

**COUNTRY PROGRAMME LANDSCAPE STRATEGY FOR
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND
KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT FOR
SATOYAMA INITIATIVE (COMDEKS)**

MONGOLIA



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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBO	Community based Organization
COMDEKS	Community Development and Knowledge Management for Satoyama Initiative
GEF	Global Environment Facility
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NC	National Coordinator
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Steering Committee
OP	Operational Phase
PA	Programme Assistant
SEPL	Socio-Ecological Production Landscape
SGP	Small Grants Programme
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme



SUMMARY

The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) was launched in 2011 as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative, and is implemented by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies. The project is funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund and has been designed to support local community activities to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS), and to collect and disseminate knowledge and experiences from successful actions for replication and up-scaling in other parts of the world. The project aims to develop sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities by providing small-scale finance to local community organizations. The project is being delivered through the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme, and is currently under implementation in 20 countries, including Mongolia.

This Strategy has been formulated to support local community activities to maintain and rebuild a socio-ecological production landscape located in the north of central Mongolia. This is an area which faces real dangers related to global environmental crisis and critically needs to improve the resilience of production systems in the face of worsening climate change effects. The target landscape is the Central Selenge Landscape, one of the main crop and vegetable growing areas in the country, is typical of a landscape where vast biodiversity is faced with pressure from humans.

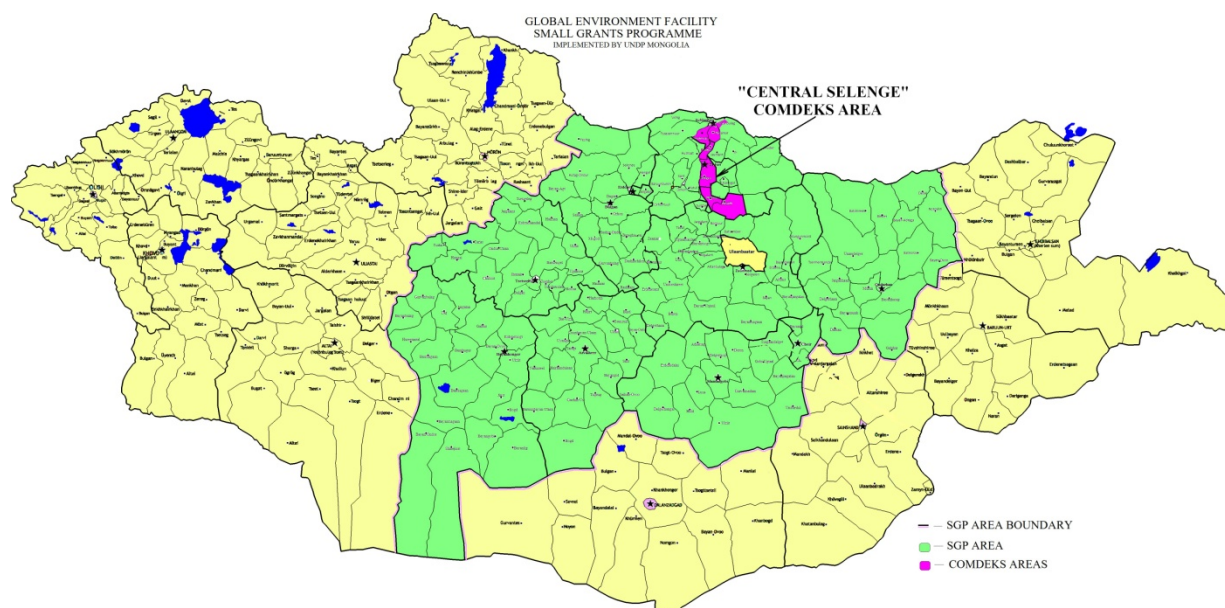
The recent baseline assessment conducted with the participation of a range of community groups, local stakeholders and representatives from local governments and civil society organizations in the target area has identified and agreed upon four main outcomes to be adopted in the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy with a total of eight impact indicators, two corresponding to each outcome. By selecting one of the most suitable socio-ecological production landscapes in the country, where the local environment needs improvement for survival of biodiversity, this Country Programme Landscape Strategy strongly intends to demonstrate the improvement of resilience of socio-ecological production systems in the target area.

The Strategy includes description of the selected target area, situation analysis with opportunities and challenges, selected outcomes with relevant indicators, typology of projects, selection criteria for projects and NGO/CBOs and M&E and Knowledge Management Plans.

