



COMDEKS

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project



Second Annual Report

May 2012 - May 2013



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Cover photos: COMDEKS Nepal, Ghana, India and Fiji.

Executive 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 Initiative¹, a global initiative to promote sustainable use and management of natural resources in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. COMDEKS is a unique global project implemented by UNDP, in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), and the United Nations University – Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS). The project, funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund, established within the CBD Secretariat, contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the implementation of the Aichi targets adopted by the tenth meeting of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity Conference of the Parties (CBD COP 10, October 2010).

The COMDEKS Project 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 on the ground 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 in developing countries.

The project is being delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme, and currently in its first phase, is under implementation in ten countries: Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Fiji, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia and Turkey. In June 2013, at least ten additional countries will join COMDEKS during its second phase (2013-2016). During this reporting period, the COMDEKS project has supported local community activities in the ten mentioned countries to promote sustainable community-based landscape-level management approaches. Within each of the first group of ten countries target landscapes have been identified that collectively span coastal areas, watersheds, pastoral systems, lowland and highland areas, and island ecosystems. The indicators developed by UNU-IAS and Bioversity International have been piloted in COMDEKS project sites as a tool during this first phase to help measure and understand the socio-ecological resilience of the target landscapes and to identify necessary activities to strengthen landscape resilience. Through a participatory and inclusive multi-stakeholder process involving the communities that inhabit, use, and protect these landscapes, these assessments have been subsequently compiled and analyzed to support the development of a landscape strategies with the identification of appropriate community-based activities in each target landscape/seascape. Currently, there are forty-seven individual COMDEKS project proposals under implementation, and additional projects are in the pipeline.

This is the second annual project report for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS). This annual report documents achievements, constraints and impacts with regard to the utilization of the UNEP/SCBD contribution of June 2012 through early May 2013.

¹ The Satoyama Initiative aims to conserve sustainable human-influenced natural environments (Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes; SEPLS) through broader global recognition of their value. The partnership, IPSI, comprises organizations committed to support SEPLS for the benefit of biodiversity and human well-being through the implementation of their respective activities. <http://satoyama-initiative.org/en/>



This annual report is divided into three sections. Section 1 provides a brief overview of COMDEKS, including its vision, objectives and components. Section 2 presents achievements and impacts to date of the COMDEKS project in the first 10 participating countries. Finally, the last section of the report provides a preview of future activities as well as a number of recommendations.

UNDP would like to thank the Japanese Ministry of the Environment, the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies and the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity for their continuous support of COMDEKS.

Background²

The Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ), the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), the United Nations University (UNU), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have been working together to promote the Satoyama Initiative, a global initiative to promote sustainable use and management of natural resources in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes with the aim of maintaining, rebuilding and revitalizing them. The Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) Project is a unique global project implemented by UNDP as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI).

The COMDEKS project has been designed to support local community activities to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes and to collect and disseminate knowledge and experiences from successful on-the-ground actions for replication and upscaling in other parts of the world. COMDEKS grant making is expected to generate key lessons on community-based best practices to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes toward the realization of “societies in harmony with nature”, as defined as the vision of the Satoyama Initiative.

Funded through the Japan Biodiversity Fund established within the CBD Secretariat, the COMDEKS Project is implemented by UNDP, and delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme. Currently, the project is implemented in 10 countries: Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Fiji, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia and Turkey.

The main goal of the COMDEKS Project is supporting local community activities to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes, and to collect and disseminate knowledge and experiences from on the ground actions for replication, policy dialogue and up-scaling.

The COMDEKS Project has two components:

1. Community Development through small grant-making by using UNDP’s existing Small Grants Programme delivery mechanism.
2. Knowledge Management for capacity building, replication, and up-scaling.

The community development component (Outcome 1) of the COMDEKS project is delivered through the UNDP-implemented GEF-Small Grants Programme (SGP). Launched in 1992, SGP has provided over 14,000 grants to communities in 126 developing countries, and functions as a well-established delivery mechanism directly to remote and vulnerable communities. SGP supports activities of nongovernmental and community-based organizations to restore the environment while enhancing people's well-being and livelihoods. Largely funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as a corporate programme, SGP is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on behalf of the GEF partnership, and is executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)³.

COMDEKS provides small-scale finance to local community organizations in developing countries. COMDEKS activities are implemented in a country-driven manner through SGP country programmes its

² See Project Document for Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS).

³ <http://sgp.undp.org/>

well established National Steering Committees (NSCs) which are decentralized, voluntary, multi-stakeholder decision-making bodies. Appointed by UNDP Resident Representatives, NSCs provide local governance and project selection mechanisms in the target countries of the Programme. In each country the SGP National Coordinator (NC) provides support for a range of functions including: programme development and grant management, monitoring and knowledge management, and resource mobilization and fostering partnerships. SGP Programme Assistants provide programme implementation support, financial management, administrative services and knowledge management.

Following SGP practices, COMDEKS grants are approved by national steering committees. Grants are made directly to CBOs and NGOs in recognition of the key role they play as a resource and constituency for sustainable development concerns. The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country and community initiative and ownership, and the local demand-driven nature of SGP projects contributes to future sustainability. The National Steering Committee is responsible for strategic guidance, makes funding decisions on grants to NGOs and CBOs, and serves as a policy conduit between community-based actions and sub-national and national policy fora. The NSC is an independent entity comprised majority civil society membership together with representation of government and UNDP, and includes a range of recognized experts on global environment and sustainable development issues.

Additionally; the COMDEKS Project Coordinator at the global level is directly responsible for the implementation of the knowledge management component of the project (Outcome 2), including the development and distribution of project case studies and other knowledge products, capturing lessons learned and best practices which can be replicated in other parts of the world and communicated to policy makers for coherent policy development.

Table 1: COMDEKS components, expected outputs and outcomes

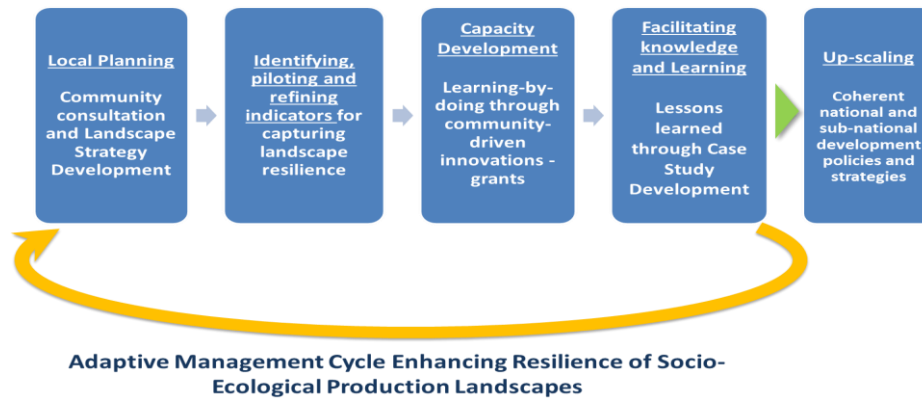
Project Components	Expected Concrete Outputs	Expected Outcomes
1. Community Development through Small Grant-Making by using the existing Small Grants Programme (SGP) delivery mechanism	<p>1.1. Baseline assessments conducted at the landscape level in order to define goals, desired outcomes and typology of potential community-based projects to achieve socio-ecological production landscape resilience.</p> <p>1.2 Country Programme Strategies developed for each participating country to guide the implementation of community based landscape projects.</p> <p>1.3 Portfolio of 5-10 community-led projects addressing resilience of socio-ecological production landscapes implemented in each of the participating countries.</p>	Local organizations and institutions have the understanding, strategies, tools, skills and technical capacities required to implement socio-ecological production landscape initiatives in participating countries.

<p>2. Knowledge Management for capacity building, replication, and up-scaling</p>	<p>Output 2.1: Project blog/web site and other learning networks combining workshops, webinars and social media are launched in order to enhance understanding and raise awareness of the importance of SEPLs for the benefit of biodiversity and human wellbeing.</p> <p>Output 2.2: Best practices and lessons learned exchanged among countries and IPSI partners through case studies development for replication and upscaling.</p> <p>Output 2.3 Policy makers engaged in the Landscape process at all levels: Lessons from community-based landscape management related activities compiled and disseminated to governmental officials and policy makers at the local, national and global level for coherent policy development.</p>	<p>Practitioners at the global, national and local levels and local stakeholders' access and exchange knowledge, experience, best practices and lessons from socio-ecological production landscapes, to incorporate lessons learned into planning tools and enable replication and upscaling of best practices around the world.</p>
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The Community-based Landscape Approach

Through the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) project, UNDP is piloting the Community-based Production Landscape Management Approach to enhance resilience of landscapes and communities. The figure below illustrates the COMDEKS Strategic Framework to enhance resilience and sustainability at the landscape level through adaptive management.

