



COMDEKS Phase 4:

Societies in Harmony with Nature

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
FOR THE SATOYAMA INITIATIVE PROGRAMME



About COMDEKS

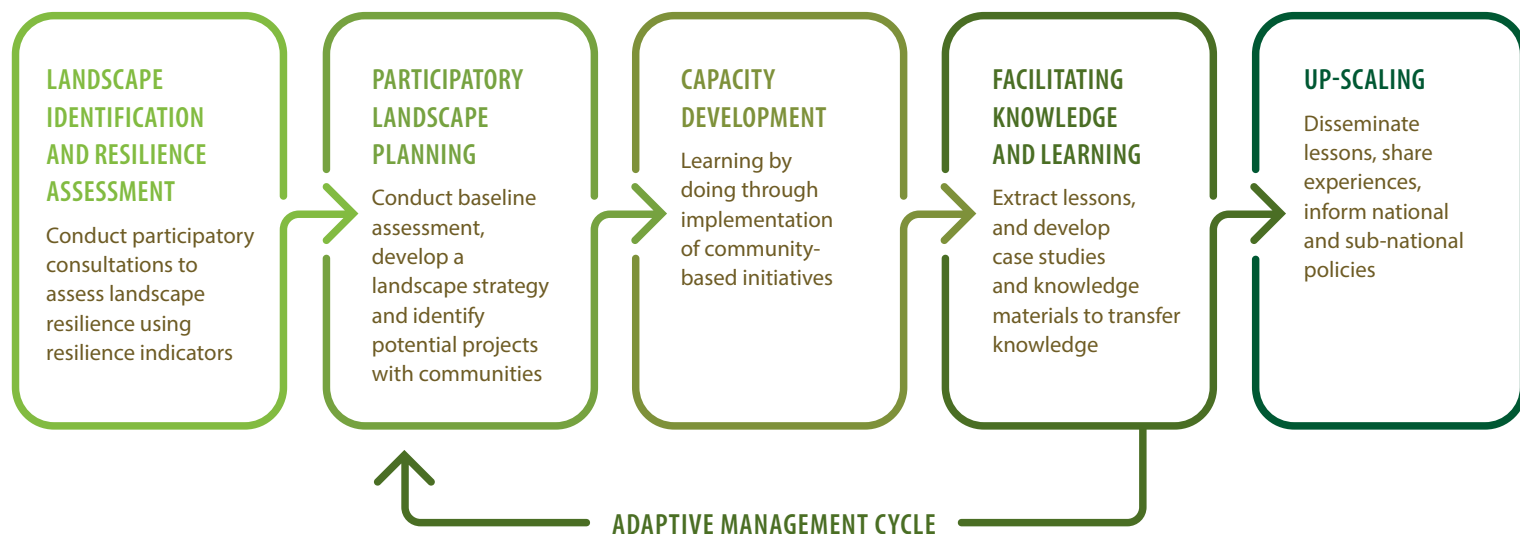
The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme (COMDEKS) was launched in 2011 as a flagship programme of the Satoyama Initiative, a global effort to promote the sustainable use of natural resources in landscapes and seascapes with local communities. Known as **socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS)**, these landscapes and seascapes include many uses, from farming and fishing to forestry. Their productivity and resilience are central to the economic well-being and cultural identity of communities who depend on them throughout the world.

The COMDEKS programme provides small-scale finance through the **GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP)** directly to local communities, Indigenous Peoples and civil society to implement locally led projects that enhance livelihoods and well-being, conserve biodiversity, address climate change, and support local cultures and traditional practices. In this way, COMDEKS activities not only contribute to the ecological resilience of SEPLS, but also strengthen the social and economic resilience of communities within these areas. By enhancing governance and participatory decision-making processes in local communities, COMDEKS offers a critical pathway for humans to effectively manage natural resources and live in greater harmony with nature. The programme also collects and disseminates knowledge and experiences from successful local initiatives to facilitate broader adoption by other communities throughout the world.

The first two phases of COMDEKS, funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF) at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), were implemented from 2011 to 2018 by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the SGP in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment Japan (MOEJ), the CBD Secretariat, and the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS). Initiated in 2020, COMDEKS Phase 3 focused on the consolidation of successful COMDEKS' experiences from Phase 1 and 2, implementing policy dialogues, and providing inputs towards the development of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, under negotiation at the CBD from 2020-2022.