1. PRIORITY AREA

The target area selected to implement COMDEKS projects in Mongolia is located in the central part of the country, stretching from southeast towards the north and covering 628,856 ha of mainly forest and mountain ecosystem territories. The distance from Ulaanbaatar, the capital city to the nearest point of the target area is about 135 km by paved road. This area was selected during consultations with the SGP National Steering Committee before the baseline assessment grant was approved by the NSC to conduct the baselines assessment and formulate this Strategy. Although during the approval of the grant one NSC member made a proposal to cover some additional pasture area, the SGP Country Programme in Mongolia was it advised that the proposal was not feasible technically due to the large extent of the area, the different ecosystems, and the limited amount of resources planned for this pilot initiative in Mongolia.

The COMDEKS target area is characterized by mainly forest and mountain ecosystems composed of well-developed river systems.. With regard to socio-ecological conditions, the Central Selenge area is one of the main crop and vegetable growing areas in the country and has strong social networks. A location map is given in Picture 1.



Pic.1. Mongolia COMDEKS target area in a country map

The COMDEKS programme in Mongolia will adopt a community-based landscape approach focusing on building the resilience of the socio-ecological production landscape, that is a mosaic of land-uses and intensities of uses that permit the conservation of biodiversity, sustain the generation of ecosystem services and enhance the livelihoods of people, especially the most vulnerable. According to the Common Country Assessment conducted by UNDP in 2009, green mass and forest depletion are among the five most pressing environmental problems in the country together with are water resources depletion, climate change effects and environmental pollution. Although loss of biodiversity is a serious problem, it is recognized that biodiversity is

mostly lost due to occurrence of the above mentioned and other problems. Picture 2 presents the overall view of the target area in terms of geography.



Pic.2. COMDEKS target areas in a geographical map

The target area with dominant forest and mountain landscapes was chosen for two main reasons. First, the target landscape is the main crop and vegetable growing area in the country and holds great potential for agro-forestry development in Mongolia. However, it is critical to improve the resilience in the area as there is already evidence of the adverse effects of climate change. Over the last 6 decades, Mongolia has experienced an increase in annual mean temperatures of 1.8 degrees Celsius, changes in the duration of heat and cold waves, and changes in the pattern and predictability of rainfall. High mountain glaciers are melting at a rapid rate, and permafrost is degrading significantly. The groundwater table is falling and land degradation and desertification have

worsened as a result of water shortages and lack of precipitation. Extreme weather events such as drought and dzud have also increased in frequency and intensity. All of these phenomena are attributable to or aggravated by climate change, and will increasingly damage the livestock and other agricultural sectors. Second, the protective functions of forests are more important in the arid zones than elsewhere. The value of dry forests to human life is greatest and forest products are an important source of income for the poor in this ecosystem. Dry forests provide food, medicine, energy and shelter not only for rural populations, but equally for wildlife as a whole..

The target area lies in a transitional zone between the boreal forests of Siberia and the Mongolian steppe. Although livestock husbandry is practically everywhere in the country, the selected area has less livestock than in other natural zones like steppe, Gobi or desert.

According to the Forest Law of 1995, every citizen of Mongolia has the right to possess the forest land, as such the community forestry concept was introduced in 1998 in the country. Since then the number of community forestry practitioners has gradually increased and there are currently about 180 community forestry groups formed in the target area. In average, one forestry group manages and protects 6000 ha of forest land.

There are two state protected areas, namely Khan Khentii Strictly Protected Area and Tujiin Nars National Park along with target area's east border and a considerable number of community protected forest areas in the region. A total of 102,045 ha area in Altanbulag, Mandal, Shaamar soums of Selenge aimag is under state protection. Roughly one third of the target landscape is covered by forests. While Pine and Larch trees are dominant in the landscape, other trees like cedar, birch, aspen, fir, silver fir and poplar also grow. The area is rich with wild fruit and berry bushes like strawberry, red currant, black currant, blueberry, blackberry, black cherry, sea buckthorn and raspberry. Pine nuts and various types of mushroom are widely found in forests. One specific thing is that the area has a relatively high number of community forestry groups or practitioners, compared to other regions in the country.

The ecosystem is home to a plethora of wild animals including the bear, lynx, fox, wolf, Pallas wildcat, ermine, weasel, badger, deer, moose, antelope and boar in the selected COMDEKS area. World widely endangered rodents with an expensive fur like sable and ondatra are found here. Many types of bird like swan, goose, crane, bustard, partridge, hazel grouse, wood grouse, quail, eagle hawk, vulture and buzzard and over 15 types of fish like perch, pike, turbot and white fish inhabit in the region.

The region has naturally well developed river systems including considerable parts of medium sized rivers like Haraa, Eruu and Boroo rivers and downstream sections of big rivers of Tuul, Orhon and Selenge. The area has relatively high development patterns in socio-economic context.

