

COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative

United Nations Development Programme



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Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

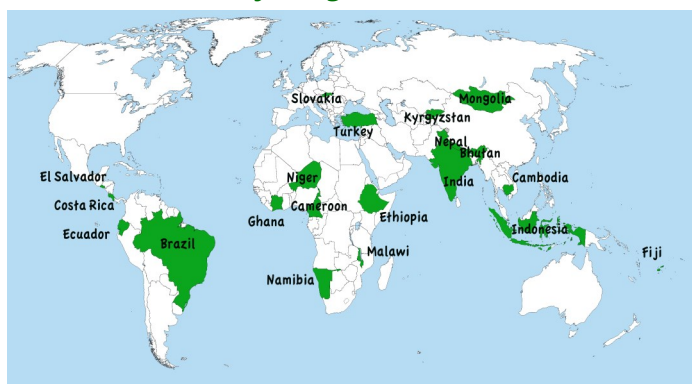
This newsletter is produced by the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project, implemented by UNDP and funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund. It provides updates on a range of topics including the status of ongoing country programmes, landscape performance indicators,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

Welcome to the sixteenth issue of our Newsletter!

In this edition, we highlight:

- 1) COMDEKS Case study featured in IPSI Publication
- 2) Order of the Polar Star Award to COMDEKS partner
- 3) Biocoal from agricultural waste in Cameroon
- 4) Revolving Fund supporting rural families in Brazil
- 5) Portfolio Updates: Fiji and Cambodia
- 6) Photo story from El Salvador

COMDEKS Country Programmes: June 2016

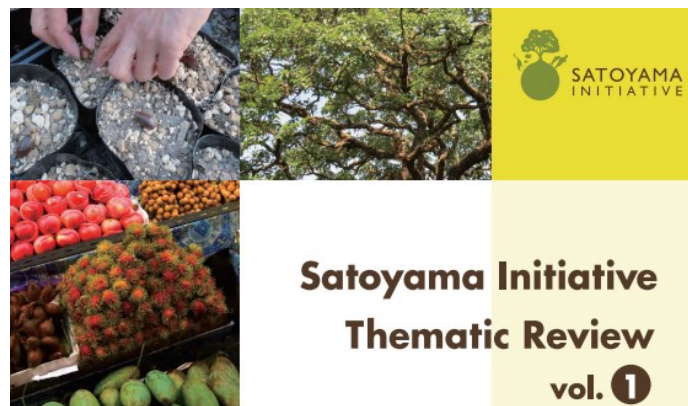


COMDEKS case study featured in Satoyama Initiative Publication

In January 2016, the Satoyama Initiative published the "Satoyama Initiative Thematic Review Vol. 1", which showcases eleven case studies from around the world that apply tools and approaches for "Enhancing knowledge for better management of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS)".

This annual publication series aims to present experiences and relevant information related to SEPLS, particularly including concrete and applied knowledge as well as policy recommendations from practitioners working on the ground. A synthesis chapter highlights the relevance of sharing lessons learned from SEPLS awareness and management activities for the policy and academic discussion and to continuously improve activities in the field.

The eleven case studies featured in this Vol. 1 are authored by IPSI member organizations, presenting experiences from 13 countries (China, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Tonga, New Zealand, Germany, Turkey, Kenya, Uganda and Guyana) and various socio-ecological contexts. As one of these case studies, the COMDEKS case study "Promoting resilience of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes in the Datça-Bozburun Peninsula, Turkey" presents the socio-economic situation of the COMDEKS target landscape in Turkey, the Landscape Strategy and its development, an outline of COMDEKS-supported projects, as well as impacts, achievements and key lessons learned.



For more information and to download this publication, please visit the [IPSI Website](http://www.ipsi.org).

Order of the Polar Star Award to COMDEKS partner in Mongolia

We are pleased to announce that in February 2016, Mr. Dovdondemberel Dambadarjaa, head of the "Bayanchatsargana" community and GEF SGP and COMDEKS grantee in Mongolia, was awarded the "Order of the Polar Star" for the community's achievements towards improved livelihoods and sustainable natural resource management in the face of a changing climate. This



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award is one of Mongolia's highest recognitions awarded by a President's decree to honor outstanding contributions to environmental protection and rural development.

The "Bayanchatsargana" Community Partnership under the leadership of Mr. Dovdondemberel began as a voluntary group of households working together to divide labor, join forces for communal activities and protect the resources they all depend on – a collective response to environmental and economic change. In collaboration with the CBO "Khos Bayankhangai", this community successfully implemented the COMDEKS-supported project "Community development integrated with the management of Tujiin Nars protected area". Through its reforestation efforts in and around Tujiin Nars, a large pine forest that has been declared a National Park, the initiative has shown how resource conservation and livelihood development can go hand in hand.