COMDEKS Framework

COMDEKS utilizes a framework built around a cycle of adaptive management where communities assess their landscape/seascape, identify desirable ecological, social, and economic outcomes as building blocks of resilience, and implement activities to achieve the desired outcomes, while generating knowledge and sharing experiences.



Key Definitions

The Satoyama Initiative

With the vision of 'realizing societies in harmony with nature', the Satoyama Initiative began through a joint collaboration between the MOEJ and UNU-IAS. Its aim is to build mutually beneficial human-nature relationships, where the maintenance and development of socio-economic activities aligns with natural processes. Its six key principles are:

- 1 Use of natural resources within the carrying capacity and resilience of the environment.
- 2 Cyclic use of natural resources.
- 3 Recognition of the value and importance of local traditions and cultures.
- 4 Multi-stakeholder participation and collaboration in sustainable landscape management.
- 5 Contributions to sustainable socio-economies, including poverty reduction, food security, sustainable livelihoods and local community empowerment.
- 6 Improved community resilience to achieve greater ecological, social, cultural, spiritual and economic benefits.

Socio-Economic Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS) are a dynamic combination of landscapes and/or seascapes with a mix of habitats and land uses- including community settlements, farmlands, woods, forests, grasslands, wetlands, coastal areas, marine ecosystems, among others- that have been shaped over many years by the positive interactions between people and the environment in ways that maintain biodiversity while providing people with goods and services to support their well-being and livelihoods.

Other Effective Conservation Measures (OECMs) as defined by the CBD Decision 14/8, are geographically defined areas distinct from traditional protected areas but managed in ways that yield positive, sustained, and long-term outcomes for biodiversity conservation, including associated ecosystem functions, services, and, when applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally significant values.

The Indicators of Resilience in SEPLS are a tool for engaging communities in the adaptive management of the landscapes and seascapes in which they live. By using them as analytical tools, communities can increase their capacity to respond to social, economic and environmental pressures and shocks to improve their environmental and economic conditions. This, in turn, can lead to improvements in their environmental and economic conditions, ultimately bolstering the social and ecological resilience of their landscapes and seascapes.

COMDEKS Phases 1 to 3



TIMEFRAME
2011-2022



TOTAL FUNDING
US\$ 10.5M



**SUPPORTED OVER 400
PROJECTS IN 20 COUNTRIES**

Bhutan, Brazil, Cambodia,
Cameroon, Costa Rica,
Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia,
Ghana, Fiji, India, Indonesia,
Kyrgyzstan, Malawi, Mongolia,
Namibia, Nepal, Niger,
Slovakia and Türkiye.



**RESTORED OVER
271,000 HECTARES
OF LANDSCAPES
AND SEASCAPES**



**BENEFITTING
8,000+ COMMUNITY
MEMBERS**

COMDEKS Phase 4

At the 15th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal, Canada 2022, the MOEJ, the Keidanren Nature Conservation Council (KNCC), the UNDP and other partners announced the launch of COMDEKS Phase 4. This phase aims to further expand and ensure sustainability and sound biodiversity management, governance and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes.

Phase 4 will seek to catalyze and drive integrated local actions to contribute to the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, focusing on targets related to conservation, restoration, spatial planning, sustainable use of biodiversity, protected areas and OECMs among others. COMDEKS Phase 4 will also support the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans at the country level through locally led initiatives.

It will achieve landscape/seascape resilience through the following outcomes:



**LANDSCAPE/SEASCAPE
DIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM
INTEGRITY AND RESILIENCE**



**BIODIVERSITY
AND SUSTAINABLE
MANAGEMENT
(AGRICULTURE
AND FISHERIES)**



**LIVELIHOODS AND
WELL-BEING**



**GOVERNANCE AND
SOCIAL EQUITY**

Components



TIMEFRAME
2022-2027



**TOTAL FUNDING FROM
MOEJ AND KNCC**
1 BILLION JAPANESE YEN/
APPROXIMATELY
US\$ 6.3 MILLION



**15 PARTICIPATING
COUNTRIES**

Nepal, Vietnam, Bhutan,
Cambodia, Samoa,
Kyrgyzstan, Morocco,
Türkiye, Jamaica,
Peru, Costa Rica,
Cameroon, Ghana,
Tanzania, Uganda



**ALIGNED TO THE
SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

GOAL

To further expand and ensure sustainability and sound biodiversity management, governance and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities in SEPLS.