There are considerable human influences on forest ecosystems in the region, including timber cutting, livestock grazing, forest fires and even illegal logging. Mongolians traditionally used wood for making ger /national tent frames, furniture, fences and sheds for animals. But due to

the industrial development during the last 6 decades, wood consumption has increased and expanded to include a large amount for export. During the last 30 years, timber logging was carried out in an unsustainable way, resulting in an estimated 83,000 ha of improperly cut forest in the region. About 60 % of the total harvest is illegal. Fuel wood constitutes between 65-75 % of total wood harvest and is used by many urban poor households in the area for cooking and heating.

The Central Selenge target area has a population of about 42,500, originating from the major Mongolian ethnic *khalkh* group. The official language of Mongolia is Mongolian. Unemployment rate of Altanbulag, Bayangol, Zuunburen, Mandal and Shaamar soums in Selenge *aimag* is only 6% while the rate of Orkhon and Khongor soums in Darkhan-Uul *aimag* shows 14.3%.

The primary regional economic activities are crop farming, animal husbandry and mining, and the number of livestock is 503,135 heads. Crop land covers 88,437 ha of which 56,625 ha of cereals, 3,483 ha of potato & vegetables, 3,819 ha of fodder crops, 310 ha of fruits and 24,200 ha of lie fallow.

As in other areas in the country, land is still state-owned in the target area, except lands in and around settlement areas. Land privatization process in settlements had started several years ago countrywide and is slowly moving forward. Pasture is free for use everywhere in the country.

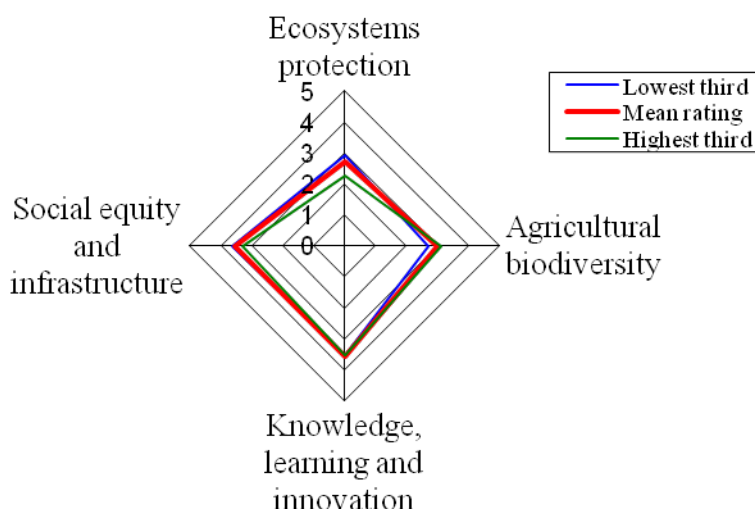
A number of UNDP projects have provided the technical assistance to community forestry development in Mongolia. The SGP Mongolia has funded over 40 community groups practicing community forestry in Zone A. It has been an important task for SGP in the recent past to encourage the active participation and efforts of state and local administrative bodies, community groups, NGOs in the conservation of forest resources. There has been a great need to change the people's mentality towards the community-based natural resource management. With COMDEKS projects the SGP is intended to develop Satoyama landscapes by selecting several key places in the area, where SGP grants have been implemented successfully.

The UNDP Mongolia works at the local level with community organizations and networks to achieve resilient and sustainable development and develop concerted local solutions for environmental management. UNDP recognizes that rural people are the primary agents of change at community and landscape levels and thereby empowers rural communities to implement participatory landscape planning and adaptive management to enhance community and ecosystem resilience and sustainability. The recent and current UNDP projects, e.g. Sustainable Land Management, Special Protected Areas Network, all have assisted local communities in their formation and organization in tackling particular problems set by them to solve.

2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

In order to conduct the landscape-wide baseline assessment, back to back workshops, one with community groups and the other with stakeholders were held, gathering and involving 36 participants, more than half of whom were women. All 36 participants gave scores to SEPL indicators during the baseline assessment using the Satoyama Indicator Scorecard electronic tool. All scores provided by the participants have been collected under SEPL performance radar diagram, as shown below.

SEPL Performance-Central Selenge Area



The radar diagram shows that the participants share similar views on two of the four SEPL performance areas (social equity and knowledge related themes). The performance on these two themes show little better results than the other two do. Therefore, a consensus on the indicators under these themes was reached easily and also supported additionally by low deviations.