Award ceremony

Photo: Mongolia

Since its inception, this initiative has increased in the number of participating CBOs from one to three, generating best practices on enabling low income households to lift themselves out of poverty by empowering women, protecting natural resources and enhancing their household incomes through the adoption of new livelihood strategies in livestock and non-livestock activities that also contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Grazing and breeding management, afforestation and agro-forestry for fodder and fruit production, as well as the protection of wetlands all contribute to carbon sequestration and are adaptive measures to local climate change impacts. The community's nursery skills have further enabled them to supply resilient plant species to the entire region to withstand new climate challenges. Milk processing, vegetable cultivation and fruit and forest tree nurseries are now adding to traditional livestock income and have tripled household incomes of community members.

Contributed by Mr. Ganbaatar Bandi, Mongolia National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

Biocoal from agricultural waste as an alternative to charcoal in Bogo households, Cameroon

As part of the COMDEKS strategy for improving the resilience of the Bogo socio-ecological production landscape (SEPL), the local CSO "Association Horizon Info" initiated a community-based project to reduce deforestation as well as the difficulties women face daily in fetching fuel wood for cooking. Through this COMDEKS-supported project, a semi-industrial biocoal production plant was established in the township of Guinglay, training 120 people – including 73 women and 27 youths – in biocoal production from agricultural waste such as maize and sorghum stems, and millet cobs, to be used in improved cook stoves.

The project further carried out continuous technical and organizational follow-up on this young production unit until independent production capacity was ensured, facilitated the participatory development of a distribution strategy to almost 50 households in the Bogo landscape with local communities, and organized an information campaign to increase awareness on the benefits of using this biocoal.



Training in biocoal production

Photo: Cameroon

The production unit is now managed by a local women's co-operative and permanently employs three people with an annual production capacity of 3.12 tons. While it considerably reduces domestic waste, it also helps to promote sustainable development, fight against desertification and supports the national priorities set out in the national strategy document for growth and employment as part of Cameroon's vision for the period 2010-2020.

Association Horizon Info has already successfully disseminated project lessons and best practices by replicating this biocoal production process through a practical training provided to community leaders in two other parts of the country. In Cameroon's Eastern region, which hosts five Central African refugees camps (Gado-Badzez, Timangolo, Mbile, Lolo and Ngari-Singo), 50 women were trained in biocoal production

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with additional funding from UNHCR, and a semi-industrial production unit was set up with funding from the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). Further 200 women were trained in the Sahelian Northern region with support from the French Embassy in Cameroon, however, resources to support construction and equipment of the production units are still to be mobilized.

Contributed by Fadimatou Hassimi, COMDEKS grantee, Marie-Laure Mpeck Nyemeck, Cameroon National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP, and Kamga Fogue Aimé, Programme Assistant, GEF SGP, UNDP

Revolving Fund supporting alternative livelihoods for rural families in the Jequitinhonha Valley, Brazil

The Jequitinhonha Valley is one of the poorest regions in Brazil, and the region is afflicted by a lack of water and degradation of natural landscapes. Based on the landscape strategy for the COMDEKS socio-ecologic production landscape in Brazil, the Upper Jequitinhonha Valley, overall nine community-based projects in 14 communities have aimed to increase landscape resilience and improve livelihoods through enhanced agroecology, water and soil management, as well as enhanced market access opportunities.



Loan recipients for drip irrigation system

Photo: Brazil

Among the COMDEKS grantees, the NGO Vicente Nica Alternative Agriculture Center (CAV), also supported by SGP Brazil through co-financing of the strategic project "Living in the Landscape: Building new relationships with nature in the Jequitinhonha Valley", has substantially contributed to improving livelihoods of the local rural population. As one of CAV's central service strategies in the Jequitinhonha Valley, the Solidarity Revolving Fund is an instrument to provide access to capital for small farmers to finance agro-ecological productive activities such as horticulture, animal husbandry or beekeeping. The same incentives also serve to improve local infrastructure and access to water. Within the COMDEKS target landscape, the fund provides capital to families to increase their production above the

subsistence level, selling surplus produce through formal and informal markets in the cities. Recipients are often women or cooperatives, with a usual loan size of R\$ 4,000 (USD 1,200). Farmers are able to acquire natural and organic inputs supporting soil recovery, combining these with equipment for sustainable water use. Such funds also contributed to capacity building through learning-by-doing within communities as well as enhanced processing and supply chains, thereby adding to improved food diversity and quality as well as higher incomes within local economies.

So far, this fund has benefited 52 farmer families from the municipalities Veredinha and Turmalina within the COMDEKS target landscape, having accessed about R\$ 55,000 (USD 17,500) altogether. With a total volume of more than USD 100,000, CAV supports smallholders within six municipalities of the region through this fund.