COMPONENT 1

Grant making to civil society and community-based organizations to support sustainable landscape and seascape management.

COMPONENT 2

Knowledge management for capacity building, replication, and up-scaling.

Partners



Japan Biodiversity Fund



Voices from the field





Ecosystem restoration in the Jesús María River Basin, Costa Rica

Located in Costa Rica's Pacific region, the Jesús María River Basin covers 35,280 hectares of forests, agricultural fields, mangroves, pastures, water bodies, and urban areas. Agriculture is the main economic activity in this diverse landscape, especially coffee, rice, sugar cane, and fruit production.

Despite its productivity, environmental threats such as fragmentation, urbanization and unsustainable agricultural practices are a threat to biodiversity, crop yields and water availability.

ESTABLISHING A BASELINE

Under previous COMDEKS phases, the Association for the Organic Agriculture Movement of the Central Pacific (MAOPAC, in Spanish) conducted a baseline assessment of the Jesús María River Basin to identify key environmental and socio-economic issues.

Led by local communities, the assessment identified the need to improve sharing scientific knowledge with decision makers and communities. It also identified a need to ensure sustainable production activities at the local and regional levels, as well as for new technologies and practices, such as water harvesting, biodigesters and stone walls to prevent erosion.

SGP supported five projects under COMDEKS in this region, each focused on specific thematic interventions that collectively resulted in improved landscape and watershed management.

FROM WATER FLOWS LIFE

The first community-led initiative focused on building reservoirs in agricultural production areas to capture runoff water and reduce erosion in the basin. As a result, farmers in the Jesús María watershed gained improved access to water and enhanced soil conservation and agriculture practices, which improved the productivity of coffee and other agro-forestry production systems.

"Thanks to COMDEKS we advanced in restoring the Jesús María river basin through close coordination with communities and state actors to implement best practices in farming. COMDEKS was key to allowing us to innovate and built forty reservoirs to harvest water through different techniques for various uses. Now more coffee farmers are requesting these reservoirs to complement the planting of new coffee varieties."

— Carlos Barboza, National Advisory Committee on Land Degradation (CADETI) field coordinator for San Mateo, Jesús María watershed.

The second project focused on restoration of the Jesús María River Basin's forests and improved forest connectivity by planting 54,000 trees, including native hardwood species and at least 20,000 fruit trees common to the area, such as mango, cashew, loquat, sapote, guava, star apple, citrus, and avocado. Non-timber forest products from these trees have provided farmers with another income source, as well as other functional services, such as shade for cattle, wind breaks for crops and protection from soil erosion.

Other projects promoted transition to organic agriculture, and introduced silvopastoral systems that combine tree growing with livestock production to restore degraded lands and reduce soil loss. Through a systematized and practical training module on soil conservation practices, farmers learned techniques such as building guard channels, soil terraces, and applying organic fertilizer to prevent erosion. More than 280 farmers received training in organic agriculture systems and visited demonstration projects in southern Costa Rica to exchange best practices and lessons.

REPLICATING THE LANDSCAPE MODEL

Since this initial approach, SGP has supported another 57 projects using COMDEKS and regular GEF resources in the Jesús María and Barranca watersheds to reduce soil erosion, protect water resources, implement silvopastoral practices and strengthen the capacities of local farmers. The result of these initiatives include the installation of 40 communal aqueducts that improved water management and the implementation of over 750 sustainable farm assessments and plans, which improved land management of 86,000 hectares through the development of conservation activities, sustainable agriculture and livestock production.

“On this farm we’ve completely turned things around because in 2012 it was practically a desert. Thanks to SGP, CADETI, and other partners, we’ve planted more than 1,000 trees, improved grazing, introduced fodder banks, a vegetable lot and a water harvesting reservoir. We’ve got pigs, hens, plantains and fruit trees. All of those things that we couldn’t grow before, we are growing them now, and doing this organically. You can come to Rio Jesús today and you’ll find a greenhouse by each house where the women are growing their own food, which is something that inspires them.”