There has been appeared a high divergence in the ecosystem protection theme and some divergence in agricultural biodiversity theme. Therefore, most debates were focused on the aforementioned two themes. Many participants indicated that ecosystem protection in the selected socio-ecological production landscape is not adequately taken into consideration by local stakeholders including local authorities. In terms of agricultural biodiversity, most participants shares similar views that agricultural biodiversity is one of the most important and urgent issues to address and benefit from the Satoyama Initiative as the nation has in fact only experienced livestock husbandry for many centuries. Field problem analysis exercises were conducted in several places in the target area with participation of local community groups in

addition to the scorecard exercises in order to justify and support the indicators selected under ecosystem protection and agricultural biodiversity themes.

2.1 The target area

This Strategy covers a total area of 628,856 hectares of land that administratively and partly belongs to 7 *soums* (rural districts) namely, Orkhon and Khongor soums in Darkhan-Uul *aimag* (province), Altanbulag, Bayangol, Zuunburen, Mandal and Shaamar soums in Selenge *aimag*. Table 1 presents some socio-economic characteristics of the target area.

Some socio-economic characteristics of the target area

Table 1.

Target area	Population	Total land area, ha.	Forest land ha.	Pasture land, ha.	Crop land, ha.	Other (settlements, roads, water, especial needs, etc)	Main agricultural products
Central Selenge area	42,500	628,856	211,568	301,755	88,437	27,096	Crops, vegetables, dairy products, honey, poultry, chicken and rarely fruits, berries, wool and skin handicrafts.

Although the forest area occupies about 9.1 % of the country's territory, the target area is considered to be relatively rich in forest resources. There are some country specific features such as dry climate, fragile characteristics of forest and its weak regeneration capacity which can even be considered as problems in some instances. Illegal logging is the chief cause of forest destruction in the region. To fight this problem, creating a more enabling environment for participatory forestry management (or community forestry) is vitally important for the local and central governments. In this regard, the target area is more advanced than other regions. The local governments provide only administrative support for community forestry groups to manage their respective forests as they are not able to provide financial support due to local budget constraints. It is widely recognized by local governments and stakeholders in the region that participatory management of forests is the only way to better protect, conserve and properly use natural resources including forest and water. As the community forestry groups continue practicing the participatory forestry management successfully, in some places of the target area their livelihoods have improved and the wealth of participants has increased by at least 20 percent. As in other forest parts of Mongolia, the target area is no exception for wild forest fires. No consolidated official data was found on forest fires in the area.

There is a general belief in Mongolia that illegal logging is discouraged in forests under the participatory forestry management system. Until recently, forest degradation was exacerbated by the absence of strong community based forest management organizations/user groups, corruption at all levels of management and inspection, and inefficient fund management. It is a challenge to further develop the established community forestry groups, strengthen/enhance their capacity as

well as to assist in establishing new groups. In this respect, the institutionalization of participatory forestry management in the region is another challenge in the near future. Overall, the country's forestry sector suffers from a lack of investment, an inadequately trained workforce, obsolete machinery and unclear institutional responsibilities.

Within the last two decades the pasture conditions in the target area have been depleted intensely due to harsh weather conditions, sudden increases in the concentration of livestock and people, especially around settlement areas as people choose to live closer to major local markets. Feeding pressure by livestock has the most significant impact on pasture in the target area, contributing to its' rapid depletion. In the target area, although animal husbandry is not the main business in many places, the number of livestock has increased considerably over the last 20 years after privatization of livestock took place in the early 1990s.

2.2. Loss of Biodiversity

Overall, the loss of biodiversity everywhere in the region is widely recognized by local residents as a result of the occurrence of environmental problems, including the above mentioned five key problems: grassland degradation and green mass/forest depletion, climate change effects, environmental pollution and water resources depletion. Moreover, poor governance and bad enforcement of legislation including illegal hunting and logging, rapid development of urban and settlements with expansion of human-influenced areas, thus disturbing and destructing wild habitats has greatly contributed to the loss of biodiversity in the area.

The target area possesses last remaining populations of a number of animal and plant species internationally threatened or endangered. However, its biological resources have been facing increasing threats from the rapid depletion of land, drought, water shortage and growing population combined with urbanization, industrial and mining expansion. Ineffective control of illegal hunting during the recent transition period to a market economy has resulted in the loss of a substantial number of wild animals.

Now with policy changes that, in particular, greatly encourage the participation of local communities in conserving and managing natural resources including forest and pasture, the situation has been changing positively. It is believed that in support and combination of these positive changes, the Satoyama initiative with application of landscape approach together with efforts of community forestry practitioners will greatly improve the status of biodiversity in the target area.

2.3. Poverty

Poverty has been widespread in Mongolia, staying generally stable at 36% since the early 1990s. In the past three years, there has been a slight decline in poverty rates of 2.3%. In rural areas,

poverty is higher than in urban areas (approx. 43.4% versus 28.6 %). . Like in many other countries, the gap between poor and rich is widening. No essential changes in livelihoods have taken place at community level.

