# Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes

## A GUIDANCE NOTE AND SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

SATOYAMA INITIATIVE

Japan Biodiversity Fund

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SGP The GEF Small Grants Programme | 25 YEARS

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**Citation:** United Nations Development Programme. 2017. Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes: A Guidance Note and Self-Assessment Tool. UNDP, New York.

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Semau Island, SGP/COMDEKS Indonesia

# Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes

## A GUIDANCE NOTE AND SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

# List of Abbreviations and Accronyms:

| | |
|---|---|
| **ACOKI** | Asociación de Comunidades Kijus |
| **CBD** | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| **CBO** | Community-Based Organisation |
| **COMDEKS** | Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme |
| **COMPACT** | Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation |
| **COP** | Conference of the Parties |
| **GEF** | Global Environmental Facility |
| **GMO** | Genetically Modified Organisms |
| **ICCA** | Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Territories |
| **IPSI** | International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative |
| **IUCN** | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| **JBF** | Japan Biodiversity Fund |
| **MOEJ** | Ministry of the Environment of Japan |
| **NGO** | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| **OCKIL** | Organización de Comunidades Kichwas de Loreto |
| **SCBD** | Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity |
| **SEPLS** | Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes |
| **SGP** | GEF Small Grants Programme |
| **SWOT** | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNCOKIC** | Unión de Comunidades Kichwa de Cotundo |
| **UNDP** | United Nations Development Programme |
| **UNU-IAS** | United Nations University – Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability |
| **WCCB** | Weto COMDEKS Consultative Body |
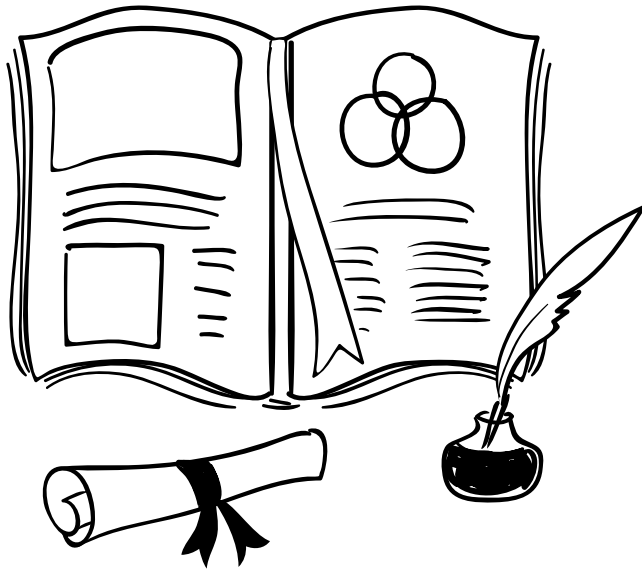
# Part 1

## Guidance Note

- **Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes**

- **Taking action: governance in landscape approaches**
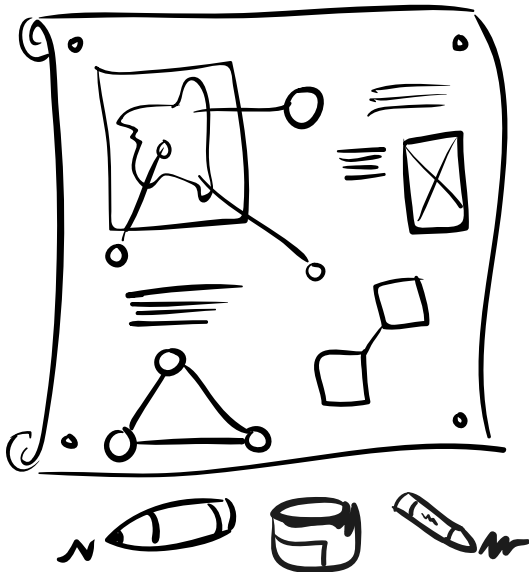
# Part 2

## Self-Assessment Tool

- **Why and how to use this tool**

- **Phase 1: Setting the scene**

- **Phase 2: Assessing Governance**

- **Phase 3: Evaluating governance**

- **Phase 4: Planning for Action**

# Introduction

**Socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS)** are dynamic mosaic landscapes with a mix of habitats and land uses including villages, farmland and adjacent woods, forests, grass-lands, wetlands, and coastal areas. Local communities are the residents, custodians, and everyday users of SEPLS. They are the primary agents of landscape change, and can be prime movers in rebuilding landscape resilience. **However, in order to do so communities and their organizations must be able to participate effectively in the decision-making processes which affect their landscapes.** A resilient landscape system needs institutions and processes that are collaborative and flexible, and which bring together actors from various levels and sectors.

As landscape-level approaches to natural resource management are gaining momentum around the world, it is therefore crucial to take into account the often complex governance issues which influence how resources are allocated, used and conserved in a landscape. This document aims to provide guidance to organizations involved in landscape approaches, on how to understand and improve the governance setting of the landscape, with a focus on the community perspective.

**Part 1** of the document is a general guidance note which provides:
- An overview of the importance and challenges of governance in socio-ecological production landscapes;

- Guidance on how to integrate governance into the planning and execution of strategic landscape processes; and

- Examples of measures to support local communities in their efforts to improve the governance of their socio-ecological production landscapes.

**Part 2** is a governance self-assessment tool that communities, and their supporting organizations, can use to understand and analyze governance processes in their landscape, and to reflect on possible actions.

The guidance and self-assessment tool provided in this document were developed in the context of the Community Development and Knowledge Management for the Satoyama Initiative Programme (COMDEKS), launched in 2011 as the flagship of the Satoyama Initiative, a global effort to promote the sustainable use of natural resources in the landscapes worked in and relied upon by rural communities. Funded by the Japan Biodiversity Fund, COMDEKS is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (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 for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), and delivered through the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP).

A corporate programme of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) which is implemented by UNDP, SGP has served as a grant making programme for 25 years with experience providing technical support and delivering small grants to community organizations for environment and development projects at the local level. SGP provided co-financing and technical and human resources to oversee the implementation of COMDEKS and its grants portfolio.

SGP also contributed lessons from implementation of landscape level approaches since 2000, from the Community Management of Protected Areas Conservation (COMPACT) funded by the UN Foundation, as an innovative model for engaging communities in landscape level conservation activities in and around World Heritage Sites.  SGP is in turn building on lessons generated by COMDEKS, and is also currently implementing the Global Support Initiative for Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Territories which supports recognition and knowledge about ICCAs and support to communities.

The community-based landscape and seascape management approach supported through COMDEKS builds a community-driven vision for restoring and maintaining the productivity and resilience of local landscapes through joint activities for biodiversity conservation, the careful stewardship of ecosystem services, and the practice of sustainable agriculture following agro-ecological principles. While some of the guidance in this document speaks directly to the COMDEKS landscape framework, it can be applied in any strategic, community-driven landscape process.



