEKS Kyrgyzstan is currently in the process of developing its 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 Evgeniia PostNova, Kyrgyzstan National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Testimonials from COMDEKS Ghana



The Paramount Chief of South Dayi

Photo: Ghana

"Thanks to the Satoyama Initiative, our mountain [the Weto Mountain], formerly referred to as the fire mountain because of the rampant wildfires is now the bee mountain."

Please click [here](#) to read more testimonials from Ghana.

Contributed by George Orsin Ghana National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP.

Portfolio Update

Brazil



Crops around the river

Photo: Brazil

In consultation with local partners and communities, the target landscape for COMDEKS activities in Brazil has been identified in a 40,000 hectares area in the Jequitinhonha Valley, one of the poorest regions of Brazil. Decades of unsustainable environmental practices have led to overexploitation of the soil and degradation of the landscape. Additionally, in the late seventies the eucalyptus monocultures invaded the landscape contributing to water scarcity. The area, in the transition between the Cerrado and the Caatinga biomes, encompasses several traditional communities and small farmers.



Exposed soil in the landscape

Photo: Brazil

A two-day landscape wide baseline workshop with local communities took place in Turmalina, Minas Gerais, in November 2013, with 30 participants from 12 communities, local NGOs and schools. The workshop was facilitated by the Salvia Institute with great effort made to tailor the indicators' language to the local reality. The main issues identified at the landscape level include lack of water (in terms of both quantity and quality), inappropriate soil management practices and exodus of young people from rural areas. COMDEKS projects will contribute to the landscape sustainability by focusing, inter alia, on food security, influencing public policies on environmental landscape management, and promoting gender mainstreaming in the implementation of community-based projects at the landscape level. The Brazil COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy is currently under development.

Contributed by Isabel Figueiredo, Brazil National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

(Continued from page 3)

Cameroon



Fishermen casting their nets in Bogo

Photo: Cameroon

The target landscape identified for COMDEKS activities in Cameroon is Bogo, an area located in the extreme north of Cameroon. Geographically, Bogo is found in the dry tropical zone which experiences low precipitation mostly concentrated in 4-5 rainy months. The rugged terrain is found in the plain basin of Lake Tchad. The area hosts a relatively high population of approximately 95,000 which contributes to the high population density of Bogo. Seventy-eight percent of the population lives in rural areas. The principal livelihood activities of this region are agriculture, livestock, fishing, hunting, and trade. These activities operate near one another on relatively small parcels, average 0.5 hectares, demonstrating the mixed use of the land.

Challenges to the landscape are food insecurity related to low precipitation, poor water quality leading to instances of water borne and parasitic illnesses in the population, and deforestation linked to population expansion and fuel wood harvest. Administrative governance related to land management and providing basic social services is weak. Reforestation to recover degraded land is one way the area is fighting the threat of desertification.



Community consultation in the Bogo landscape

Photo: Cameroon

Contributed by Marie-Laure Mpeck Nyemeck, Cameroon National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Ecuador

In Ecuador, the landscape area selected for COMDEKS activities is located between the Andes Mountains and the Amazonian Lowlands in the Amazon Region, an area playing a critical role in regulating one of the most important fresh water systems on the planet, the Amazon River Basin, and retaining large amounts of organic carbon.

The landscape approach supported by the COMDEKS programme in Ecuador builds upon the concept of “Biocorridors for Good Living” (Buen Vivir or Sumak Kawsay), a concept adapted from the 2008 Constitution of Ecuador and the National Plan for Good Living, and implemented by the Ecuador GEF Small Grants Programme in four priority ecosystems; páramos (Neotropical high mountain biomes), dry forests, mangroves, and tropical rainforests). Biocorridors for good living are described as expanses of land where ecological connectivity is re-established connecting fragmented habitats, incorporating sustainable productive activities into the landscape and fostering community partnerships.

Community consultation process

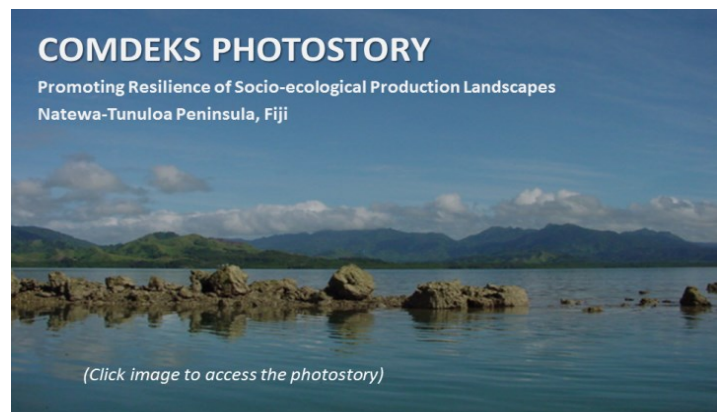
Photo: Ecuador



Community-based interventions at the landscape level are integrated through exchange of knowledge and participatory planning. Five community partnership projects have been recently approved for COMDEKS funding in two bio-corridors, Yaku Samay (The Power of Water) and Akllak Sacha (The Chosen Forest), in the north and center of the Ecuadorian Amazon Region.

Contributed by Ana Maria Varrea, Ecuador National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

Fiji



Click the image above to access a Photostory from Fiji describing the baseline assessment workshop and the community consultation process that led to the development of the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Fiji.

Contributed by Katarina Atalifo, Fiji National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP, and Anna Krueger, COMDEKS Intern

Previous Issues of COMDEKS Newsletter: Issue 1, Issue 2, Issue 3, Issue 4, and Issue 5.