Over the last 20 years it has become another widespread phenomenon for rural herders to migrate to settlement areas, as being employed in agriculture increases the chances of being poor due to loss of livestock caused by environmental deterioration and frequent natural disasters like *dzud*, an extremely snowy winter in which livestock are unable to find fodder through the snow cover.

3. LANDSCAPE STRATEGY – OUTCOMES AND INDICATORS

In recent years, the concept of environmental conservation has evolved from a species-based conservation approach to a livelihoods-based landscape approach. This shift to a conservation paradigm has included acceptance of communities as an integral part of national conservation initiatives.

A “landscape approach” means taking both a geographical and socio-economic approach to managing the land, water and forest resources that form the foundation – the natural capital – for meeting our goals of food security and inclusive green growth.

The recent baseline assessment conducted with the participation of a range of community groups, local stakeholders and representatives from local governments and civil society organizations in the target area has identified and agreed on four main outcomes to be adopted in the Mongolia COMDEKS Country Programme. Landscape Strategy Table 2 below provides these outcomes with their corresponding impact indicators. COMDEKS projects selected in Mongolia in the target landscape area will need to contribute to these outcomes and track the relevant indicators.

By selecting one of the most suitable socio-ecological production landscapes in the country, where the local environment needs improvement for survival of biodiversity, this Country Programme Landscape Strategy strongly intends to demonstrate the improvement of resilience of production systems in the target area through the development of sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities to maintain, rebuild and revitalize socio-ecological production landscapes”, in accordance with the following five perspectives of the Satoyama Initiative:

- Resource use within the carrying capacity and resilience of the environment;
- Cyclic use of natural resources;
- Recognition of the value and importance of local traditions and cultures;
- Natural resource management by various participating and cooperating entities;

- Contributions to local socio-economies.

The development of agro-forestry with diversification of agricultural products in the area has good potentials with expected positive impacts to the natural environment and its socio-economic development. It is important at this stage of development to further support agro-forestry practices, develop community livelihoods enterprises by encouraging income-generating activities with the participation of local communities and stakeholders. The proposed strategy aims to promote resilient agro-forestry production systems, taking into account continued climate change effects and worsening environmental quality and conditions.

This Country programme Landscape Strategy for Mongolia has 4 major outcomes, as indicated in table 2 below.

Central Selenge Area		Table 2
Overall Objective	Outcomes	Indicators
Improve ecosystem resilience and the resilience of production systems.	1. Conservation of biodiversity strengthened and ecosystem services restored and maintained by linking or cohering advanced farming and traditional livelihood practices with protection and conservation measures of community protected areas.	Number of hectares within the landscape protected for their ecological and cultural importance.
	2. Food security in the target landscape enhanced by increasing productivity and sustainability of agro-ecosystems through agro-forestry, watershed restoration, agro-biodiversity management and farming practice diversification.	Food security through climate resilient agriculture (% of under-nourishment) Type and No. of resiliency enhancing agricultural practices introduced to promote food security (Type and No.) Number of hectares within the target landscape where innovation practices in agricultural biodiversity management are promoted for improved resilience and sustainability.
	3. Livelihoods of communities enhanced through diversification of agricultural products, income-generating activities and development of community livelihood enterprises.	Increase in household income and assets as a result of supported activities. Number of alternative income sources created through livelihood diversification. Number of people practicing sustainable land use management and other eco- friendly non-agricultural activities
	4. Institutional governance systems created	Number of community groups

	and/or strengthened through participatory decision making processes and knowledge sharing at the landscape level.	established or strengthened who are engaged in integrated landscape management. Number and type of policies influenced at the local, landscape, and national levels. Number of best practices and lessons learned shared among landscape stakeholders.
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Outcome 1. *Conservation of biodiversity strengthened and ecosystem services restored and maintained by linking or cohering advanced farming and traditional livelihood practices with protection and conservation measures of community protected areas.*

The COMDEKS Country Programme in Mongolia aims to strengthen the conservation of biodiversity by restoring and maintaining ecosystem services in the target area, while encouraging the establishment and management of community protected areas, where strong linkages exist between traditional or even ordinary livelihood activities and conservation measures.

Outcome 2. *Food security in the target landscape enhanced by increasing productivity and sustainability of agroecosystems through agro-forestry, watershed restoration, agro-biodiversity management and farming practice diversification.*

Food security will not be achieved without preserving the ecosystem services that our forests, grasslands and water provide us. Meeting the fundamental goals of food security and inclusive green growth requires a better integration in the management of core natural assets such as land, forests, and water resources, taking into account their interactions and ecosystem services. Doing so will help to maximize productivity, improve livelihoods, and reduce negative impacts on the environment. Given that food security is closely connected to agriculture, water and forests, the challenges these natural elements face today must be linked and solved in an a much integrated way. Thereby, the second outcome of this Strategy in the target zone is focused on enhancing food security across sectors to find integrated solutions at the scale of the entire landscape through practicing a socio-ecological production landscape approach in the target area restoring watersheds, diversifying production systems and encouraging sustainable landscape management.