Participatory landscape-wide Baseline Assessment, SGP/COMDEKS Bhutan

Local fisherwoman in Datça-Bozburun Peninsula, SGP/COMDEKS Turkey

# PART 1

# Guidance Note

# 1. Governance of Socio-Ecological Production Landscapes

Humans have been interacting with ecosystems for millennia to produce food and fiber, collect building materials, extract energy and mineral resources, and support their spiritual and cultural lives. The landscapes that have resulted are altered by human management, but in many cases remain ecologically vital and productive, providing the basis of local livelihoods. In fact, many local land use practices have evolved into highly productive and sustainable management schemes, informed by years of local adaptations and traditional knowledge. They are often characterized by a mosaic of land uses that may include crop land, home gardens, agroforestry systems, pastures, forest groves, marine and freshwater fishing grounds, and water harvesting sites, as well as community conserved areas. These so-called **"socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes (SEPLS)"** are found in many places in the world under different names, and are deeply linked to local culture and knowledge. Such production landscapes have historically provided the backbone to rural economies and play an important role in the cultural and spiritual well-being of the communities that live and work in them. They also comprise a globally significant repository of biodiversity.

However, the resilience of many of these landscapes has declined as economic, social, and demographic changes have eroded traditional landscape management and governance systems and outside pressures have increased, including from climate change.[1] To adapt to often rapid socio-economic and ecological changes and to restore or strengthen the social and ecological resilience of their landscapes, communities have to reinforce existing sustainable management practices and institutions, as well as develop innovative approaches. They also have to engage with a range of other actors at the landscape level, including government authorities. Resilient socio-ecological production landscapes require collaborative and flexible governance arrangements, which can cope with the complex interactions between actors, and which enable communities to play their role as the primary managers of the landscape's resources and processes.

## 1.1. What is landscape governance?

**BOX 1  |  GOVERNANCE: A DEFINITION**

The term governance describes "the interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say."[2] It is about making decisions and ensuring the conditions for their effective implementation. Governance is the process of developing and exercising authority and responsibility over time; and about who makes decisions and how, in relation to learning processes and evolving institutions in a society.

Governance is not only about who holds authority de jure (prescribed and recognized by the law), but also who makes decisions de facto (what is actually the case in practice) and about how these decisions are made. So questions of governance go beyond a formal attribution of authority and responsibility; they also include questions about both formal and informal decision-making processes, as well as the respective roles of governmental, customary and culture-specific institutions.[3]

Socio-ecological production landscapes fulfill different functions for multiple actors. The values that actors associate with or derive from a landscape differ from level to level. They range from livelihoods and income, as well as cultural and spiritual values at the local level, to economic interests, development and/or conservation goals at sub-national and national levels, to global economic interests and/or interest in the preservation of significant resources or ecosystem services (e.g. emblematic species, carbon sinks) at the international level.

It is therefore necessary to establish governance systems that allow landscape actors to, among other things:

- Decide which **functions** of the landscape will be located where;
- Negotiate **trade-offs;**
- Establish rules that determine who has **rights** to which resources at what time; and
- Develop ways to enforce those **rules**.

Governance processes also must respond to the fundamental question of who decides such questions based on what values, and who is included and excluded from activities and benefits linked to different functions within the landscape.[4] Collaborative deliberation has to take place, and therefore bridges have to be built between the local, regional and national level, and between actors at each level.

FIGURE 1:

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE? [5]



MANAGEMENT IS ABOUT:
- WHAT IS DONE IN PURSUIT OF GIVEN OBJECTIVES
- THE MEANS AND ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE SUCH OBJECTIVES

GOVERNANCE IS ABOUT:
- WHO DECIDES WHAT THE OBJECTIVES ARE, HOW TO PURSUE THEM, AND WITH WHAT MEANS
- HOW THOSE DECISIONS ARE MADE
- WHO HOLDS POWER, AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
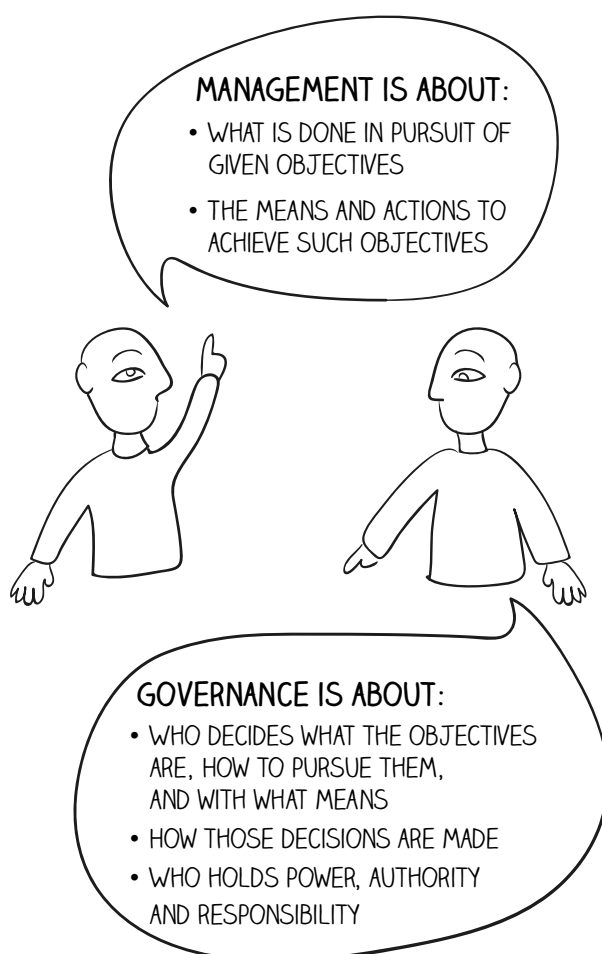
# 1.2. Elements of landscape governance

Governance of landscapes is a complex, dynamic, multi-level and multi-actor process. To get a better grasp on this complexity, it can be helpful to unpack the different elements of governance and the ways they interact in a given landscape:

## FIGURE 2: ELEMENTS OF LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE [6]

- GOVERNMENT
- COMMUNITIES
- CIVIL SOCIETY
- BUSINESSES

- LOCAL
- ECOSYSTEM
- LANDSCAPE
- PROVINCE/REGION
- NATIONAL
- INTERNATIONAL



- PLANNING & REGULATORY
- REVENUE GENERATING & SPENDING
- CONVENING & MOBILIZING
- KNOWLEDGE & KNOW HOW

- RULES, LAWS, POLICIES
- AGREEMENTS
- PLANS: MANAGEMENT, LAND USE
- SOCIAL & FINANCIAL INCENTIVES
- TECHNICAL & FINANCIAL SUPPORT
- INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE
- EDUCATION & TRAINING

As mentioned above, governance essentially refers to the institutions, rules and processes by which all involved **actors** influence and make decisions at several **levels** that affect the landscape. Usually, a number of institutions share - or compete for - authority at different levels within the landscape: local governments, provincial authorities, state government ministries, traditional authorities, community organizations, and sometimes regional bodies, such as river basin authorities, for example.[7]

These actors make use of a variety of **instruments,** which include legal instruments, but also a range of "softer" instruments such as the distribution and use of knowledge, or social and economic incentives.