Figure 1: COMDEKS Strategic Framework



COMDEKS promotes the principle of long term strategic engagement through a community-based, resilient landscape approach that moves beyond short term projects at the community level (of which there are many good examples) to a more programmatic and strategic approach aimed at creating and/or sustaining resilient communities and landscapes.

COMDEKS operates in landscapes that have been selected through a participatory multi-stakeholder process involving the communities that inhabit, use, and protect them. Diverse landscapes require locally-adapted solutions to meet the needs of stakeholders and conserve the wealth of ecosystem services, biodiversity, cultures and knowledge found within socio-ecological production landscapes. The definition of landscape (whether agricultural fields, watershed, river basin, coastal zone, marine fisheries, mountain pastures, lowland forests, or other land-use mosaics) is a community definition.

Once a landscape has been identified, community consultations are held to develop a landscape strategy to enhance resilience and sustainability. This process of social learning promotes the conditions for achieving long-term biodiversity conservation by building the capacity of communities to learn about the complexity of interactions in the landscape and promoting changes in behavior.

A COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy is a comprehensive document which outlines the landscape profile, and strategies for community-based actions.⁴ Landscape strategies focus on major landscape level resilience outcomes including ecosystem services and biodiversity conservation, agro

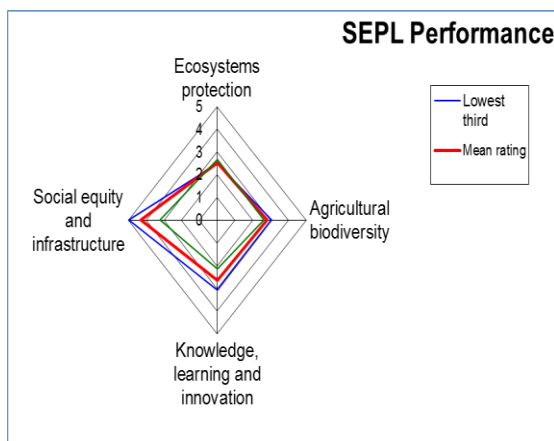
⁴ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategies can be consulted at the following link: www.comdeksproject.com

biodiversity, food security and disaster management, promotion of alternative livelihood activities, and strengthening of institutional and governance systems at the landscape level.

Through the community consultations, landscape strategies identify the type of potential community-level activities that will enhance community and landscape resilience. Each approved project is designed to increase the resilience of the socio-ecological landscape, while improving the livelihoods of community members. Types of supported activities include: activities that promote more sustainable production practices that maintain land and water ecosystem services and conserve biodiversity; that promote access to new markets for biodiversity-friendly products; that promote nature-based tourism initiatives that generate income for local communities; and that promote sustainable land management practices to protect the ecosystem services needed for food and water security; etc. but also promoting effective governance systems at the landscape level.

COMDEKS is field-testing methodologies to empower community organizations to implement participatory landscape planning and enhance resilience at the community level. As part of the community consultation process, COMDEKS is currently piloting a set of Indicators for Resilience in Socio-ecological Production landscape and Seascapes (SEPLS), developed by IPSI members, UNU-IAS and Bioversity International to help measure and understand the resilience of target landscapes and seascapes. Indicators for Resilience in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS) are piloted enabling the development of participatory transformative strategies that reflect local priorities negotiated among representatives from local communities, the government, academia and the private sector. Landscape Strategies guide the selection and implementation of specific community initiatives in each country.

Figure 2: Example of a radar diagram developed during the consultation process to provide a graphical presentation of SEPL performance⁵.



⁵ In each participating country, with the support of a scorecard developed for this purpose, the practical application of the Resilience Indicators during the baseline assessment was conducted by measuring elements of SEPLS resilience along four interrelated dimensions, namely: ecosystems protection and the maintenance of biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; knowledge, learning and innovation; social equity and infrastructure. The diagram depicts the mean scores for the four dimensions of the landscape to give viewers a visual image of comparative strengths and weaknesses across them (Example from [Ghana](#), COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy).



To support innovative actions identified by the communities through stakeholder consultations, small grants are provided to local community organizations with the overall long term objective to enhance socio-ecological production landscape and seascape resilience by developing sound biodiversity management and sustainable livelihood activities with local communities. Through a process of social learning, projects are organized around a landscape approach or strategy.

COMDEKS also focuses on reviewing, analyzing, and codifying results from on-the-ground activities to distill and disseminate lessons which can be replicated in other parts of the world and communicated to policy makers for coherent policy development and upscaling. Knowledge management is essential for building adaptive management capacities in communities and landscapes and beyond. To consolidate the community-based, resilient landscape approach requires analyzing and codifying lessons learned and good practices, and producing knowledge about community and landscape resiliency that can be shared and taken up by actors and agencies at the local, national and global levels. Lessons learned are generated at the individual project level (the project process and impacts) and at the landscape level (the contribution of projects to landscape outcomes, governance, synergies, etc.).

Communities are empowered to learn by doing. Communities identify, design, and implement projects; they reflect on project outcomes, consult with partners and, if necessary adjust goals and approaches. These reflections, consultations, and adjustments inform new planning and action. This collaborative, adaptive management process can support the legal empowerment of communities, their access to financing and markets and their contribution to policy debates, as well as scaling up of successful initiatives.⁶

Initial grant funding to organizations to design and implement projects in pursuit of landscape outcomes builds ownership, capacity of local communities, and the agency of the organizations themselves and guarantees a high degree of sustainability of outcomes based on the knowledge and social capital generated. Organizations thus empowered are able to participate constructively and authoritatively in policy dialogue around resilience enhancing measures.

⁶ Process of adaptive management to achieve landscape resilience outcomes: “the incorporation of a formal learning process into conservation action. Specifically, it is the integration of project design, management and monitoring, to provide a framework to systematically test assumptions, promote learning, and supply information for management decisions.” [Source: <http://www.conservationmeasures.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/CMP-OS-V3-0-Final.pdf>]

Progress to Date

This Second Annual Report reviews the implementation and results of the COMDEKS Project during the period May 2012 through May 2013.

During this reporting phase, COMDEKS activities covered the following nine countries: Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Fiji, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia and Turkey. As indicated below, now that GEF SGP co-financing has been secured in Brazil, COMDEKS activities in Brazil are expected to be launched in June 2013 with the development of the baseline assessment and the COMDEKS Landscape Strategy. Additionally, Grenada was initially envisioned as one of the potential participating countries for the first phase of COMDEKS. However, given the absence of a SGP National Coordinator for Grenada, due to the transition of the SGP programme from a sub-regional to a country programme modality, Grenada was not in a position to participate in the first phase of COMDEKS (2011-2013). Considering the recently established SGP Programme in Grenada, the high volume of resources received from other donors through the SGP and the absorptive capacity of Grenada, it was agreed, in coordination with the donor, to target countries that are more mature in SGP and where GEF funding is relatively low, so that the additional workload of COMDEKS can be more easily accommodated.

To date, the community consultation process and the practical application of SEPLS indicators have led to the formulation and approval of COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategies in Ethiopia, Cambodia, Ghana, India, Malawi, Nepal, Slovakia, and Turkey.

As a first step, each COMDEKS participating country awarded up to USD 25,000 to an experienced NGO or academic institution as an on-the-ground capacity building project to assist the SGP National Coordinator and National Steering Committee to conduct the landscape-wide baseline assessment, consult with communities, ensure stakeholder participation, identify and pilot indicators for resilience in socio-ecological production landscapes, and produce case study material. The baseline assessment projects were instrumental in bringing stakeholders on board, developing the COMDEKS Landscape Strategies, piloting the Resilience Indicators, and providing a baseline from which to measure the resilience of the target landscapes.

In each participating country, with the support of a scorecard developed for this purpose, the practical application of the indicators during the baseline assessment was conducted by measuring elements of SEPL resilience along four interrelated dimensions, namely, ecosystem protection and the maintenance of biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; knowledge, learning and innovation; and social equity and infrastructure. After each theme was discussed, participants answered a series of related questions, which were then aggregated to depict the communities' perspective on the resilience of the target landscape. Through the use of indicators scorecards, interactive mapping exercises, problem tree analysis and focused group discussions, the COMDEKS landscape-wide baseline assessments and community consultations workshops successfully engaged stakeholders in assessing the status of their selected socio-ecological landscape.