Outcome 3. *Livelihoods of communities enhanced through diversification of agricultural products, income-generating activities and development of community livelihood enterprises.*

Livelihoods improvement is an important factor to achieve environmental goals. In conditions of poverty, it is extremely difficult or sometimes impossible to conserve nature. In fact the factor itself is not less

important than direct interventions. Therefore, assistance in creating alternative livelihoods, development of small scaled household enterprises such as milk processing, dairy product making, vegetable drying and packaging etc., non-traditional income-generating activities such as agro-tourism, use of medical herbs and production of handicrafts, and planting and growing locally adapted and proven high value crops. Also improvement of access to credit and market through development of appropriate business plans would be very helpful to communities to develop.

Outcome 4. *Institutional governance systems created and/or strengthened through participatory decision making processes and knowledge sharing at the landscape level.*

Community based institutional governance systems through participatory decision making processes among community groups themselves or neighboring communities, promoting knowledge sharing among communities and other stakeholders outside the target landscape will be created and strengthened. The mentioned community institutional systems are imagined to be community self-governing bodies to manage community activities and share information relevant for the landscape and exchange biodiversity products.

One of the main objectives of the COMDEKS project is to generate key lessons on community-based best practices in order to maintain and rebuild socio-economic production landscapes toward the realization of “societies in harmony with nature,” as defined in the vision of the Satoyama Initiative. Therefore, enhancing understanding and raising awareness of the importance of improving the resilience of the socio-ecological production landscapes must be an important task to be achieved through effective knowledge management in the target areas.

4. TYPOLOGY OF POTENTIAL COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS AND CRITERIA FOR PROJECT SELECTION.

4.1. Typology

The typology developed through community consultations during the baseline assessment is vital for project proponents, especially for CBOs to understand the essence of COMDEKS projects and should guide them in the development of project proposals in their respective territories of the target landscape. The typology suggests:

- Diversification of agricultural landscapes and agro-forestry systems, including silvo-pastures, windbreaks, shelterbelts, riparian forest buffers and integration of crops, livestock and trees in the context of climate change adaption;
- Forest and ecosystem restoration activities that also enhance landscape connectivity and increase landscape resilience;

- Restoration of river water flows and water quality by protecting and enhancing forest ecosystem services;
- Construction of community ponds/dams to accumulate and regulate small stream and spring flows to use for restoration, conservation and livelihoods improvement purposes;
- Community garden development in areas under community forestry scheme;
- Promotion of multipurpose and multi-tree plantations to improve ecosystem resilience as well as to support local livelihoods;
- Promotion of restoration of riparian areas, wetlands and watersheds;
- Support for bee keeping activities and strengthening existing bee keeping associations;
- Promotion of eco and agro-tourism and visitor centre activities;
- Activities supporting diversification of livelihoods and income generation connected to biodiversity conservation;
- Support for handicraft production;
- Promotion of fertilizer production by using livestock manure;
- Promotion of alternative fuel/energy technologies to save forests from excessive extraction for household energy needs (e.g. firewood for cooking and heating);
- Support for initiatives on crop diversification, livestock production and crop-livestock-trees integration;
- Improvement of access to credit and market through development of appropriate business plans;
- Introduction and use of community wood saving and wood replacing technologies;
- Establishment of local working groups, networks or associations of community organizations;
- Support for establishment of participatory decision-making and planning processes/mechanisms and knowledge sharing;
- Capacity building for local governance on issues related to landscape problems and opportunities through policy dialogue, etc.

4.2. Project Selection Criteria

Each community-based project funded by COMDEKS will need to contribute to at least two outcomes identified in this strategy, and track the relevant outcome level indicators identified in the table above.

For COMDEKS projects, proposals will be reviewed by the SGP National Steering Committee following the selection criteria suggested in Table 3.