The ability of actors to apply these instruments depends on the **powers** they hold and their degree of influence.[8] Unequal distribution of power, or of the capacities to use governance instruments effectively, is a core challenge for landscape governance. Some actors are better endowed or have strong institutional mandates that permit them to have a greater degree of influence across levels. Local communities however are often disempowered and rarely engaged at higher levels of governance, which is limiting their influence on decisions affecting their landscapes. This state of imbalance is reinforced by the fact that traditional and indigenous knowledge is often not fully recognized by scientists, policy makers and practitioners.[9]

## 1.3. Governance Systems

It is a combination of the above-mentioned powers, strategically applied through various instruments at various levels, which result in the *de facto* governance for a given landscape.[10] In reality, there is often more than one governance system exerting influence over the landscape at any given time. These systems usually overlap, which can lead to either competition for authority and contradictions in rules and processes, or - ideally - to collaboration.

FIGURE 3: GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN THE LANDSCAPE
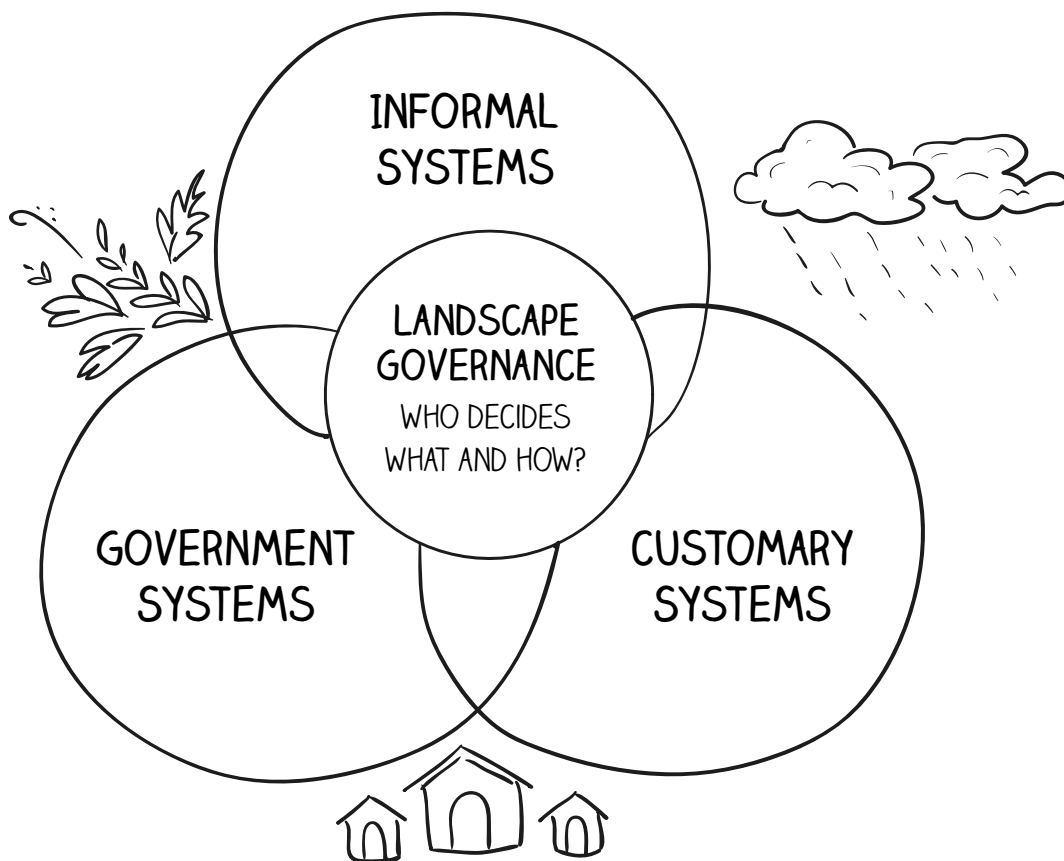
## GOVERNMENTAL SYSTEMS

This "formal" system of governance includes government policies and laws, decision-making processes and actors and institutions including government agencies and their staff, elected or appointed public authorities, legislators and law enforcement bodies at various levels.

Unfortunately, none of the existing **administrative levels** usually match the socio-ecological boundaries of landscape, which cut across administrative and political boundaries.[11] However, administrative units necessarily have to be taken into account when looking at landscape governance, since this is where a significant number of the decisions affecting a landscape take place.[12] The government levels with most direct influence on a landscape are arguably the local and provincial or regional level, depending on the level of decentralization of the country. However, decisions made at the national level, including laws and policies, are also relevant as they constitute the legal environment in which decisions about the landscape are taken, for example, by establishing land and resource rights, possibilities for participation, sanctions, conflict-management procedures, etc.

In addition to the issue of governance levels and scale, the lack of horizontal integration is a common challenge. Each government institution typically has a defined role managing one activity or jurisdiction, but lacks the mandate or vision to manage a number of activities across the landscape in an integrated manner. As a result, decision-making and implementation is often divided by **sectors**, with separate bodies governing and managing forestry, agriculture, fishing, infrastructure etc. with little cross-over or integration.[13]

As mentioned above, government **laws and policies** do influence the governance and management of SEPLS, by influencing the decisions that landscape actors take concerning the use and conservation of their resources, by rewarding certain behaviors while deterring or punishing others. In many landscapes however, the implementation of government laws and policies remains patchy. Reasons for this can include, for instance, a lack of awareness or understanding of legal frameworks at the local level, or weak enforcement due to geographic remoteness, inefficiency, corruption etc. This is often compounded by a lack of ownership of government policies and laws by local communities, who generally have little input into the policy development process, might therefore doubt the value of the results, and feel little incentive to comply. Even with evolving decentralization, most government laws are still developed in a top-down manner and are often not attuned to landscape-level or local realities. Finally, policies can lag behind rapidly evolving local realities, as formal governance processes can be time-consuming.

## CUSTOMARY SYSTEMS

Many local communities and indigenous peoples possess customary institutions, decision-making processes, laws and rules with a role in governing land and natural resources – some with centuries of history and experience, others relatively new, or recently revived in contemporary forms. What most have in common is that they represent the interests of local actors – the people first in line to pay the price for wrong management decisions, and who possess traditional knowledge, skills and the accumulated local experience necessary to protect and use resources in sustainable ways. Despite their diversity and complexity, and possibly because of that, customary and local institutions appear to function effectively and make important contributions to resilient landscapes.[14] Customary laws are also more flexible as they can be adapted and revised by resource users in response to changing contexts. This is different from formal laws which may not be as responsive to change and may become outdated compared to current realities.