Table 1: Status of COMDEKS Landscape Strategies and Baseline Assessments

Status of COMDEKS Landscape Strategies and Baseline Assessment Workshops			
Brazil	Community consultations ongoing	India	Completed Feb. 2013
Cambodia	Completed Nov. 2012	Malawi	Completed March 2013
Ethiopia	Completed Aug. 2012	Nepal	Completed Nov. 2012
Ghana	Completed Aug. 2012	Slovakia	Completed Oct. 2012
Fiji	Baseline Assessment completed Landscape Strategy under development	Turkey	Completed Sept. 2012

During the first phase, each COMDEKS participating country is programmed to receive USD 280,000 for grant making activities. COMDEKS grant making activities carried out during this reporting period were instrumental in funding a total of forty-seven community-based projects aimed at increasing the resilience of targeted landscapes and seascapes. The table below shows the total number of COMDEKS projects funded with COMDEKS resources. The figure reflects the number of projects awarded and resources committed until 9 May 2013 (the date the data was drawn from the SGP database). There are currently forty-four individual COMDEKS projects under implementation and three completed projects. Additionally, it is expected that COMDEKS grant funding will be matched as co-financing by an equal amount in regular funding from SGP at the landscape level.

Table 2: Number of COMDEKS Project under implementation and/or completed during this reporting period

Number of Projects	47
Currently under execution	44
Satisfactorily Completed	3
Total Amount in Grants	1 270 528 USD
Total Amount of Cash Co-financing	463 689 USD
Total Amount of Kind Co-financing	630 667 USD
Total Amount of Co-financing	1 054 084 USD

Following SGP good practice, (although not a requirement for COMDEKS) co-financing levels for all new grants committed during the reporting period continued to reflect a 1:1 target ratio of programme funds to co-financing, as shown in the table above and below. SGP project level co-financing continued to bring together resources from a range of partners, including in kind and in cash contributions from communities, as well as NGOs, CBOs, Donors, Governments, and other partners. Additionally, during this reporting period, XX projects have been awarded as co-financing from regular SGP resources.

The table below presents the number of COMDEKS projects delivered by SGP per country.

Table 3: COMDEKS projects approved up to May 2013 by Country

Country	Number of Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
CAMBODIA	3	117 102 USD	2 461 USD	67 703 USD
ETHIOPIA	11	255 000 USD	3 999 USD	85 513 USD
FIJI	1	25 000 USD	3 000 USD	12 000 USD
GHANA	10	253 000 USD	134 350 USD	298 460 USD
INDIA	1	20 241 USD	2 000 USD USD	13 200 USD
MALAWI	1	25 000 USD	0 USD	14 600 USD
NEPAL	4	124 317 USD	45 601 USD	9 877 USD
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	6	195 868 USD	114 575 USD	72 771 USD
TURKEY	10	255 000 USD	157 703 USD	56 543 USD

Implementation progress

The section below provides an overview of COMDEKS activities in each participating country as of May 2013.

Table 4: Target landscapes and seascapes supported by COMDEKS during Phase 1

Country	Landscape/Seascape Name	Area (hectares)	Geographic
BRAZIL	Jequitinhonha Valley	15,000	Agriculture land
CAMBODIA	Steung Siem Reap Watershed	361,900	Watershed
ETHIOPIA	Gilbel Gibe 1 Catchment	127,800	Pastoral
FIJI	Natewa-Tunuloa Peninsula	25,243	Coastal
GHANA	Weto Range	15,000	Mountain
INDIA	Uttarakhand	1,500	Mountain
MALAWI	Tukombo-Kande	27,000	Inland water
NEPAL	Makawanpur	78,900	River basin
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	Východoslovenská nížina Lowland	40 242	Grassland
TURKEY	Datça-Bozburun	247,700	Coastal

COMDEKS Brazil:

As indicated in the first annual report, the target geographical area for COMDEKS activities has been identified, in consultation with local partners and communities, in the Jequitinhonha Valley, one of the

poorest regions of Brazil. In 2011, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council approved SGP Full Size Project funding in Brazil in the amount of \$5 million for SGP Operational Phase 5 (OP5), through 2014. Based on this, the SGP Brazil OP5 project will be launched in late May 2013. Now that SGP Brazil operational mechanism and co-financing have been secured, the COMDEKS project in Brazil can be launched in June.

COMDEKS Cambodia

Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in Cambodia is the Steung Siem Reap watershed area. The Siem Reap watershed is located in the Northwestern province of Siem Reap, home to the world-famous historic temple of Angkor Wat and its surrounding archeological park. The watershed covers an area of 361,900 hectares, and encompasses a wide range of elevations. The upstream area of the Phnum Kulen mountain range reaches 500m above sea level, whereas the downstream area is approximately 15m above sea level. The targeted area is highly heterogeneous due to the wide diversity of biological, geographical and topographical features located within the region. The main environmental challenges facing the landscape are: increasing habitat destruction, unsustainable farming practices, inadequate livelihood support systems, and weak institutional capacity to implement and manage conservation initiatives.

To ensure the effective management of the target landscape the watershed has been divided into three sub-areas based on the waterway systems of the three rivers in the area. The sub-areas are characterized as upstream, midstream and downstream based on watershed management perspectives. During the landscape-wide baseline assessment, in order to capture the heterogeneity of the target landscape, and identify potential community-based activities to enhance resilience of the landscape, with the use of a Geographic Information System (GIS), the landscape was further subdivided into six socio-ecological zones taking into account the topography, rainfall pattern, soil types, land use, forest cover change, and statutory land tenure systems of the target area, and to avoid a “one size fits all” landscape strategy and instead ensure that landscape management decisions adapt and respect the heterogeneity of the entire watershed system. Given the extensive size of the area, as well as the variety of functions of the watershed system, interventions should be prioritized into two phases. The first phase will focus on upstream and midstream areas to ensure that the negative impacts on downstream areas are immediately reduced while maximizing watershed ecosystem services that are beneficial to downstream users.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators. A landscape-wide baseline assessment took place in November 2012. The baseline assessment undertaken for the development of the Cambodia COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy (CPLS) identified and prioritized the problems and potential opportunities of the target landscape through a variety of methods such as: participatory rural appraisals organized in 13 villages (two/three villages in each socio-ecological zone), resource mapping exercises, seasonal calendars and problem/solution analyses. These methods complemented the set of Resilience Indicators in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS), developed by IPSI members, UNU-IAS and Bioversity International. The baseline assessment and the community consultation process helped identify a range of activities that may be undertaken at the community level

in order to increase the resilience of the landscape. A follow up work-shop took place to share findings and to generate discussions concerning the challenges ahead for each socio-ecological zone.

Landscape Strategy: The Cambodia COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy⁷ (CPLS) was completed and approved by the National Steering Committee in November 2012, following the community consultation process. The long-term objective of the COMDEKS Landscape Strategy in Cambodia is to “maintain and restore functional socio-ecological production landscapes to preserve biodiversity, improve local livelihood, and enhance ecological and institutional landscape connectivity.” The landscape vision will be met through community-based activities that integrate local cultural knowledge and scientific principles. The Country Programme in Cambodia specifically seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Restoration of biodiversity and ecosystem services through multi-functional land use systems. b) Development of ecologically sound and community-owned income generating activities to improve local livelihoods. c) An ecologically-sound agricultural production system for sustainable increase of crop yield and productivity. d) Establishment of a robust governance system designed for effective participatory decision making at the landscape level. The baseline assessment and the COMDEKS Landscape Strategy for the Siem Reap Watershed was developed with support from the Learning Institute, and financed by a COMDEKS grant. The Learning Institute is a non-profit, non-political Cambodian organization working with a wide range of civil society, and public and private sector organizations so that they can contribute more effectively to the sustainable management of natural resources.

Portfolio Development: In addition to the baseline assessment project (satisfactorily completed at the end of 2012), two additional COMDEKS projects are currently being supported in Cambodia, for a total commitment of USD 117,102. Each approved project is designed to increase the resiliency of the socio-ecological landscape, while improving the livelihoods of community members. The two projects will restore biodiversity through reforestation and forest protection schemes. Local livelihoods will be improved through integrated agroforestry activities, and the creation of support systems such as seed (rice) banks and women’s finance groups. Restoration of irrigation systems and the protection of community forests and fisheries will ultimately lead to increased crop and fishery productivity. Community participation in land and water use associations encourages the involvement of the community in establishing a robust governance system. Two additional COMDEKS projects are currently in the pipeline.

Country	Number of Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
CAMBODIA	3	117 102 USD	2 461 USD	67 703 USD



Donor field visit: In March 2013, a donor site visit took place in the Siem Reap landscape. The objective of the monitoring/learning mission was to visit the COMDEKS funded project sites, and provide feedback to COMDEKS project partners and beneficiaries in the implementation of COMDEKS project activities. During the visit, the mission team was able to meet with project stakeholders and beneficiaries, and provide their feedback. At the local level, co-

⁷ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Cambodia can be downloaded here.

financing is provided by the Provincial Department of Agriculture (PDA, in particular the Cambodian Fishery Administration) and the Provincial Department of Water Resource and Meteorology (PDoWRAM), the commune council, and community members. The involvement of fishery and forestry authorities represents an important strength for the project going forward. MOUs were signed between the grantees and these departments to ensure continuous support. Overall the representative from Japan was very pleased with the site visit, and praised the team welcoming the project's visibility, the presence of logos at the project sites, and the focus on knowledge management and communication.