Contributed by Mr. Valmir Soares de Macedo, COMDEKS grantee, and Ms. Isabel Figueiredo, Brazil Country Programme Manager, GEF SGP, UNDP

Portfolio Updates: Fiji

Since the Landscape/Seascape Strategy for the COMDEKS target landscape in Fiji, the Natewa Peninsula, was approved in May 2013, nine community-based projects have been supported as part of Fiji's portfolio of COMDEKS landscape interventions. COMDEKS projects have placed a large focus on supporting the development of institutional platforms to provide the necessary assistance and technical support for the implementation of activities at the landscape level, as well as the rehabilitation of natural biodiversity and promotion of sustainable agricultural practices.



The Natewa Peninsula

Photo: Fiji

Throughout this past year of implementation, 20 community consultation meetings were held for activities such as the compilation of natural resources management

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village plans, and a district-wide village profiling exercise covering over 15 villages, which formed the basis for the design of 15 village development and natural resources management plans aligned with COMDEKS targets and outcomes. Additionally, nine village development committees were established in order to strengthen environmental governance and civil society participation thereof within the target landscape.

At least five communities established viable seed banks to support crop diversification and close to 50 community farmers are actively involved in reviving sustainable traditional farming methods, as well as the retention of traditional breeds of local crops. Through five initiatives actively promoting alternative livelihood opportunities, household incomes of about 300 beneficiaries increased by roughly 30% through the promotion of activities such as horticulture, traditional bark-cloth production, apiculture, traditional mat-weaving, traditional handicraft making, and the sale of root crops to local markets. These livelihood activities engaged both men and women, as well as the local youth.

Contributed by Ms. Katarina Atalifo-Malo, Fiji National Coordinator, GEF SGP, UNDP

Cambodia



Reforestation activities

Photo: Cambodia

COMDEKS-supported projects in the Steung Siem Reap watershed target landscape, which is located in the North-western province of Siem Reap, mainly focused on restoring ecological systems and strengthening livelihoods through community forest management, community-based ecotourism and the conservation of watersheds. Through Community Forestry Committees, projects aimed to conserve forest areas using Community Forestry Management Plans, along with the establishment of agro-forestry demonstration sites, community tree nurseries and reforestation activities.

In 2015, the COMDEKS Ex-post Baseline Assessment was conducted to review the baseline and indicators. This as-

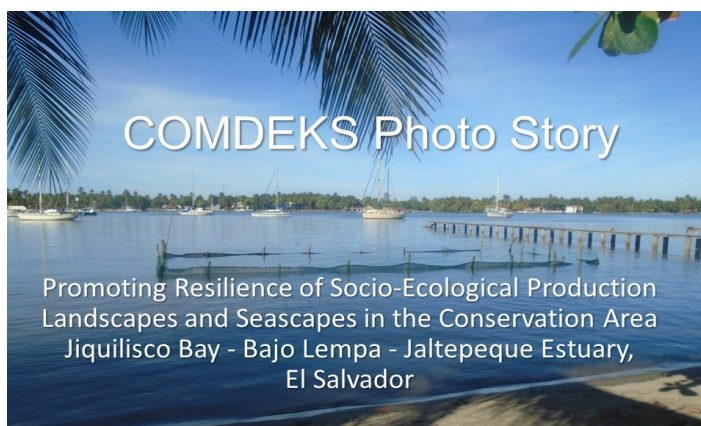
essment also explored underlying perceptions and changes in perceptions of communities in different areas.

Results include an increased level of awareness of environmental impacts. Beneficiaries were able to link degradation between different sections of the landscape, and degradation in their own areas. Understanding these links and how zones affect one another is not only important to help motivate change, but to promote cooperation and networking.

Throughout all COMDEKS projects in the Steung Siem Reap watershed target landscape, more than 1,900 community members have benefitted from additional income activities, raising household incomes by 100% in some cases. In terms of restoration and protection of forests and flooded forest ecosystems, about 361,900 hectares (ha) have been restored or protected through COMDEKS, and about 8,491 ha have been brought under sustainable management plans. Families were trained in integrated farming techniques and noted a decrease in the reliance on herbicides and pesticides. Beekeeping was considered particularly successful, as there is a steady market with prices increasing every year. Rice banks are successful in providing access to drought tolerant rice seeds and home gardens have contributed to improved food security, while strengthening the use of locally produced resources.

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

A Photo story from El Salvador



Click on the image above to access a photo story from El Salvador.

Contributed by Mr. Juan Rene Guzman Arbaiza, El Salvador National Coordinator, GEF-SGP, UNDP

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