However, these local, customary systems are often not legally recognized or supported by government institutions. This lack of recognition, as well as rapid socio-economic changes in many places, have weakened the effectiveness of governance systems that had successfully managed and conserved resources for a long period of time. Even where they are still strong, traditional systems can, in most places, no longer function truly autonomously and separately, and must find a way to interact with, and gain recognition from, higher level authorities. Also, localized institutions will encounter difficulties to implement a landscape approach by themselves; here interactions with other communities and with actors operating on larger scales are needed.[15]



The Paramount Chief plants a tree for World Environment Day, SGP/COMDEKS Ghana

**BOX 2 | CUSTOMARY GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS IN GHANA**

In Ghana, the constitution guarantees the authority of the chieftaincy and its traditional councils, who are established by customary law. In the Weto Landscape, the traditional chief exercises his authority through his sub-chiefs, who play various roles. Although the chieftaincy is patrilineal in inheritance, Queen mothers and women leaders do play a role, which varies between communities in the landscape. Generally speaking, they represent the interests of women in the community and on the traditional council. They advocate for women's welfare, especially on issues relating to land tenure, access to land and widowhood rites. In the past, a number of traditional rules contributed to the conservation of biodiversity and to sustainable land use practices. Numerous sacred sites were effectively protecting forests and water bodies by prohibiting human interference. Several communities regarded certain wildlife species as sacred and prohibited their hunting. Regular taboo days for fishing or farming (usually once a week) ensured that natural resources were not over-utilized. Other rules prohibited specific uses in sensitive areas, for example logging along watercourses and sources. The de facto level of authority of traditional governance institutions, however, varies between communities and is weakening in places due to socioeconomic and cultural changes. The traditional rules are still known in the communities of the landscape, but most of them are not being strictly followed anymore.

# INFORMAL SYSTEMS

A third kind of governance system has emerged in many landscapes over the past decades. These informal systems are being built by local community groups and organizations, such as user groups or associations, cooperatives, natural resource management committees etc., and by the civil society organizations that support them. They function alongside, and sometimes even replace, government and customary systems where these are not effectively governing certain aspects of a community or landscape. This could be:

• because new challenges or opportunities emerge, which formal and customary institutions do not adequately address (e.g. village committees are formed to manage environmental challenges, local cooperatives are organized around a productive activity), or

• in response to a lack of effectiveness or legitimacy of formal governance systems: for example, when government institutions and services are not sufficiently present in remoter areas, or government policies and programs are not adapted to local realities, or

• when traditional authorities have become eroded and no longer have the capacity, or the perceived legitimacy, to take and enforce decisions.

In these cases, new types of community organizations can play a crucial role in strengthening or rebuilding the resilience of communities and their landscapes, especially if they have emerged from bottom-up discussions in the communities. However, it can also happen that new organizations or forms of governance are developed and imposed by outside actors like NGOs, development projects or even governments in the course of "participatory management" programs. When this happens too fast and without considering existing, legitimate customary institutions in the communities, it can endanger the very governance systems that have maintained these multi-purpose landscapes over time. New local governance systems should therefore be put in place only where necessary, with the full consent of the concerned communities, and with the involvement of relevant customary authorities. Where several governance systems co-exist in a landscape (as is arguably almost always the case), a key challenge is how to develop collaborative systems that can bring together the variety of institutions, rules and laws, processes, knowledge systems and cultural values that influence how people make decisions.

# 1.4. Governance Quality

**Good governance** is a measure of how far certain principles and values are adhered to. While the norms for good governance at the level of formal government systems are well established and understood, this is not necessarily the case for the collaborative systems needed to govern these multi-purpose landscapes. It is therefore important that landscape actors agree on a set of values to guide the development of these systems. These values will be influenced to some degree by the cultural and national context. However, some principles can be considered universal and serve as guidance. For example, the IUCN uses a set of five quality criteria for protected area governance, which can also be applied to the larger landscape:

FIGURE 4: IUCN PRINCIPLES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE [16]
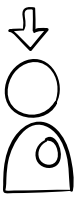
## ACCOUNTABILITY

Upholding integrity and commitment; ensuring appropriate access to information and transparency, including for lines of responsibility, allocation of resources, and evaluation of performances; establishing communication avenues and encouraging feedback and independent overseeing.

## LEGITIMACY AND VOICE

Enjoying broad acceptance and appreciation in society; ensuring procedural rights of access to information, participation and justice; fostering engagement and diversity; preventing discrimination; fostering subsidiarity, mutual respect, dialogue, consensus and agreed rules.
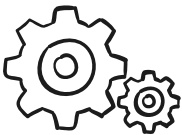
## PERFORMANCE

Achieving the landscape resilience objectives as planned; promoting a culture of learning; engaging in advocacy and outreach; being responsive to the needs of rights holders and stakeholders; ensuring resources and capacities and their efficient use; promoting sustainability and resilience.
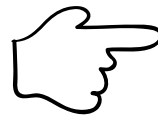
## DIRECTION

Following an inspiring and consistent strategic vision grounded on agreed values and an appreciation of complexities; ensuring consistency with policy and practice at various levels; ensuring clear answers to contentious questions; ensuring proper adaptive management and favoring the emergence of champions and tested innovations.
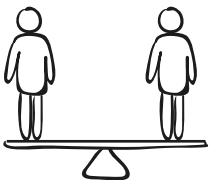
## FAIRNESS AND RIGHTS

Striving towards equitably shared costs and benefits, without adverse impacts on vulnerable individuals or groups; upholding decency and the dignity of all; being fair, impartial, consistent, non-discriminatory, respectful of procedural rights as well as substantive rights, individual and collective human rights, gender equity and the rights of indigenous peoples, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent; promoting local empowerment.

# 2. Taking action: governance in landscape approaches

When planning and implementing a landscape approach, a stronger governance system should be pursued both as a desirable outcome in itself, and as a factor that significantly contributes to other outcomes, such as the conservation of natural resources and provision of ecosystem services; sustainable production systems; and stable livelihoods and income generation for local communities. Rooted in the SGP approach of supporting community-based development initiatives, the landscape approach supported through COMDEKS is based on the concept that if communities are to fully embrace landscape sustainability, they should be recognized as the primary agents for change in that landscape, not simply the beneficiaries of changes originated or mandated by others. In terms of governance, this means that landscape programs with such a community focus should strive to:

- **Strengthen community organizations** (including customary authorities and informal groups and organizations) so that they can take autonomous action, both at the level of their individual communities as well as through collective strategies and networks in the landscape.

- **Improve formal governance systems** at all levels to strengthen the rights and enable the participation of local communities and their organizations, and to allow integrated planning and implementation across institutions, levels and sectors.