Picture 1. COMDEKS Donor field visit, Cambodia.

SGP Co-financing: It is expected that COMDEKS grant funding will be matched as co-financing by regular funding from SGP at the landscape level. In response to the COMDEKS and SGP partnership, the NSC has also approved two other projects using SGP funding as co-financing in the same landscape, and additional projects are in the pipeline.

COMDEKS Ethiopia

Target Landscape. The priority area selected for the implementation of COMDEKS activities in Ethiopia is the Gilgel Gibe 1 catchment, with a total area of 127,800 ha. The target area, enclosed within four districts, Sekoru, Omo Nada, Kersa and Tiro Afeta, is located in the Oromia regional state, Jimma zone, about 260 km south-west of Addis Ababa and about 55 km north-east of Jimma city. The target area has recognized environmental problems that have seriously influenced the resilience of the ecosystem and production systems of the target landscape. Severe biophysical resource degradation in the GG1 catchment area has resulted in both on-site and off-site consequences that threaten socio-economic development and sustainable environmental management. The major on-site effect is the loss of fertile soil through water induced soil erosion, and the associated impact on agricultural production. The off-site impact is manifested in increased sediment deposition in the reservoir of the Gilgel Gibe 1 hydroelectric power dam, which is one of the major hydroelectric power generating dams in the country.



Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators. In Ethiopia, the baseline assessment of the selected landscape, the Gilgel Gibe-1 (GG1) catchment area, was carried out in June 2012 in the four districts (*woreda*) bordering the GG1 dam through focus group discussions (FGD) with community members of the selected neighborhoods (*kebeles*). The process was facilitated by experts from Jimma University, the grantee organization selected to conduct the landscape-wide baseline assessment, with four Focus Group Discussions with 8-10 individual participants, each to capture the opinions and concerns of the local stakeholders. Overall, four separate workshops were held to collect and disseminate information throughout the baseline assessment process until the approval of the landscape strategy.

Picture 2. Baseline assessment workshop with landscape stakeholders, Ethiopia.

Landscape Strategy: The overall goal of the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy in Ethiopia⁸ is to enhance the socio-ecological production landscape resilience of the priority area through community-based activities, with a vision that “the target area would become a resilient socio-ecological production landscape and harbor societies living in harmony with nature, which will be realized through adaptive collaborative management.” The COMDEKS Country Programme in Ethiopia seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Degraded ecosystems within the landscape restored through improved water, soil and vegetation management, contributing to ecosystem connectivity and enhanced ecosystem services; b) Increased and stabilized agricultural yields through crop diversification, agroforestry systems, tree plantations, integrated crop-animal systems and other approaches, as well as improved storage of agricultural products; c) Livelihoods of people in the landscape improved by developing eco-friendly small-scale community enterprises and improving market access; d) Community-based institutional governance structures in place for effective participatory decision-making at the landscape level.

Portfolio Development: Ethiopia is currently supporting 11 COMDEKS projects, for a total commitment of USD 255,000 (5 projects awarded at the end of 2012, and 6 projects awarded in January 2013). Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)/Cooperatives are currently active partners in implementing COMDEKS activities in selected catchments of Gilgel Gibe 1 (GG1). COMDEKS activities in Ethiopia will benefit an estimated population of 20,000 inhabitants of the landscape, apart from its wider benefit in terms of improving SEPL resilience. Potential activities that are supported in these COMDEKS projects include activities aimed at the biological stabilization of the physical soil and water conservation structures at critical points of the landscape, especially in the buffer zone of the GG1 dam; crop diversification, agroforestry systems, multipurpose tree plantations, integrated crop-animal systems and other traditional approaches aimed at increasing and stabilizing yields, as well as improved storage of agricultural products, activities aimed at supporting eco-friendly small-scale community enterprises (i.e. honey production and aquaculture), and finally, activities aimed at setting up effective community-based institutional governance structures. Most of the grantees have conducted project launching workshops, and on-the-ground activities are recently starting up. Low capacity of the targeted cooperatives is one of the main challenges, but this is monitored closely by the SGP National Coordinator in Ethiopia.

Country	Number of Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
ETHIOPIA	11	255 000 USD	3 999 USD	85 513 USD

SGP Co-financing: In response to the COMDEKS and SGP partnership, 12 community-based grants have been supported through regular SGP resources.

COMDEKS Fiji

Target Landscape/Seascape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified for COMDEKS activities in Fiji is the Natewa-Tunuloa Peninsula, covering an area of 25,243 hectares, commonly referred to as the country’s Northern Division. The target area is part of the island of Vanua Levu, the

⁸ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Ethiopia can be downloaded here.

country's second largest island. The forest within the landscape supports various unique assemblages of plant and animal species and is listed as a site of national significance under the Fiji National Biodiversity Action Plan (NBSAP). The area has been prioritized for conservation not only as a national terrestrial biodiversity hotspot but also due to the area being one of the last few places in Fiji which retains forest with an intact range from lowland to mountain habitats. Due to the landscapes intact forest range the area also retains very high bird diversity of which 21 of the 28 species present are endemic to Fiji. Although the area still retains some old growth forest, a large portion of the landscape has been degraded or destroyed due to poorly planned logging activities, agricultural development and mahogany plantations. These activities have led to increasing threats of extinction of endemic bird species. The population, in terms of landscape demographics, is primarily agrarian, predominately indigenous and contained within traditional rural village settings. Of the landscape's total population, the indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) make up 97.8%, whilst Fijians of Indian descent (0.4%) and Fijians of other ethnicities (1.8%) make up the remainder. Local communities in the area derive their income mainly from agriculture (dalo, kava and copra), with 54% of the population living below the poverty line.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators: The baseline assessment and community consultation workshop aimed at piloting the Resilience Indicators took place at the end of January 2013. As part of the site and stakeholder scoping exercise, all 15 villages within the target landscape were visited to capture information specific to the landscape, the current state of the environment and socio-economic conditions of the communities living in the area, identify community priorities and assess capabilities at the local level to carry out specific activities. Forty-six people (community representatives but also key government officials and NGOs active in the landscape) participated in the baseline assessment and in the scoring exercise to measure resilience indicators.

Landscape Strategy: In April 2012, the National Steering Committee endorsed a draft version of the Fiji COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy. The Landscape Strategy is expected to be finalized by the end of May, and a call for project proposals will be launched shortly thereafter.



Portfolio Development: Currently, Fiji has one COMDEKS project under implementation, aimed at the development of the baseline assessment and the Fiji COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy. COMDEKS grant-making is expected to generate key lessons on community-based best practices to maintain and rebuild socio-ecological island production landscapes toward the realization of "societies in harmony with nature", as defined in the vision of the Satoyama Initiative. COMDEKS activities in the Natewa-Tunuloa Peninsula landscape also provide for an opportunity to document and revive traditional practices as part of the essence of reviving SEPL's, this includes the cultivation of irrigated taro field called "vuci" and masi production, as the area was once a regional center for the production of this traditional cloth.

Picture 3. A young woman of Karoko Village beats the bark of the mulberry plant on hardwood, an ancient process still embraced to this day for making the highly valuable masi or tapa, Fiji.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
FIJI	1	25 000 USD	3 000 USD	12 000 USD

COMDEKS Ghana



Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in Ghana is the Wetu range. The targeted landscape is a 15,000 hectare area of the Wetu Mountain range within the Volta region. The Wetu Range was jointly identified as the target landscape and geographical area for the COMDEKS project by traditional authorities in the eleven traditional areas, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating on the Wetu Range, local people living on the landscape, and the three District Assemblies.

Picture 4. The Wetu Range Landscape, Ghana.

The landscape varies widely due to the unique adaptations to local climatic, geographic, cultural, and socio-economic conditions; and it is valuable in terms of sustainability. The range is well-endowed with a diversified natural resource base in the form of high biodiversity, hydrological systems, rich soils, stony features and conducive climate, all of which form a strong base for economic activities and sustainable development. In addition to its rich endemic flora, the Wetu Range landscape has a rich wildlife, including birds, bats, rodents and monkeys, waterbuck and butterflies. The range is highly heterogeneous in agricultural biodiversity and food systems. On average about 20 percent of the population live below the national poverty line. Farm holdings range in size from half to two hectares of arable land, and usually farmers engage in mixed-cropping along the slopes of the mountains or in the relatively flat terrain in valleys and downhill.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators: In Ghana, community consultations were organized at the village level through a series of community meetings spearheaded by a newly created Wetu Platform, and involving overall more than 160 people from the 36 selected communities of the Wetu range landscape. Additionally, in June 2012, a one-day landscape-wide baseline assessment validation workshop was attended by over 50 stakeholders, in order to pilot the SEPLS indicators and assess the resilience of the target landscape. During the baseline assessment workshop, community resource mapping activities and a GIS map developed by the Centre for Remote Sensing and Geo-Information Services (CERGIS) at the University of Ghana were used to provoke discussions, assess the threats to the landscape and identify potential community based activities to manage the Wetu range towards the goal of landscape resilience.