— Allen Rojas, farmer from Rio Jesús, San Ramón canton, Jesús María watershed.





The Fisherwomen of Türkiye

Small-scale fisheries have historically been active across most of coastal Türkiye, including along Gökova Bay, a magnificent 45-mile-long stretch of aquamarine waters on the southern Mediterranean coast. Although fishing is an important source of livelihood for coastal communities in Türkiye it has traditionally been regarded as a male domain. As a result, the contribution of women to the fisheries sector has been undervalued and under-represented in official statistics.

In 2009, the Underwater Research Society received a COMDEKS grant to address overfishing and over-capacity fishing fleets in Gökova Bay by creating No-Fishing Zones, a successful initiative that was later replicated by neighboring communities to cover 3,538 hectares within the Gökova and Datça-Bozburun protected areas. Through multi-stakeholder consultations with the active involvement of local fisherwomen, the NGO and local communities were able to agree on measures for monitoring and improving protected area management. The consultations also revealed that women were not accounted for as active fishers in Türkiye, being excluded from small-scale fishery governance and effectively made invisible, with no information available on the specific challenges they faced.

TAKING STOCK OF WOMEN'S WORK

Building on this work, in 2013 SGP supported the Mediterranean Conservation Society (MCS) to launch a project under COMDEKS to map the numbers of fisherwomen in the Datça-Bozburun Peninsula. The goal was to adequately respond to fisherwomen's needs and ensure their inclusion in decision-making processes around sustainable small-scale fisheries and conservation in Türkiye.

MCS implemented the first smart marine software for female marine rangers in the world, developed by the Zoological Society of London. The monitoring and protective enforcement activities enabled by the introduction of this technology in Gökova Bay have led to positive results for local communities' livelihoods and the environment.







Monitoring data shows that local ecosystems have been recovering rapidly since the establishment of the No-Fishing Zones and the marine ranger enforcement system. One of the key indicators, average fish biomass, is four times higher within the Gökova Bay protected area than in surrounding areas. Additionally, fish stocks have increased by 800 percent, while monk seals and sandbar sharks are now present in the area.