- Develop or strengthen collaborative, **landscape-level governance systems.**

Governance should be taken into account from the onset when landscape actors develop a strategic vision for their landscape. This understanding forms the basis for strengthening the governance system of the landscape, which will usually require intervention at various levels:

- **Locally,** to strengthen community institutions and local organizations,
- At **landscape level**, to build landscape-level bodies or improve existing governance systems,
- When necessary **beyond the landscape,** to improve relevant laws and policies.

COMDEKS has adopted a strategic framework for its landscape approach, built around a cycle of adaptive management in which communities assess the state of their landscape; identify desirable outcomes; plan activities, execute projects and measure results; and then adapt their planning and practices to reflect lessons learned. The graphic below shows how governance can be integrated into this landscape approach at each step of the cycle:

FIGURE 5: GOVERNANCE IN A STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE APPROACH
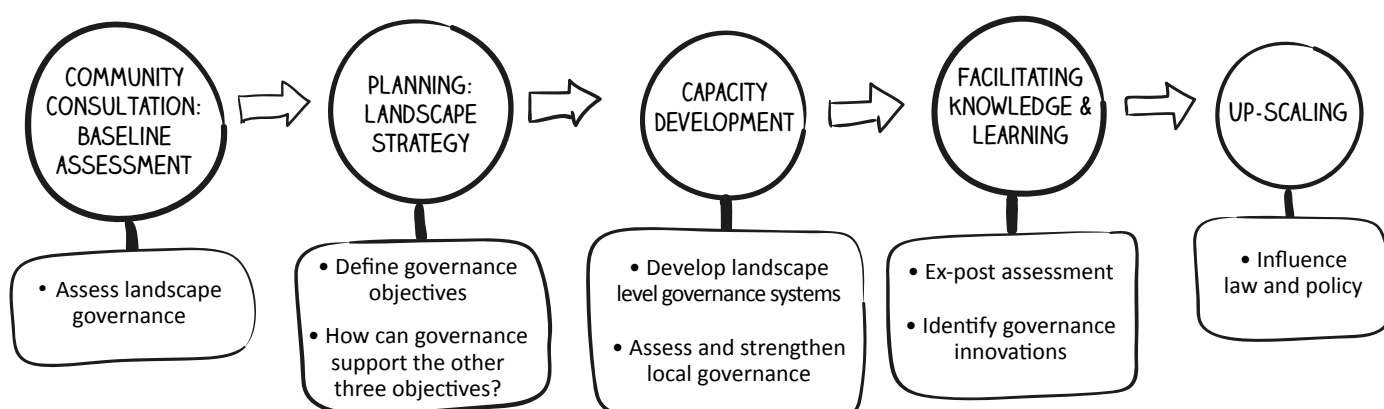
# 2.1. Assessing governance at landscape level

The landscape approach supported through COMDEKS starts with a stakeholder-driven process where communities take a careful look at their landscape and its condition through a baseline assessment. Jointly, they map resources and land uses and pinpoint resource access and management challenges. They identify priority problems in the landscape and their root causes. This is partly achieved through the application of a set of 20 resilience indicators developed by the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) in collaboration with Bioversity International.[17]  These indicators capture community perceptions of different elements of landscape resilience in five areas:

- Landscape/seascape diversity and ecosystem protection
- Biodiversity (including agricultural biodiversity)
- Knowledge and innovation
- Livelihoods and well-being
- **Governance and social equity**

The indicators on governance include:

- Rights in relation to land/water and other natural resources; and
- Community-based landscape governance, including landscape-level and local institutions.

Building on the Resilience Indicators with regard to governance and social equity, **the landscape governance self-assessment tool in Part 2** provides a more in-depth process for communities and other actors to assess and evaluate the state of governance in their landscape. This assessment can be conducted in one or several meetings between relevant groups of actors, ideally at the beginning of a landscape process as outlined above.

The assessment process creates the space for local communities and other actors to understand the existing decision-making processes, institutions, power relations, values, etc. in their landscape. An understanding of how important decisions are made, and by whom, is crucial to understand the root causes of, for instance, resource degradation or overuse. Governance is an often overlooked factor when actors and their supporting organizations analyze resource use, livelihoods and conservation. Discussions of power, rights and accountability can be sensitive and challenging. Institutions at each level and in each sector may understand the dynamics within their jurisdiction, but usually lack the "big picture" of how their actions fit into the larger governance setting. Additionally, customary governance institutions of local communities are often overlooked or poorly understood; as are more informal forms of governance, such as the influence of civil society including community groups and organizations. The insights from a landscape-level governance assessment can feed into a broader baseline assessment, or can complement it. In any case, the process will allow landscape actors to gain enough of a joint understanding of the governance dynamics in their landscape to later define which outcomes they would like to see for their landscape in terms of governance, and to develop ideas for action.

# 2.2. Defining governance outcomes

Based on the discussions and insights from the self-assessment, communities can decide which outcomes they would like to achieve in their landscape in terms of governance. These outcomes will depend on the types of institutions and actors present in the landscape, the specific challenges and dynamics, and on what is realistically achievable by the actors engaged in a landscape process.

In the landscape approach supported through COMDEKS, communities define landscape resilience outcomes in four different areas:

- Enhancing ecosystem services;
- Strengthening the sustainability of production systems;
- Developing and diversifying livelihoods and income generation; and
- **Strengthening institutions and governance systems at the landscape level.**

The landscape resilience outcomes agreed through the community consultation process form the basis for a formal **Landscape Strategy,** a comprehensive document outlining the landscape profile and strategic approaches for community-based actions to achieve the desired outcomes.

**BOX 3 | LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE OUTCOMES**

Outcomes at the landscape level necessarily have to be quite broad to encompass the various aspects that the strategy seeks to address. However, if a governance assessment has been conducted, it might be possible to pinpoint the major governance challenges in the landscape and formulate more targeted outcomes. The following elements can be combined to formulate overall outcomes, or can be used to plan more concrete action:

- **Strengthened (government) institutions** to improve landscape-level governance
- **Strengthened community groups/organizations** (e.g. producer groups, cooperatives, conservation groups, women's associations, etc.) and/or strengthened community institutions (e.g. customary institutions, traditional authorities, committees, councils, etc.) to improve local and landscape-level governance
- Increased and more effective **participation of local communities** in landscape-level governance decision-making (e.g. through empowered community institutions, and/or more recognition of community institutions by government authorities)
- Increased horizontal (between sectors) and vertical (between local, regional, and national level) **collaboration between institutions**
- Established / strengthened **landscape-level governance bodies**
- Developed / strengthened **informal networks** of landscape actors
- Improved **policies and laws** affecting the landscape, and/or improved implementation
- Established / strengthened **community rules / agreements**
- More secured land and resource tenure / more recognition for **community land and resource rights**

Traditional irrigation on Semau Island, SGP/COMDEKS Indonesia. Photo credit: Harry Jonas

# 2.3. Taking action at community level

The governance outcomes defined as part of a landscape strategy can serve as an orientation for local action in each community with the aim of:

- Establishing or strengthening community institutions, groups and organizations;
- Developing or increasing the recognition of community rules and agreements; and
- Securing community rights.