Landscape Strategy: As part of the baseline assessment process, a participatory transformative strategy has been developed and approved by the Ghana National Steering Committee in August 2012 to reflect local priorities to promote sound socio-ecological production systems to conserve biodiversity, while

meeting the socio economic needs of communities residing within the landscape negotiated among local stakeholders at the landscape level.⁹ The baseline assessment helped landscape stakeholders to define a vision for their landscape strategy: “A thriving socio-ecological production landscape where the local communities are actively involved in the sustainable management and utilization of the natural resources for increased production, the restoration of biodiversity, wealth creation and continuous flow of ecosystem services.” The COMDEKS Country Programme in Ghana seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Conserving natural and semi-natural habitats and ecosystem services within the WETO landscape; b) Implementing sustainable agricultural practices across the landscape to enhance and revive traditional conservation and production practices and adoption of new technologies; c) Sustaining and enhancing livelihood and wellbeing of target social groups in the landscape through the development of livelihood enterprises, in line with the local tradition and culture; d) Strengthening of institutional capacity at the landscape level to realize the goal of integrating conservation and production in the management of the target landscape.

Portfolio Development: In addition to the baseline assessment project (satisfactorily completed in 2012), in order to enhance landscape connectivity and increase landscape resilience in the Weto Range, Ghana is currently supporting nine COMDEKS projects (six grants were awarded in October 2012 and an additional 3 projects were awarded in December 2012), for a total commitment of USD 253 000. A one-day stakeholder capacity building workshop was held in October 2012 at the SGP secretariat in Accra for selected NGOs which will be implementing COMDEKS activities in the Weto landscape. The workshop was aimed at exposing the participants to basic skills, knowledge and tools needed for project management. The workshop gave an opportunity for the participants to understand the COMDEKS concepts and the tracking of indicators. Supported activities include forest restoration activities along the hillsides; reforestation of riparian areas, restoration and protection of wetlands and watersheds and related ecosystem services such as water flows and water quality through restoration of forest patches with both indigenous and exotic species, and soil and water retention infrastructure. COMDEKS activities are supporting local communities on sustainable agricultural practices and systems, controlling the overutilization of natural resources, and promoting alternative livelihood options including beekeeping, goat breeding, citrus farming and guidance in micro-enterprise development.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
GHANA	10	253 000 USD	134 350 USD	298 460 USD

COMDEKS India

Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in India is the Uttarakhand region. Uttarakhand State comprises 13 districts distributed over two administrative divisions, Garhwal and Kumaon, and shares international borders with Tibet in the north and Nepal in the west. The chosen landscape is a mountainous region with a high dependence on nature. Nearly 70% of the over 10 million residents live in rural areas. During the baseline assessment, 6 regions/districts within the Uttarakhand region were identified as target areas for COMDEKS activities.

⁹ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Ghana can be downloaded here.



The six regions of Uttarakhand may be grouped by their similar features. Rasulpur and Shankarpur are located in the foothills of the Himalayas, while Ranman, Pipalkoti, Tadikhet, and Ranikhet lie within the Himalayan mountain region.

Communities within the Uttarakhand region earn their living through traditional forestry, agriculture and animal husbandry practices. However, fragmentation of land holdings, worker migration, and weak support from the state system are all testing traditional systems and bringing sustainable practices under threat. Key environmental challenges are deterioration and desertification of land. The increasing costs of agriculture and increased expectations for high crop yields places significant pressure on the rural communities of Uttarakhand and their surroundings. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Uttarakhand region, but is becoming a subsistence activity that has limited benefits.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators. The COMDEKS baseline assessment in Uttarakhand was conducted in November 2012. The baseline assessment process began with a stakeholder consultation workshop. The initial briefing session engaged existing GEF-SGP and NGO partners to outline past efforts in the area, and the features of the COMDEKS program that may be adopted for the relevant landscape. Feedback gathered at the stakeholder consultation was followed by a day session for participating representatives of the landscapes chosen for baseline survey. Field visits were conducted at eight different locations (at least 50-70 km apart from each other) within the state, so that community members could participate in the identification of increased pressures on natural resources and mountain communities. A system of cards and board based interactions engaged the community members in identifying appropriate resilience indicators for the socio-ecological production landscape. Community members also participated in a mapping exercise to validate the maps of participating villages. These methods complemented the set of Resilience Indicators in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes (SEPLS), developed by IPSI members, UNU-IAS and Bioversity International.

Landscape Strategy: The community consultation workshop, together with the SEPLS indicators piloting exercise, successfully engaged stakeholders to determine the resilience of the landscape and inform the design of the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy in India, completed in February 2013¹⁰. The COMDEKS Country program in India seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Enhancement of ecosystem services through conservation activities and sustainable use of natural resources; b) Improvement in agricultural productivity by promotion of sustainable agricultural practices to increase food security and income generation; c) Promotion of alternative livelihood options to enable access to markets and local financial institutions; d) Strengthening of institutional systems at the landscape level through promotion of knowledge-sharing on natural resources management and landscape-related issues, and a more participatory decision-making process.

Portfolio Development: Currently, there is one COMDEKS project under implementation in India aimed at the development of the baseline assessment and the India COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy. Formal proposals have been received from more than 10 NGOs within the scope of the developed landscape strategy. Potential grantees have been guided during the formulation of the project proposals, and COMDEKS grants are expected to be awarded by June 2013, during the next meeting of the National Steering Committee.

¹⁰ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for India can be downloaded here.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
INDIA	1	20 241 USD	2 000 USD	13 200 USD

COMDEKS Malawi

Target Landscape. The target landscape selected for COMDEKS activities in Malawi is the Tukombo-Kande socioeconomic production landscape, a fishing town located in the Nkhata Bay district of northern Malawi. The landscape covers an area of 27,000 hectares covering three Traditional Authorities (TA) of Zilakoma, Malengamzoma and Fukamapiri. The landscape is biodiversity rich with several pristine vegetation types and has high potential for ecotourism, aquaculture, wetland conservation and sustainable agriculture production in Malawi. The landscape has faced changes in forest cover over the past 30 years where crop fields have expanded at the expense of forest area and fallow period (Kalindekafé et al. 2000¹¹). There has been rapid increase of slash and burn farming practices (Chitemene). For centuries the landscape was occupied mostly by the Tonga tribe but in the past three decades other tribes, namely Tumbuka, Ngoni from Mzimba, Chewa from Kasungu, Lilongwe and Nkhotakota have settled in the area. The inhabitants have deep cultural traditions that have been used in the protection of biodiversity.



Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicator: The landscape-wide baseline assessment and the application of the Resilience Indicators took place in October 2012, covering eight villages in the four Traditional Authority areas. The baseline assessment and the testing of the indicators were conducted using several tools, including focus group discussions, key informant interviews with stakeholders from different sectors, problem tree analysis, transect walks across the landscape and sketch

mapping, use of trends table, participatory scoring and ranking using stones and drawing stars. The stakeholders included five agricultural officers, three lead farmers, two forest officers, one fishery officer, twelve fishermen, ten local leaders and three representatives of local NGOs and CBOs. A map of the landscape, identifying landscape elements, assets and boundaries was discussed and modified in a participatory manner in consultation with the local communities.

*Picture 5. Community members during the baseline assessment consultation, Malawi.*¹²

Landscape Strategy: The COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Malawi¹³ was approved by the National Steering Committee in March 2013. The Landscape Strategy seeks to achieve the following outcomes: (1) Diversified livelihood resources and improved welfare of the landscape (2) Natural woodlands, Village Forest areas and other habitats such as sacred groves, watershed, and

¹¹ Kalindekafé, Meya Patricia, Michiro Fujihara & Mahito Kamada. (2000). Land Use Histories and Fuelwood Consumption in a Highly Populated and Degraded Area in Nkhata Bay District, Malawi. *Natural History Research*, 6(1): 23-38.

¹² See COMDEKS [photo story](#) from Malawi on the baseline assessment workshop and community consultation.

¹³ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Malawi can be downloaded here.

aquatic habitats are conserved (3) Sustainable agricultural practices implemented through adoption of agroforestry, crop diversification, conservation agriculture, value addition and processing of produce (4) Community-based ecotourism developed to broaden household income base (6) Community based institutional governance structures in place.