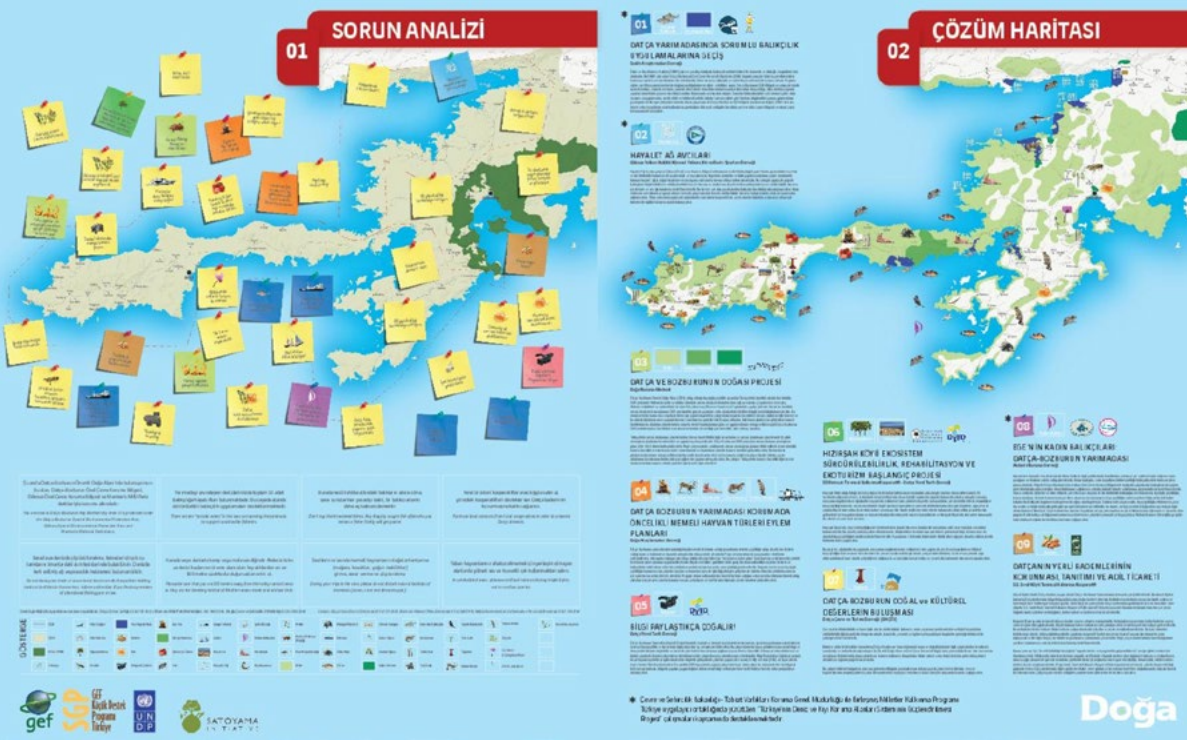
YIELDING HIGH RETURNS

The success of this initiative led to a second COMDEKS grant for MCS in 2015 focused on promoting entrepreneurship among fisherwomen. This project aimed to support women in artisanal fisheries to develop alternative sources of income, building an organizational model targeted at their specific needs while enabling them to contribute to sustainable fisheries.

Later, MCS received additional funding to scale up this initiative and map fisherwomen at the national level. Gender-based data collection methods were used to determine both the number and locations of fisherwomen in the Gulf of Edremit, Lake Beyşehir, and the Datça-Bozburun peninsular. The project revealed that more than 3,000 fisherwomen are active in Türkiye's inland and coastal waters, participating in 553 fishery cooperatives. The results also revealed that 61 fisherwomen were working alone, without the support of a husband or another family member. This effort resulted in Türkiye's first report on the status of fisherwomen, which was distributed widely to create awareness and improve their conditions.

EMPOWERING WOMEN

The impact of these multiple efforts supported by SGP over time have led to several socio-economic benefits. For instance, the Akyaka Fisheries Cooperative reported a fourfold increase in their revenue between 2010 and 2016, from 1,422 Turkish liras per boat per month to 6,277. Overall, more than 120 women were trained in sustainable fisheries and others now have direct communication channels with local authorities.



Furthermore, 450 local fishing cooperatives changed their typical practices to recognize the work of fisherwomen, empower them and give them voice in decision-making meetings. Consequently, fisherwomen in Türkiye now have proper recognition, equal income and access to equipment within their own networks.

Improved networking between different local fishery cooperatives because of these SGP projects encouraged solidarity among the women, which led them to mobilize and connect with fisherwomen in other regions across Türkiye. In addition to the concrete environmental and social benefits of these initiatives, the cooperatives also were officially recognized as groups eligible for microfinance through the Türkiye Grameen Micro Credit Program.

AWARD-WINNING RESULTS

In 2014, MCS won the prestigious UNDP Equator Prize for the impressive results of its unique, community-led effort to create, patrol and scientifically monitor this network of No-Fishing Zones in Gökova Bay.

In 2019, local fisherwomen and experts who led these projects formed the Fisherwomen Society together with other volunteers. This unique civil society platform continues to empower fisherwomen and are working on projects that promote the blue economy and marine biodiversity conservation.

“The fisher-women initiative has unique value for Türkiye. Before the project the women were invisible, and the fishing sector was not aware of their existence and worth. This SGP COMDEKS initiative has changed that and highlighted their role in sustainable fisheries. This impacts the future of fishing in terms of biodiversity conservation, stock management, fisheries by-products, policy making and the overall well-being of society. These women are true leaders and an inspiration for me in many ways.”

— Gökmen Argun, GEF Small Grants Programme National Coordinator of Türkiye



The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Established in 1992, SGP is currently active in 127 countries and promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth. SGP has supported over 28,000 community-based projects on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, climate change mitigation and adaptation, sustainable land management, conservation of international waters, and chemicals and waste management, while generating sustainable livelihoods.



The GEF is a family of funds dedicated to confronting biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, and strains on land and ocean health. Its grants, blended financing, and policy support helps developing countries address their biggest environmental priorities and adhere to international environmental conventions. Over the past three decades, the GEF has provided more than \$22 billion and mobilized \$120 billion in co-financing for more than 5,000 national and regional projects.
www.thegef.org



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