Project Selection Criteria		Table 3
Criteria	Evaluation elements	Possible Points
Agricultural biodiversity value	• Usage and conservation of local crops, varieties and breeds; • Diversification of locally sourced foods.	20
Food security	Contributing factors:	20

	• Halting deforestation; • Restoring watersheds; • Diversifying production systems; • Encouraging sustainable landscape management.	
Ecosystem protection and biodiversity maintenance	• Diversification of land-use types and improvement of connection of ecosystem patches; • Protection of landscape components maintaining ecosystem functions and services.	20
Livelihood improvement	• Linking income generation to conservation;	20
Scope of action and Innovation	• Addressing multiple threats or needs; • Addressing innovative areas.	10
Policy inform and Replication	• Addressing policies; • Affecting the entire site; • Replication potentials.	10
Total Points Possible		100

Total score above 50 points – recommended for NSC consideration

Total score below 50 points – not recommended for NSC consideration

4.3. Criteria for NGO/CBOs selection

Selection of an implementing organization is another important factor for the success of a grant. The Satoyama Initiative is something new to the majority of NGOs and CBOs in Mongolia. Therefore, training events and round table discussions will/must be organized for interested organizations, local consultants and stakeholders on a range of issues related to COMDEKS implementation. The SGP Mongolia website will also be used for advertisement and introducing basic concepts of the Satoyama Initiative. The following criteria will be applied to NGO/CBOs to implement COMDEKS projects:

- Eligibility of organizations - government registered national NGOs working on environment and green development, scientific community, women groups, youth organizations and rural NGOs, community based organizations such as nuhurels, herder cooperatives and groups;
- Ability to deliver community projects, considering institutional, technical and financial capacity to manage projects;
- Previous experience of implementing community projects and records of past activities on nature conservation;
- Assurance of community participation in project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;
- Good knowledge of the Satoyama Initiative, socio-ecological production landscapes, landscape resilience, agro-forestry and food security;
- Permanent location or office of NGO to project site will be an advantage.

Over the last 11 years of operating GEF SGP in Mongolia, it has become the practice that the NSC meets 4-5 times a year to fully commit the country allocations. Now with additional proposals of COMDEKS, it is expected that the number of meetings will be increased by two. NSC meetings are possible to be convened any time around year, if a required number of proposals is collected for consideration. There is one essential country specific related to natural factors that community projects are not desirable to be implemented over cold season as the Mongolian winter is very harsh and it is practically impossible to do something good during this period.

As some of the NSC members are not very familiar with the Satoyama Initiative, they will be provided with information, COMDEKS newsletters and case studies.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

The monitoring and evaluation system of this Strategy will be carried out under existing GEF-SGP operating procedures. The COMDEKS project will be governed through the NSC Committee formed under the GEF OP 05 SGP programme and will be informed through the National Coordinator. The COMDEKS will be kept as a separate agenda during NSC meetings, where the National Coordinator will be responsible for providing project status updates and progress.

Monitoring and Evaluation will be carried out in two levels, the country programme landscape level and at the level of individual projects.

Country Programme Landscape Level M&E: The SEPL scorecard will be utilized at a defined timeframe annually to measure and document change against the baseline assessment values generated in October 2013. A final assessment of SEPL indicators will take place at a

workshop financed by a grant. This will serve as a final evaluation of the Country Programme Landscape Strategy.

Landscape Specific Project Level M&E: Prior to project approval, each project will have to identify the specific landscape strategy outcome to which it is contributing and will monitor the corresponding indicators. Progress towards the outcome will be updated using the grantees' progress reports. Additionally, the individual project will have an indicator system aligned with GEF SGP OP5 indicators.

During the formulation of the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy several consultations were organized with some of the SGP National Steering Committee members, leaders of community groups covered by SGP grants and soum governors or deputy governors. The consultations were focused on areas of coverage by COMDEKS projects, main activities, outcomes and selection of indicators to measure expected results and impacts, given that they have a lot of experience and know of opportunities and risks and can be key players, when COMDEKS is implemented. As monitoring and evaluation process will be participatory in nature, when time comes to conduct it, NSC members will be again key actors in the implementation of the monitoring and evaluation plan.

Project monitoring and evaluation will be organized and led by the National Coordinator during project site visits with involvement of the grantee organization, community leader and members, representatives of local government, SGP local consultants and some members of the NSC. When time and location of a monitoring and evaluation site is determined, the above mentioned actors will be informed and invited for a participatory monitoring. During the participatory field monitoring and evaluation, each participant will be given a monitoring and evaluation record paper prepared for that particular grant and must complete it at the end of monitoring and evaluation. And then the papers will be analyzed and documented. As usual, monitoring will track actual against planned results, using SGP indicators and provide systematic information on progress towards expected results. For individual COMDEKS projects, the following Monitoring and Evaluation Record (Table 4) will be used.

Monitoring and Evaluation Record

Table 4

Monitoring and Evaluation Record				Table 1
Project Number:		Project Name:		
Name of Grant Recipient:				
Brief Description of General Objective of Project:				
Project Component	Expected Results	SGP Indicators	Note Progress, Problems, and Recommendations for Corrective Measures (indicate date of comment)	
Objective 1:				
Activity 1.1				
...				
Objective 2:				
Activity 2.1				
...				