Portfolio Development: Currently, the SGP Country Programme in Malawi has one COMDEKS project under implementation, aimed at the development of the baseline assessment and the Malawi COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy. The possible eligible projects to be funded by COMDEKS in the Malawi target landscape will include, inter alia, initiatives for crop diversification, livestock production, bee keeping, and agroforestry systems and crop and livestock integration; restoration of riparian areas, restoration and protection of wetlands and watersheds, restoration of indigenous forests and adoption of soil and water saving technologies; building capacity of fish farmers in aquaculture; value-added food products processing, improving access to credit and market through development of appropriate business plans; and establishment of seed banks. Projects that establish and strengthen governance institutions at the landscape level for community based organisation (CBOs), village natural resources management committees (VNRMCs), water and fisheries associations will also be supported.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
MALAWI	1	25 000 USD	0 USD	14 600 USD

COMDEKS Nepal

Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in Nepal is located in the Makawanpur region. The Makawanpur region is comprised of a diverse mosaic of ecosystems. It lies in the Manahari River watershed, which drains in to the Rapti River. The landscape is composed of hills and flat plains, with nearly half of the area under forest. Some areas of the Manahari hills lie in the buffer zone of Chitwan National Park, whereas part of Manahari and Handikhola fall in the buffer zone of Parsa Wildlife Reserve. The landscape is divided into designated administrative units known as Village Development Committees (VDCs). The average geographic area of each VDC is 7,900 hectares, with an average of 1,338 households per VDC and an average population of 7,781 (National population census 2001). Ten VDCs were selected for the COMDEKS Baseline Assessment: Handikhola, Bharta, Raksirang, Kankada, Dandakharka, Khairang, Kalikatar, Namtar, Manahari and Sarikhet. The ten VDCs cover an area of 78,900 hectares. Only 8% of the area is cultivated, due to the risks associated with unstable, sloped terrain. Local inhabitants must deal with extreme events such as landslides, flooding, and wildfires. The landscape is known as one of the most hazard-prone areas in central Nepal as a result.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicator: The landscape-wide baseline assessment was conducted by MDI, the Manahari Development Institute, in June 2012 with support from a COMDEKS grant. Stakeholders convened for a rigorous pre-workshop in Daman, Nepal to establish the boundaries of the target landscape. Stakeholders included representatives from the District Development Committee (DDC), heads of district line agencies, local political leaders, journalists, and farmers from the landscape. A study-team of experts including agro-forestry and GIS professionals, engineers and rural officers was

formed with the mandate to carry out the field surveys and workshops exercises, including the application of the Indicators to measure the resilience of the target socio-ecological production landscape. After the pre-workshop, baseline surveys were carried out in in all 10 selected Village Development Committees (VDC s). Over 200 households were surveyed across the landscape, taking care to include women, Janajati, Dalit, and marginalized households. The information gathered from the baseline assessment was used to develop the COMDEKS landscape strategy for Nepal.

Landscape Strategy: The COMDEKS landscape strategy for Nepal,¹⁴ approved by the National Steering Committee in November 2012, describes a community approach to maintaining, restoring and revitalizing sustainable socio-ecological production landscapes. The COMDEKS Country program in Nepal seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Enhance the buffer capacity of key ecosystems against extreme weather events in 10 VDCs of west Makawanpur; b) Maintain and protect agricultural biodiversity and genetic resources in the target landscape through conservation and diversification in farming practices; c) Enhance communities’ livelihoods through community development activities and land-use diversification; d) Support community-based institutional governance structures for effective participatory decision making and local knowledge exchange at the landscape level. An integral component of proposed landscape strategy activities is the SALT method. SALT, Sloping Agricultural Land Technology, helps minimize soil erosion in hilly agricultural areas. A number of SALT methods exist, including alley cropping systems, silvopasture (the combination of forests and livestock grazing), windbreak and shelterbelt plantings, riparian forest buffers, and forest farming systems. The SALT system helps restore soil structure and fertility, thereby improving food production success.

Portfolio Development: In addition to the baseline assessment project (satisfactorily completed by the end of 2012), currently Nepal has an additional 3 COMDEKS projects under implementation, for a total commitment of USD 124,317. An additional 3 COMDEKS projects are currently in the pipeline. The types of community-based activities currently being supported by COMDEKS Nepal to achieve socio-ecological production landscape resilience include implementation of agro-forestry practices, training of farmers on SALT Technology, promotion of micro-irrigation sprinkler systems, conservation and diversification of agricultural and agroforestry systems through community seed banks, improved management of hill slopes through SALT technology, as well as alley cropping or hedgerow intercropping, intensification of environmentally-friendly livelihood activities in three poverty hotspots, establishment or strengthening of multi-purpose cooperatives, and sustainable processing and marketing of non-timber forest products. These projects will encompass a combination of rehabilitation and preventative measures. Lands that are already experiencing degradation will benefit from restoration activities, while preventatively shifting cultivation practices will mitigate future risk. The active participation of community members will promote sustained replication of project activities in the Makawanpur region and neighboring communities.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
NEPAL	4	124 317 USD	45 601 USD	9 877 USD

SGP Co-financing: Additionally, two grants have been supported through regular SGP resources, and additional projects are in the pipeline.

¹⁴ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Nepal can be downloaded here.

COMDEKS Slovakia

Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in Slovakia is located in the north-eastern part of the Východoslovenská nížina Lowland (Eastern Slovakia Lowland), in the Latorica river basin. The area is rural, with low population density. The territory boundaries are defined by the river Laborec in the west, by the river Uh in the south, the Veľké Revišťa – Bežovce canal in the east, and by the southern dam of Zemplínska Šírava Lake in the north. The area was selected as a COMDEKS pilot landscape mainly due to its biodiversity and hydrological values, as well as its ranking as one of the most underdeveloped Slovak regions in terms of its social, economic, agricultural and ecological aspects.



The target landscape includes the National Nature Reserve, a 213.31 ha area where over 145 species of birds have been documented. Five of these species are globally endangered, and 53 of the species are endangered in Europe. Other areas of the Východoslovenská nížina Lowland landscape have been preserved and enlisted as part of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention), for example, the Senné Rybníky fishponds. The fishponds provide a major waterfowl migration route for this diverse group of birds. The majority of

land is agricultural. However, local agriculture is declining due to lower soil fertility, unclear land ownership, and the distorting influence of the EU subsidy policy which has led to the intensification of farming through monoculture crops such as wheat, barley, corn, sunflower, soya and canola for bio-fuels production. These have contributed to a negative environmental trend due to the excessive use of agrochemicals and low agrodiversity. The main environmental challenges confronting the landscape are surface and ground water pollution, drastic land use changes resulting in ecological vulnerability, and agricultural degradation.

Picture 6. Laborec and Uh basin landscape area, Slovakia.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators. In Slovakia, the baseline assessment of the selected landscape built on the results of a previous assessment carried out in 2007-2009 during the elaboration of the Integrated Local Development Strategy developed under the UNDP/GEF Laborec-Uh Project. During this period several community consultations helped delineate the landscape area. A two-day landscape-wide baseline assessment workshop, aimed at piloting the SEPLS indicators and developing the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Slovakia, took place in August 2012. Twenty participants representing members of civic associations and volunteer organizations, village mayors, representatives of agricultural cooperatives and craft centers, and local communities completed the SEPLS scorecard exercise and engaged in discussions regarding the COMDEKS socio-ecological approach and its relevance within the Slovak context. Overall, participants confirmed that SEPL indicators helped them to better grasp and understand the need to link social and ecological aspects within the landscape in order to improve its resilience as well as the quality of life in the area.

Landscape Strategy: The COMDEKS Landscape Strategy for the Východoslovenská nížina Lowland was developed, with support from the NGO Civil Association Spectrum-East and approved by the National Steering Committee in October 2012¹⁵. In the long-term, the COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Slovakia aims to increase the resilience of target natural ecosystems and human production systems through partnership-based community activities which promote eco-system functions and increase landscape diversity. In the target area – Laborec-Uh basin area – the long-term objective is to improve the water quality and hydrologic regime of the target landscape in order to retain water in the landscape, to revitalize and manage semi natural eco-systems, as well as to promote production of traditional products and services in harmony with local resources and conditions. The COMDEKS Country program in Slovakia seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Enhanced livelihoods through the development of small-scale production activities and businesses using local resources; b) Improved ecosystem services through integrated water management and landscape regeneration; c) Strengthened agricultural production that promotes agrobiodiversity and landscape resilience through sustainable practices and systems; and d) Strengthened multistakeholder participatory decision making at the landscape level for greater resilience.