## COMMUNITY AUTHORITIES

As explained above, customary community authorities play an essential role in governing the resources of SEPLS, but may have been weakened over time, or might simply not have the capacities necessary to take on larger roles at the landscape level. It may therefore be necessary to help communities to strengthen their local governance systems, by:

- Increasing their **effectiveness**: this can include support for administration or project management, trainings for example to improve negotiation skills, or material support for offices facilities, among others;

- Addressing **governance quality:** this should always start from a careful self-assessment process from within the community and could address issues such as transparency in decision-making and accountability, equitable representation of women or marginalized community members, etc., and

- Supporting their **inclusion** in landscape-level decision-making processes.

Where customary institutions alone do not have the capacity or mandate to address landscape management issues, it may be necessary to create **new community institutions** focused for example on resource management and/or environmental issues. These can include bodies such as committees or councils, which can be independent or function as part of an existing community institution; or larger decision-making spaces such as participatory forums. Support to these new institutions can include the same aspects as those mentioned above. If a body is newly created, initial support can be needed to develop its structure and mode of functioning; and if possible and necessary, support to achieve official recognition or registration of the institution with the appropriate administration. Importantly, where functioning, legitimate customary institutions are in place, these should not be displaced or undermined by the external imposition of new institutions.[18] Doing so could create power imbalances and conflicts that would undermine the very systems that have preserved the SEPLS over time. When supporting organizations work with communities, they should carefully analyze with the community what is there already (for example, through a local governance assessment), jointly determine if it is necessary or desirable to create new institutions, and if yes, how to involve the traditional leadership and a broad representation of the community in these structures, to ensure their legitimacy.

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**BOX 4 | EXAMPLES: DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS**

One underlying cause for landscape threats on the **Natewa-Tunuloa Peninsula in Fiji** was the lack of a concerted and coordinated effort by both the communities and local government with regard to natural resource planning and management. The SGP Fiji team, with COMDEKS support, conducted an extensive participatory survey to examine and strengthen the local landscape governance framework. Survey results were used to assemble a village profile for all 16 villages in the target area. One concrete outcome of the village profiling was the establishment of a Village Development Committee in each village, with the responsibility of developing a village development plan, under which all development and environment projects would fall. Simultaneously, Natural Resources and Environment Committees were established in many villages to oversee the formulation of management action plans to help coordinate environment related projects.

On **Semau Island in Indonesia**, a range of new institutions and networks were established in participating COMDEKS and SPG communities. Perhaps the most important new institutions are local Environmental Forums, which include participation of customary authorities, community leaders, community groups and government authorities. Environmental governance on Semau Island is typically the responsibility of the state-recognized Village Chief, in association with the Ministry of Forestry and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, which administer the Marine National Recreation Area and the Marine National Park that occupy much of the island's coastal areas. The village Environmental Forums bring these parties together with the customary authority of local landlords, who heavily influence the patterns of day-to-day land use, and with community groups undertaking landscape interventions. The goal of the Environmental Forums is to ensure restoration of damaged ecosystems in the village environs and to develop a mechanism for sustaining these ecosystems in the future. These local forums also participate in inter-village meetings so that issues of broader concern can be discussed and planned for in a collaborative manner.

In the **Bogo Landscape in Cameroon,** a key challenge is the weak administrative and institutional capacity to support conservation and production. There are no explicit protection and management strategies for this landscape, although its resources are highly valued and well understood in oral history tradition. COMDEKS-supported activities prompted the creation of new community advisory groups to give local people a direct voice in environmental management. In many communities, Environment Committees (including youth and women) were established and trained in forestry law, techniques of rural organizing and environmental education. In villages with existing Community Development Committees, these groups were strengthened by creating subcommittees directed toward natural resources management. There has been wide participation in and support of the landscape activities by both traditional authorities and government institutions. Some 70 traditional authorities (including the Paramount Chief and County Chiefs) are directly involved in landscape activities.

Landscape baseline assessment in Bogo Landscape, SGP/COMDEKS Cameroon

# COMMUNITY-BASED GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to formal decision-making bodies, **local interest groups and community-based organizations** play an increasing role in community governance. They contribute to resilient landscapes by organizing sustainable production processes, pooling resources (financial or otherwise) to develop and market products, playing leading roles in conservation activities, and articulating the concerns of their members in the community or at higher governance levels.

Strengthening these groups can therefore have a positive impact on community and landscape-level governance. Supporting measures can include:

- Training in management and other skills;
- Helping organizations to become officially registered;
- Helping to raise funds or obtain credits for their activities; and
- Building networks between similar groups across the landscape.

The structure and functioning of these groups should as much as possible be adapted to the local context and culture.

**BOX 5 | COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN COMDEKS-SUPPORTED LANDSCAPES**

Community groups have been central governance actors in all landscape strategies. Many of these groups were created and/or streghtened through the supported projects; in other places existing groups were empowered by taking on new roles and developing their capacities. Groups and organizations are as varied as the landscapes that they operate in and include, for example:

- Informal community groups such as:
  - Livelihood activities groups: farmers, fishers, bee-keepers, cocoa producers, livestock rearing groups etc.;
  - Women's groups;
  - Savings, credit and self-help groups; and
  - Groups around the use and conservation of certain community resources, such as water use groups.

- More formal cooperatives around specific production activities.

- Organizations in charge of managing community areas, such as community forestry organizations, or organizations in charge of community conserved areas.

# COMMUNITY RULES AND AGREEMENTS

Through their long-time relationship with their landscapes, most communities have developed **local rules** on the use and conservation of land and resources. These rules are based on an intricate knowledge of the landscape, and are rooted in the local culture. They can therefore be more effective than laws and regulations imposed from the outside.

However, these rules are usually only known orally by the members of the community. This means that the community has no legal power to enforce the rules. Moreover, with increasing social and cultural changes, customary rules are in danger of being forgotten or disregarded by younger generations. At the same time, rules that were traditionally effective might not be able to address new challenges, or in certain cases, they might not be compatible with national laws.

Supporting organizations can work with communities to reinvigorate, improve or develop new local rules for natural resource management. Through a process of dialogue and documentation, communities can agree which rules should be kept and document them (in writing or through other means), thereby making them more visible – both to members of the community and to outsiders. Another step is to ask someone with legal expertise to present the relevant national laws to the community, and to discuss how the customary rules fit within this larger context.

In some countries, communities can officially register their community laws with the government (usually at local or provincial level) and thereby make them legally binding. But even where this is not possible, it is still valuable to document the rules in order to safeguard and disseminate them.