This table should be adjusted and expanded as needed.

When evaluation is conducted towards the end of grant implementation as usual, in addition to the information collected through previous monitoring records, all other possible sources, including progress and field visit records will be used to determine the results of outcomes and impact of interventions. Evaluations will also provide answers to the questions “what has worked, what has not, and why?”. Evaluation will be done using a participatory approach and through community-based methods. Therefore, annual joint evaluations with stakeholders will be organized.

The results of each and individual SGP projects will be summarized in a table and analyzed for further action, indentifying best practices and producing knowledge practices. Analysis will be used for further approval and implementing processes. Project level M&E plan implementation is summarized in Table 5.

M&E Plan at the Project Level

Table 5

Individual COMDEKS Project Level		
M&E Activity	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
NC Project Proposal Site Visit	NC	Before project approval, as appropriate
Project Work plans	Grantees, NC, PA	Duration of project
NC Project Monitoring Site Visit	NC	On average once per year, as appropriate
Participatory Project Monitoring	NC, grantees, NSC, other stakeholders	Duration of project
Baseline Data Collection	Grantees, NC, PA	At project concept planning and proposal stage
Three Project Progress and Final Reports	Grantees, NC, PA	At each disbursement request
Participatory Project Evaluation Site Visit	NC,	At end of project, as appropriate
Project Final Report	Grantees	Following completion of project activities
Project Evaluation Report	NC, NSC, External party	Following completion of project activities
Description of lessons learned and knowledge generated.	PA, NC	At start of project, and ongoing throughout the end

At the COMDEKS level, this M&E plan establishes an approach for continuous improvement in the planning and implementation of individual projects and ensures right directions in supporting local community activities to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and in collecting and disseminating knowledge and experiences from successful on the ground actions for replication and up-scaling, while developing sound biodiversity management and sustainable



livelihood practices in the target areas through periodic review of results of individual projects, this Strategy and country Portfolio.

6. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Proper implementation of monitoring and evaluation plans will serve as a source for identifying best practices. Once identified, it will be decided whether to launch a case study or just to collect data on the project, depending on what the final knowledge products would be, e.g. a video or photo story or just a leaflet, etc. It will be assumed that case studies work out every details including the lessons learned to produce more comprehensive or informative knowledge products such as a video, photo story, or TV coverage, etc. For data collection, it will be assumed that all required information and data needed to produce the desired knowledge materials are collected and processed. The data collection itself will be done in cooperation with the COMDEKS grantees, local stakeholders and network consultants and using grant progress and final reports.



Sharing knowledge and disseminating to the public will be conducted through uploading to youtube.com, the SGP country programme website-www.sgpmongolia.org, knowledge fairs, national and international environment and green development events, SGP community consultants, “Partnership for Development” SGP National Network local coordinators and posting to communities and local stakeholders.

There are two basic levels to inform and influence policy. One is national level, where, first of all, parliament and government members, relevant ministries and agencies such as Ministry of Environment and Green Development, Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development will be the targets to inform and influence policy. They can be reached mostly by distributing knowledge materials. There is another important way to inform policy at the national level. That way goes through civil society groups and their networks which become very active and powerful, when needed and sometimes unbelievably influential to parliament and government members. The other level is local level, covering provinces and soums/counties. This level is easily reachable and in many cases what the communities do is well known to local authorities and decision making bodies. However, to better inform and influence the local policy and thereby the national policy, it is preferable to work and cooperate with them and provide them with knowledge products and often invite participatory monitoring and evaluations, stakeholders and other meetings, workshops and seminars.

Knowledge products generated by COMDEKS projects along with basic concept papers on the Satoyama Initiative and socio-ecological production landscapes will be shared widely with the private sector, communities, farmers, herders and other local stakeholders for replication and up-scaling purposes in the forms of publications, video and photo stories. As our previous experience shows that replication is mostly taken by neighboring communities, while up-scaling is done by private sector. Therefore, informing and supplying small private companies at the provincial and soum levels with knowledge products will be the way to up-scaling.

Key audiences who are deemed to be important partners in implementing COMDEKS knowledge management plan are grantees, potential grantees, national and local governments, GEF implementing agencies and other donors conducting similar activities, SGP community consultants, “Partnership for Development” SGP network, media, private sector, national committees on environmental conventions, international and national NGOs and foundations, conservation communities (scientific community, environmental academia and institutions, movements, NGO networks), NSC members, and GEF operational focal point.

Preparations to produce COMDEKS knowledge products will start from the beginning of 2014 with involvement of grantees, SGP network local coordinators and NGOs.