Portfolio Development: In addition to the baseline assessment project, five COMDEKS projects have been approved and are currently under implementation in Slovakia, as of May 2013. Project implementation began in March and April 2013, for a total commitment of USD 195,868. COMDEKS projects focus on improving ecosystem services through integrated water management and landscape restoration activities, establishment of bee colonies and local farms for the breeding of goats, sheep, and ducks; a return to traditional cultivation methods, which may prevent landscape degradation while improving food self-sufficiency among communities; establishment of local markets to support small scale agricultural production; sustainable management of flooded grasslands through directed cattle grazing and mowing of the meadows. An additional project, currently in the pipeline, involves the construction of a plant-root wastewater treatment plant to demonstrate a low-cost, environmentally friendly wastewater treatment option suitable for distant rural areas.

Country	Number of COMDEKS Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
SLOVAK REPUBLIC	6	195 868 USD	114 575 USD	72 771 USD

SGP Co-financing: Additionally, four grants have been supported through regular SGP resources in the same area.

COMDEKS Turkey

Target Landscape. The socio-ecological production landscape identified as the target area for the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Project (COMDEKS) in Turkey is the Datça-Bozburun peninsula located in Muğla province in the southwest of Turkey. The Datça-Bozburun peninsula is recognized as a key biodiversity area as it represents one of the most pristine remaining Mediterranean lowland forest and coastal landscapes. The proposed landscape spans 247,700 hectares and includes Datça and Bozburun peninsulas and their surroundings, with a northward extension covering the rich marine habitats of Gökova Bay. It is a diverse hilly landscape with harbors

¹⁵ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Slovakia can be downloaded here.

and bays along its coasts. The highest peaks of the peninsula are Balan, Güver and Hamzalı mountains from east to west. The steep cliffs prevent the expansion of the road network to some extent and provide suitable patches of habitat for wildlife.

About 90% percent of the Datça-Bozburun peninsula is protected under several natural parks, wildlife reserves, natural and archeological sites as well as six no-fishing zones and two Special Environmental Protection Areas (Gökova SEPA and Datca-Bozburun Peninsula SEPA) which cover 144,300 hectares and 57,700 hectares respectively and comprise 3 sub-districts and 21 villages. The area's agricultural habitat heterogeneity is rich due to the typological, climatic, historical and cultural characteristics of the region. The warm climate, along with varying soil quality and relatively sufficient to scarce precipitation, has enabled the people to produce crops, such as almond, olive and barley that can thrive in moderate conditions. The proposed landscape was selected because of the imminent environmental and social threats identified and the concomitant potential for the reversal of degrading landscape processes.

Baseline Assessment and Resilience Indicators. Doğa Derneği, the Turkish branch of BirdLife, conducted the baseline assessment project which resulted in the development of the Turkey COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy and the application of the Resilience Indicators. In Turkey, the baseline assessment of the selected landscape, the Datca-Bozburun Peninsula, was completed in August 2012 through three different workshops involving more than 70 stakeholders representative of the 17 target communities in the area. Stakeholders included officers in forest and agricultural management, rural affairs; cooperatives and unions for agriculture, fisheries, tourism and infrastructure; individual farmers, fishermen, hotel owners, tourism operators; local and national NGOs working on nature conservation and agro-biodiversity. The interactive mapping exercise proved to be particularly successful in providing a spatial dimension to conservation priorities and encouraging relevant and practical solutions to landscape resilience. The SEPL scorecard exercise was used to analyze key concerns and reach a consensus on the most important areas of interest, problems, opportunities and threats.

Landscape/Seascape Strategy: The COMDEKS landscape strategy for Turkey was approved by the National Steering Committee in September 2012¹⁶. The COMDEKS Landscape Strategy in Turkey seeks to achieve the following outcomes: a) Improved and/or maintained ecosystem services in the target landscape and seascape by strengthening participatory land use planning and management practices; b) Increased resilience of agriculture in the target landscape through conservation of plant genetic resources and implementation of agro ecological practices using traditional knowledge; c) Livelihoods of people participating in COMDEKS activities improved through eco-friendly community-based enterprises



that reduce impacts on the ecosystem functions and scenic value of the landscape; d) Institutional governance mechanisms created and/or strengthened in the target peninsulas through more inclusive and participatory decision making processes at the landscape level.

Portfolio Development: Ten COMDEKS projects have been supported in Turkey as of May 2013 for a total commitment of USD 255,000. Nine projects are currently under implementation, and the baseline assessment project was completed in 2012.

¹⁶ COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy for Turkey can be downloaded here.

Supported activities to enhance the resilience of the target landscape include the development of ecotourism, the conservation of locally produced Datça almonds (through more efficient production, marketing and harvesting), prevention of soil erosion and active reforestation of a substantial portion of the degraded landscape to ensure the natural regeneration of water resources; development of a market for native medicinal herbs and aromatic plants; improvement of current forest management plans, promotion of the existence and significance of fisherwomen in fisheries, and support to the development of conservation plans to help protect important mammal species in the area.

Picture 7: Fisherwomen from Bozburun

SGP Co-financing: In response to the COMDEKS and SGP partnership, 4 grantees have been supported in the same landscape, through regular SGP.

Country	Number of Projects	Grant Amount	Co-financing in Cash	Co-financing in Kind
TURKEY	10	255 000 USD	157 703 USD	56 543 USD

Knowledge Management

As COMDEKS is recognized by the donor as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI), knowledge management is a primary component of COMDEKS, and significant effort is placed on external communication of lessons learned through the development of comparative case studies and a variety of knowledge products produced by COMDEKS Project Management Unit. The COMDEKS Project undertook several key knowledge management activities during this reporting period to ensure that the initial lessons learned from its pilot initiatives were captured, analyzed and shared among key stakeholders at the local, national and global levels.

In order to guide SGP Country Programmes and grantees at the local level, COMDEKS, in coordination with SGP Global Programme staff, has developed branding guidelines for all communication materials developed at the local or national level and supported by the COMDEKS project. As agreed with the donor, all COMDEKS knowledge and communications materials, including publications, will always include the following five logos: the Satoyama Initiative, Japan Biodiversity Fund, GEF¹⁷, SGP, and the UNDP.

At the local level, each SGP Country Programme team works directly with the communities in capturing and sharing their lessons and best practices and organizes training workshops to guide potential grantees in the development of project proposals aligned with each COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy, and lobbies national and subnational authorities to increase awareness of COMDEKS supported activities to potentially scale up and replicate best practices. Several Country Programmes have made significant efforts to create awareness through national media such as television channels and newspapers (i.e. Turkey, Cambodia and India). During this reporting period, Country Programmes have already started to produce photo stories, fact sheets, posters, banners and reports (in English and/or in their local languages for outreach purposes. Some of grantees have developed their own websites in local languages with information tailored for local contexts (i.e. <http://www.hayaletag.com/>, in Turkey, under the COMDEKS funded project “Ghost Net Busters”, aimed at combatting overfishing, the lack of regulatory enforcement and illegal harvesting within “no-fishing” zones).

For example, the following pictures below capture some of the knowledge products generated by the SGP at the country level in Turkey and Cambodia:



Picture 8, Landscape poster with information on landscape elements and COMDEKS funded activities developed during the baseline assessment through a participatory mapping exercise, Turkey.

¹⁷ For the acknowledgement of GEF’s contribution to SGP as the delivery mechanism of COMDEKS.



Picture 9. A COMDEKS grantee setting up a billboard indicating the COMDEKS-funded community forestry site, Choam Village, Cambodia.

At the global level, to facilitate knowledge sharing and communication, COMDEKS launched major KM initiatives, including its COMDEKS website, quarterly newsletters, and it was featured in major UN events and conferences.

The [COMDEKS website](#) was launched at the RIO+20 side event¹⁸. Initially set up to serve as an internal portal for information sharing and exchange of experience on lessons learned, the COMDEKS website is now widely accessible to the public, hosting information on its community-based landscape approach, areas of work and country programme portfolio and capturing progress at a glance, as well as knowledge products such as newsletters, case studies, reports, videos and photo stories. Additionally, COMDEKS has also a dedicated subpage under the UNDP corporate Local Development website¹⁹, and a dedicated subpage under the GEF-SGP global website²⁰.

Substantive quarterly newsletters were published in [July 2012](#), [November 2012](#) and [March 2013](#), and a fourth newsletter is expected to be launched in June 2013. COMDEKS newsletters have been circulated globally through the COMDEKS website, UNDP-GEF corporate website and through Satoyama Initiative newsletters to all IPSI members, serving for donor stewardship and wider dissemination on a range of topics including the status of ongoing Country Programmes, landscape performance indicators, project impacts and results. COMDEKS has also contributed with articles and project updates to several editions of the Satoyama Initiative newsletter (see for example the March issue of the [IPSI newsletter](#) for an article on “Piloting Indicators of Resilience: Empowering Communities for Participatory Monitoring, Update from the COMDEKS project”).