**BOX 6 | EXAMPLES: COMMUNITY RULES AND BY-LAWS**

In the **Weto Landscape in Ghana**, COMDEKS participating communities developed by-laws concerning various aspects of landscape conservation such as fire control, regulation of logging on slopes prone to erosion, or farming close to water sources. Some of these by-laws are enforcing existing government policies that were not well known or being complied with, others are reviving traditional rules of the communities that were no longer enforced. The by-laws are agreed upon in the community and are then communicated to all members – traditionally by drumbeaters who are sent around the community by the chief. The chief enforces the laws, and non-compliance can carry heavy fines. Customary rules regulate how the fines are to be used and distributed. In Ghana, community by-laws can be ratified by the District Assembly if the community wishes to give them an official status, and SGP Ghana, through COMDEKS-supported initiatives, is assisting some communities to do so.

In the **Gamri Watershed in Bhutan**, local traditional knowledge and practices associated with landscape and natural resource management were an important factor of the landscape strategy. They were recorded and embedded in local by-laws, particularly concerning the tree and plant species to use for reforestation and revegetation efforts.



The WETO Landscape, SGP/COMDEKS Ghana. Photo credit: Barbara Lassen

A variation of the documenting and updating of existing customary rules is the development of **community agreements.** These are newly created, usually to specifically conserve a community area, resource or species. The community commits itself to certain conservation measures (such as not to harvest resources in a certain area, either periodically or permanently). Sometimes these agreements are also validated by government bodies, which allows the community to receive technical or financial support.

### BOX 7 | EXAMPLES: COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS

In the **Bogo Landscape in Cameroon,** six villages came to an agreement to form a joint community forest and developed by-laws for sustainable management practices there. These communities are applying for legal recognition of the forest by the Ministry of Forest and Wildlife to secure its legal status. This is expected to further empower the community to implement forest conservation activities, and to ensure equitable and sustainable benefits from the forest to the entire community.

In the **Napo Rivershed in Ecuador**, local community agreements were developed through an intensive process of dialogue and awareness-raising about the importance of conserving watersheds and forests and reforesting degraded areas. Four of these agreements were signed as part of the COMDEKS projects, achieving a total of 570 ha of forest under conservation. Through collective work (a traditional practice called minga), men and women from the communities reforested 61 ha. The agreements updated existing customary conservation practices and created new rules, making them more visible and transparent. The finalized community agreements were ratified in a general assembly of community delegates and are an important step in achieving recognition by local government authorities and to counter some external threats, such as logging.

On **Semau Island in Indonesia,** a variety of new environmental commitments were agreed on by local clan leaders, village governments, and community members. These agreements cover a wide range of activities from watershed protection, to irrigation and agricultural production, to seaweed farming and mangrove restoration. For example, in Batuinan village, community members agreed to hold a water catchment area as a conservation zone, with the land owners agreeing not to lease this land for other purposes and community members agreeing to limit the number of wells in surrounding areas.



Women from Santa Rita Community are planning activities to strengthen their organization, SGP/COMDEKS Ecuador

# COMMUNITY RIGHTS

There is growing evidence of the vital role played by full legal ownership of land by indigenous peoples and local communities. Up to 2.5 billion people depend on indigenous and community lands, which make up over 50 percent of the land on the planet - however they legally own just one-fifth. The remaining land remains unprotected and vulnerable to land grabs from more powerful entities. Since the rules that govern relationships between land, forests, and people are often unclear, unenforced, or undocumented, they inevitably pit communities, businesses, and governments against one another with competing land claims.[19]

The lack or loss of control over a community's territory or resources can significantly undermine the relationship between the community and the land. This in turn will weaken the motivation of local actors to conserve or use their resources sustainably, since without established rights, they have no guarantee that the resources will be available to future generations in the community or even a few years from now.

Moreover, where local resource rights are weak, large-scale investment projects such as mining or infrastructure, for example, may undermine the ability of local groups to access the resources on which they depend. This may take the form of expropriation or otherwise loss of resource access without adequate compensation; or of environmental degradation. Loss of rights and resource degradation have major negative impacts on the livelihoods of local resource users.[20]

Supporting organizations can help communities to secure their land rights, for example through:



- Mapping of territories and resources: depending on the objective and available resources, this can range from simple sketch maps to satellite or digital mapping.



- Support for land titling or registration: supporting organizations can help to research the available options, advantages and risks under national laws and regulations. While formal government registration is legally the strongest form of rights documentation, it is not essential: a community's by-laws, maps and boundary markers can also serve as proof of a community's customary land claims.[21]



- Resolution of possible intra- or inter-community land conflicts, for example by facilitating the negotiation of boundaries.



- Local legal empowerment approaches (see Box 8).

All these support initiatives should be in accordance with the local communities' customs and provide for communal or collective land tenure. It is essential to discuss with the community which forms of land documentation and planning they are comfortable with. Some communities may be skeptical or opposed to documentation or land use planning, fearing for example land alienation. It is important to be respectful of the community's concerns and to find ways to plan resource use and protect their land rights that they are comfortable with.[22]

**BOX 8 | LEGAL EMPOWERMENT: PUTTING THE LAW IN THE HANDS OF COMMUNITIES**

Even where resource rights formally exist, their legal protection is often weak, and local communities have limited opportunities to influence decision-making affecting these rights. This situation is compounded by strong power asymmetries between private investors, the government and local resource users. In many rural areas, use of the state legal system is constrained by, among others things, lack of legal awareness, lack of access to information, and economic, geographic or linguistic barriers.[23]

**Legal empowerment** aims to strengthen the capacity of local communities to use legal tools (such as land registration, participation in mandatory consultation processes, access to information, negotiation with companies and governments, court litigation etc.) to exercise their rights, tackle power asymmetries and take greater control over the decisions and processes that affects their ways of life, lands and resources. Legal empowerment is based on the twin principles that law should not remain a monopoly of trained professionals, and that alternative forms of dispute resolution (such as dialogues) are often more attuned to local realities than formal legal processes.[24]

Legal support can combine a small number of lawyers with a larger pool of **community paralegals** or grassroots legal advocates who are trained to assist communities in finding concrete solutions to instances of injustice. The paralegals can use several strategies, including:
- Public education to increase awareness of the law
- Advising clients on legal process, and options for pursuing remedies
- Assisting communities to navigate authorities and institutions
- Mediating disputes
- Organizing collective action
- Advocacy
- Fact Finding, investigations, and monitoring[25]

# DOS AND DON'TS FROM A COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE PERSPECTIVE

Any of these actions towards better community governance can be integrated into local projects as part of a landscape approach. Additionally, it is important to keep certain governance factors in mind when designing and implementing activities towards other landscape outcome such as enhanced ecosystem services, improved livelihoods or sustainable production systems.

