

SATOYAMA  
INITIATIVE





Most biodiversity remains outside Protected Areas in production landscapes managed for agriculture, forestry, and other land/water uses. The fate of this biodiversity, and of the vital ecosystem services it sustains, depends on the adaptive management of these land and seascapes, especially in the face of climate change and other shocks and pressures. The resilience of these landscapes – their ability to weather shocks and pressures and return to a productive and stable state – rests on collective action by local communities acting across the landscape.

*Through COMDEKS, we hope to make strides toward achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the realization of societies in harmony with nature in keeping with the Satoyama concept.*

**Nobuteru Ishihara, Japan's Minister of Environment, June 2013**

## WHAT IS COMDEKS?

Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative (COMDEKS) is a global effort, implemented by UNDP, to empower communities to manage landscapes sustainably with the vision of realizing “societies in harmony with nature.” These landscapes and seascapes encompass many uses, from farming and fishing to forestry and livestock herding and provide an economic and cultural mainstay of rural life.

The COMDEKS programme provides small-scale finance directly to community organizations in developing countries for joint activities that maintain and revitalize their critical production land and seascapes. COMDEKS also supports the dissemination of knowledge and experiences from on-the-ground actions to other community organizations and networks, as well as policy makers.



# THE COMMUNITY-BASED LANDSCAPE APPROACH

The COMDEKS approach builds a community-driven vision for restoring and maintaining the productivity and resilience of local ecosystems through joint activities for biodiversity conservation, the careful stewardship of ecosystem services, and the practice of sustainable agriculture and sound fisheries management as a basis for sustainable livelihoods, strengthening local institutions and building social capital.

## Restoring Landscape Resilience

COMDEKS employs an integrated landscape approach to development, aimed at increasing the ecological resilience of local ecosystems – including agro-ecosystems – as well as enhancing the social and economic resilience of the communities living and working within them.

For COMDEKS, a **landscape** encompasses a mosaic of land uses involving a number of communities. The landscape includes not just the physical or ecological processes of the locality, but the cultural, social, and economic dynamics that have shaped it as well. Although this geographic unit rises above the scale of individual landholdings or communities, it is not so large that members of the different landscape communities are unfamiliar with its processes and properties.

## COMDEKS Strategic Framework

The cornerstone of the COMDEKS approach is supporting community organizations to revitalize their landscapes through participatory land use planning that builds their awareness and capacities for governance and innovation.

COMDEKS communities practice an **adaptive management cycle** in which they first assess socio-ecological conditions, trends, problems, and potential opportunities in their landscape; identify desirable ecological, social, and economic outcomes as dynamic building blocks of resilience; plan activities in pursuit of these outcomes by boosting ecosystem productivity and sustainability and improving organizational capacities of communities to execute projects and measure results; and finally adapt their planning and management practices to reflect lessons learned and new conditions and opportunities.

**Resilience Indicators** – In the COMDEKS participatory planning phase, community members apply **resilience indicators** – developed by Bioversity International and UNU-IAS – to guide the assessment of socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. Through interactive mapping exercises, communities identify ecosystem features and land uses, and pinpoint resource access and management challenges.

**Landscape Strategy** – As a result of the landscape-wide baseline assessment and consultation process, communities agree on a **Landscape Strategy**, outlining the landscape context, identifying desired landscape resilience outcomes, and developing community-based actions to achieve landscape resilience. The Landscape Strategy adopted by stakeholders is a living document meant to be revised and updated as communities implement projects, interpret the results, and reevaluate their choices – the **adaptive landscape management cycle**.





## LANDSCAPE RESILIENCE OUTCOMES



**Enhancing ecosystem services**



**Strengthening the sustainability of production systems**



**Developing and diversifying livelihoods and income generation**



**Strengthening institutions and governance systems at the landscape level**

*With this programme, we are pursuing a resilience-based approach to sustainable development, encouraging collective action and learning-by-doing, and strengthening organizations to be effective decision makers in landscape management.*

Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, June 2013





# EMERGING LESSONS

## Participatory Landscape Planning and Collective Action

- **Participatory landscape planning develops social capital for collective action.** If communities are to fully embrace landscape sustainability, their organizations must be the primary agents of change. Participation in COMDEKS empowers communities to envision multifunctional, resilient landscapes, plan a course of action to achieve their vision, and carry it through with appropriate financial, logistical, and capacity support. This learning-by-doing process builds the social capital and the organizational capacity necessary to implement local activities and sustain community-based landscape management.

## Governance of Integrated Landscapes

- **The governance of integrated landscapes calls for new institutional models.** COMDEKS projects not only support formal community government structures, but also provide a mechanism for creating larger communities of interest and connection over the landscape. By working together to formulate a single area-wide landscape strategy, diverse stakeholders become aware of their interdependency, and ultimately, the need to govern the area's resources cooperatively.

## Knowledge, Innovation and Scaling Up

- **Knowledge from innovation is critical to scaling up the landscape approach.** COMDEKS is designed to give community groups the skills and networks they need to share their innovations and experiences. It also involves growing the internal capacities of community organizations to direct the processes of community dialogue and management necessary to transform landscapes. Learning reliable systems of innovation is critical to enabling communities to adapt to change.

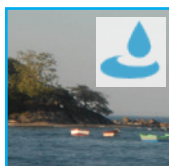
## Long-term Engagement and Adaptive Management

- **Work at the landscape level requires time and long-term support, but frees communities and donors from the constraints of a single-project focus.** Resilient landscapes do not appear overnight. Interventions at a landscape level offer considerable latitude to donors to pursue long-term and large-scale outcomes without being tied to a single project or a single community. Such landscape interventions are an opportunity for multiple donors to collaborate in funding a suite of activities over a longer timeframe.



## WHERE WE WORK

Since 2011, COMDEKS has supported the development of Landscape Strategies in a wide variety of selected landscapes and seascapes in twenty countries, with more than 100 projects contributing to improvement of biodiversity and ecosystem services, agricultural production and food security, economic livelihoods, and participatory decision making and institutional capacity.



### Inland water systems

Lakes  
Watersheds  
Wetlands

Krygystan – Lake Issyk-Kul  
Malawi – Tukombo-Kande, Lake Malawi  
Niger – Tabalak Lake  
Cambodia – Steung Siem Reap Watershed  
Ecuador – Alto Napo River Watershed, Amazon  
Costa Rica – Rio Jesus Maria Watershed  
Slovakia – Východoslovenská nížina Lowland



### Coastal seascapes

El Salvador – Jaltepeque-Naja Lempe  
Fiji – Natewa and Tunuloa Peninsula  
Indonesia – Semau Island  
Turkey – Datça-Bozburun Peninsula



### Mountain ecosystems

Bhutan – Gamri Watershed  
Ghana – Weto Range  
India – Kumaon Region, Uttarakhand  
Nepal – Makawanpur



### Agro-pastoral systems

Ethiopia – Gilbel Gibe Catchment  
Cameroon – Bogo Region  
Brazil – Jequitinhonha Valley



### Grasslands

Mongolia – Central Selenge Region  
Namibia – Ipumbu-ya-Shilongo Conservancy

## OUR PARTNERS

Funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund, the five-year programme (2011-2016) is implemented by UNDP, in partnership with the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations University.

Grants are delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme. The decentralized structure of SGP encourages maximum country and community-level ownership and initiative.



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