Additionally, during this reporting period, COMDEKS was featured in two major UN conferences: i) in the RIO+20 side event “the Satoyama Initiative and the Green Economy” as the flagship of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI), and ii) at Biodiversity COP11, in a Japanese MOE-organized side event as well as during a UNDP-UNU joint side event, focused on the social/community aspect of the landscape approach. On 18 June 2012, at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Government of Japan held a seminar on “the Satoyama Initiative and the Green Economy”. During the seminar, IPSI activities towards enhancing both

¹⁸ www.comdeksproject.com

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http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/environmentandenergy/strategic_themes/local_development/community-development-knowledge-management/

²⁰ http://sgp.undp.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=104&Itemid=166#.UYIIGPDD_mQ



human well-being and biodiversity in human-influenced natural environments, in particular those with strong links to the Green Economy (including COMDEKS) were introduced, followed by a discussion on how IPSI could expand its activities to further contribute to the Green Economy. The side event was organized by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan and the IPSI Secretariat (UNU-IAS), in partnership with the Government of Japan, the United Nations University, the United Nations Development Programme, and the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF).

On 11 October 2012, at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), organized by the CBD Secretariat in Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh), India; COMDEKS was prominently featured at a side event on “Achievements and Further Development of the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI)”. The event was organized by the Ministry of Environment of Japan and the IPSI Secretariat (UNU-IAS) attracting the interest of practitioners on how to operationalize the Satoyama Initiative concept. Moreover, on 12 October 2012, during COP 11, UNDP and the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI) jointly organized a side event to understand landscape resilience and link the community and social aspects of building and maintaining socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS), in collaboration with the Community Dialogue Space sponsored by the UNDP’s Equator Initiative. Speakers from civil society organizations, government institutions, the private sector, and international organizations discussed issues, best practices and lessons learned related to building local institutions and social capital toward more inclusive and participatory decision-making processes at the landscape level. For more information about the three side events, please read COMDEKS newsletters and read the full press releases posted on the Satoyama Initiative website.

Information about COMDEKS activities were also shared during other major international level events, including the conference on *Cultural Landscapes: Preservation Challenges for the 21st Century*, sponsored by the Rutgers’s Graduate Program in Cultural Heritage and Preservation Studies (CHAPS) in the School of Arts and Sciences in October 2012, where the SGP National Coordinator from Ghana shared, inter alia, the experience of COMDEKS activities in Ghana. Information about COMDEKS was also shared by the GEF Small Grants Programme, Bioversity International, and The Christensen Fund during the 2012 World Conservation Congress (WCC), which took place in Jeju, Republic of Korea (6–15 September 2012), during a session on *Transforming Agriculture, Transforming Conservation: New Partnerships for global environmental resilience and food sovereignty*. COMDEKS was also presented by the GEF Small Grants Programme and UNU-IAS during an expert workshop on Integrating Category V into Landscape-and Seascape-scale conservation to enhance connectivity and ensure resilience, which took place on the Isle of Vilm in Germany. This last event was organized by the Protected Landscapes Specialist Group of IUCN’s World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) in cooperation with the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) with its International Academy for Nature Conservation.

At the time of submission of this annual report, COMDEKS activities in Nepal will also be featured during the Satoyama Initiative workshop to be jointly organised by the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation, the Government of Nepal and IPSI Secretariat in Kathmandu, Nepal during 14-16 May 2013. The objective of the workshop in Nepal is to share information and experiences from the Asian region relevant to IPSI to further promote IPSI activities and understanding of the partnership in the



region, and the SGP National Coordinator in Nepal has been invited as a speaker during the Satoyama Initiative Workshop to share the experience of COMDEKS activities in Nepal.

Additionally, as part of on-going collaboration with UNU-IAS and Bioversity International - aimed at developing and piloting a set of socio-ecological production landscape indicators which are currently being applied and tested in the COMDEKS project sites to help tracking, measure and understand the resilience of target landscapes - experts from UNDP (COMDEKS Project Coordinator speaking on behalf of UNDP, and sharing experiences from COMDEKS activities) and Bioversity International gave lectures at a [UNU-IAS Public Symposium](#) on "Indicators for Resilience in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes (SEPLs)" in April 2013. Since 2011, UNU-IAS and Bioversity International have been engaged in a collaborative activity to develop indicators of resilience in SEPLs and further refine these indicators through field-testing. Both IPSI member organizations, Bioversity International and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), have taken leading roles in developing and piloting the indicators for resilience in SEPLS. The indicators have been playing a substantial role in the COMDEKS project, and the COMDEKS piloting exercise will help UNDP and other IPSI members to refine the overall approach and methodology for measuring landscape resilience. During the UNU-IAS Public Symposium, COMDEKS shared experience and lessons learned on how the indicators are being used in COMDEKS sites to help measure and understand the resilience of the target landscapes and to identify necessary activities to strengthen resilience.

Looking forward, UNU-IAS, UNDP, Bioversity International and IGES (Institute for Global Environmental Strategies²¹), are working together to develop a Resilience Indicators Toolkit to promote the use of indicators among IPSI members and other interested organizations.

Finally, the COMDEKS project team is currently working on systematizing results and lessons learned from the first phase countries to produce a comprehensive knowledge product with summaries of individual country case studies with detailed information on target landscapes and seascapes and supported activities at the local level.

²¹ <http://www.iges.or.jp/>

The way forward

As outlined in this second annual report, covering COMDEKS activities undertaken between May 2012 and May 2013, this period was significant not only in terms of laying the groundwork for project implementation, through the development of landscape-wide baseline assessment, the application of Resilience Indicators and the development of COMDEKS landscape strategies, but also in terms of selecting and initiating community-based COMDEKS projects at the landscape level making available small grants to community organizations to help them maintain and manage more resilient socio-ecological production landscapes. Community-based activities are guided by each COMDEKS Country Programme Landscape Strategy, and are designed to simultaneously improve the livelihoods of local populations while strengthening the resilience of surrounding ecosystems of the target landscape.

As we move forward in 2013-14, COMDEKS activities will be focused on the following:

- **The Second Phase of COMDEKS will be launched in ten additional countries**, with a joint UNDP and MOE-Japan press release in June 2013. Discussions are currently taking place with potential participating countries. COMDEKS Phase 2 countries will be selected based primarily on their ability to provide lessons on management of socio-ecological production landscapes and thus to contribute to the Satoyama Initiative. Selection criteria include, inter alia, geographic representation, diversity and vulnerability of ecosystems, experience and capacity in the country, absorptive capacity and potential for replication, up-scaling and mainstreaming community work.
- **Regional webinars for Phase 2 participating countries will be organized** (in lieu of a second inception workshop, due to limitations of the project budget) to promote collaboration amongst COMDEKS Phase 1 and Phase 2 participating countries to share experiences, best practice and lessons and ensure coherence across global project objectives. The participation of experts from UNU-IAS (UNU-IAS is the project advisor and one of the partners of COMDEKS as an IPSI Collaborative Activity) in this regional webinars is welcomed in order to promote a better understanding of the Satoyama Initiative's concept and activities and its partnership IPSI.
- **COMDEKS methodologies will be tested and applied in the second phase pilot countries.** Best practices and lessons learned from first phase participating countries will be used to prepare COMDEKS Phase 2 participating countries to field-test the landscape-wide baseline assessment methodologies and the indicators for resilience in socio-ecological production landscapes, developed by UNU-IAS, and Bioversity International. Experiences and lessons to be gained through the practical application of the indicators in both Phase 1 and Phase 2 participating countries will be compiled and analyzed for further improvement of the indicators.
- **UNDP/COMDEKS will participate in a collaborative activity with UNU-IAS, Bioversity International and IGES for the development of a Resilience Indicators toolkit.** Inter alia, the toolkit will promote dissemination of lessons learned from COMDEKS in the application of the resilience indicators and the development of the landscape-wide baseline assessments and community consultations building on information collected during this reporting period and summarized in COMDEKS landscape strategies, country case studies and newsletters.

Information dissemination has already taken place through a Questionnaire for Lessons Learned from the Landscape-Wide Baseline Assessment and Community Consultations.

- COMDEKS project team will be working on **systematizing results and lessons learned from the first phase countries** to produce a comprehensive knowledge product with summaries of individual country case studies with detailed information on target landscapes and seascapes and supported activities at the local level.
- Through the production and dissemination of COMDEKS newsletters of other KM products, UNDP and the COMDEKS project team will continue to increase exposure of COMDEKS activities to IPSI members, as well as policy makers and a wider audience via website and UNDP-GEF Communities Platforms.

Additionally, it is recommended that the **third year contribution** is released in June, so COMDEKS activities can start in the second phase countries. This will ensure that COMDEKS allocations letters are sent to participating countries of the second phase promptly, and selection of grantees can happen expeditiously.

Finally, it is recommended that a **Project Board/partnership (MOEJ, SCBD, UNU-IAS, UNDP) meeting** be conducted in late June or July 2013 in order to launch the second phase of COMDEKS and to guide the implementation of the project at the global level.