**TABLE 1: DOS AND DON'TS FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN THEIR EFFORTS TOWARDS RESILIENT SEPLS[26]**

| DOS | DON'TS |
|---|---|
| Assist communities to gain recognition of their land, water and resource **rights.** | Do not impose top-down governance regimes, including co-management / shared governance regimes if they are not wanted by the community. |
| Recognize and work with **local community institutions** that govern lands and resources, while supporting them to self-evaluate and strengthen the quality of their governance. | Do not undermine or displace functioning governance institutions or impose new institutions upon endogenous bodies and rules. |
| Understand and promote the links between **biological and cultural diversity,** highlighting history, ancestral territories and cultural identity. | Do not promote any form of cultural uniformity, intolerance or any type of discrimination. |
| Provide support to communities to **enforce** their local rules as well as state laws and regulations. | Do not leave communities alone to carry the burden of surveillance and enforcement. |
| Provide means for **joint, constructive evaluation** of community actions, focusing on agreed outputs and impacts for conservation, livelihoods, governance and cultural values. | Do not evaluate community actions solely or mostly in terms of compliance with external expectations and structures. |
| Provide **assistance in technical aspects** of management where required, through respectful, cross-cultural dialogue between different knowledge systems. Respect and protect **traditional knowledge.** | Do not impose management objectives or technical solutions that undermine local knowledge and values. Do not impose external or "scientific" ways of understanding and solving problems; do not undermine customary approaches and values that contribute to resilient SEPLS. |
| Help to **prevent and mitigate threats** to community lands and resources, including by seeking **legal protection** of community conservation areas, if the community wants this. | Do not impose any legal status (e.g. protected area status) on a community area without their free, prior and informed consent. |
| Promote or strengthen **socio-cultural and economic incentives** for conservation and sustainable management, while seeking to maintain the community's independence and autonomy. | Do not replace or undermine existing motivations for conservation and sustainable use, by making them primarily dependent on outside economic incentives. |

## 2.4. Taking action at landscape level: collaborative governance systems

The complexities of socio-ecological production landscapes mean that landscape resilience will only be achieved and sustained by collective action from all actors engaged in landscape governance – and foremost by the people living in the landscape. For effective governance of these multi-purpose landscapes, there needs to be some form of integration between:

- Governance **levels and scales** (local, landscape, regional, national level);

- Different landscape **actors** (communities and their organizations, government bodies, civil society, the private sector, etc.); and

- Several **sectors** (such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, conservation).

This integration can take the form of more or less formal, **landscape-level governance bodies,** or of more informal **networks** of communities and interest groups. Both can be effective and indeed complementary. It is also not always necessary, or feasible to create new administrative bodies in a given landscape, **existing bodies** can serve just as well, with appropriate additions and innovations.[27]

### BUILDING LANDSCAPE-LEVEL GOVERNANCE BODIES

Landscape governance bodies can take a number of forms and be called by a variety of names, including platforms, committees, forums etc. depending, among other things, on their size, their mandates and their level of formality.

**Formal landscape bodies** are more or less permanent structures, with set rules, members and decision-making. They usually include representatives of government institutions, and their mandate is formally recognized by authorities at the provincial/regional or national level. They sometimes have the authority to take and enforce decisions concerning the management of the landscape.

**Less formal bodies** serve mainly as dialogue and deliberation spaces. They might not have a formal mandate or the authority to enforce decisions, but can develop joint plans, guidelines and projects to be implemented by their members. They can be used to exchange information, create trust, jointly raise funds, and create public awareness about the landscape and its components.

Many factors will play a role in defining the best "fit" for a particular landscape at a particular time, including the national policy framework, the level of decentralization and capacity of public agencies, the level of organization and recognition of community institutions, to cite only a few. The characteristics of the governance body should be in tune with the current reality of the landscape, and can evolve over time.

## BOX 9 | EXAMPLES: BUILDING LANDSCAPE-LEVEL GOVERNANCE SYSTEMS

### GHANA: THE WETO PLATFORM

This multistakeholder body exercises authority over resource management policies and local landscape projects in the target landscape. It links traditional authorities, civil society groups, and government bodies in a single institution with the goal of approaching natural resource management from a landscape perspective.

It has a three-tiered structure consisting of (a) the Weto Governing Council, (b) the Weto COMDEKS Consultative Body (WCCB), and (c) local groups and associations. The Weto Governing Council consists of representatives from local NGOs, local landowners, traditional authorities, District Assemblies, the Regional Coordinating Council, District Chief Executives, and academic institutions; it develops natural resource management policies for the region, approves management plans, garners political support, and settles disputes. The WCCB consists of representatives from local CSOs, collaborating government ministries, donors, and media, and makes day-to-day management decisions on COMDEKS projects, and monitors project progress. Local groups and associations are involved in project implementation; they range from agroforestry groups and beekeeping groups, to tree nursery and tree planting groups.

The Weto Platform is registered as an association and certified by the Government of Ghana. It has been successful in harmonizing the landscape activities of local civil society groups and bringing them into a peer relationship with local government authorities and service providers, such as the extension services provided by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture.

### ECUADOR: REGIONAL WORKING GROUP AND BIOCORRIDOR ROUNDTABLES IN THE NAPO WATERSHED

From its origin, the COMDEKS Programme in Ecuador was harmonized with the already existing SGP Ecuador programme known as Biocorridors for Living Well. This program seeks to establish biocorridors where ecological connectivity is reestablished, connecting fragmented habitats, incorporating sustainable production activities into the landscape, and fostering community partnerships. To facilitate biocorridor planning in the Amazon region, a regional, multistakeholder working group was formed early on, bringing together community organizations, indigenous peoples groups, NGOs, and local and provincial government authorities, as well as other stakeholders. After significant dialogue and consultation, this working group generated a political agreement among the parties on biocorridor principles and priorities.

To implement this agreement, "Biocorridor Roundtables" were set up for each of the three biocorridors planned for the Amazon region. Each Roundtable produced a Biocorridor Action Plan, with specific guidelines developed in line with SGP and COMDEKS objectives and also aligned with government development and resource management plans. The Biocorridor Roundtables provide forums for direct dialogue between stakeholders such as community organizations, indigenous groups, and the technical staff of municipal and provincial authorities and government ministries. Environmental issues, sustainable production concerns, and local policies of relevance to the biocorridor stakeholders are all taken up by the Roundtables.

The fact that the Biocorridor Action Plans produced by the Roundtables are linked to existing development and land use plans has encouraged high-level buy-in by the government and has allowed the Biocorridor Roundtables to position their activities as key contributions to the government's social and environmental goals, increasing their effectiveness.

Exchange of experiences between COMDEKS project participants, Napo Watershed, SGP/COMDEKS Ecuador

The following questions can be used as a guide to determine **which model of landscape-level body is the most appropriate** in a given landscape, at a given moment in time. The landscape-level governance assessment described in Part 2 of this document can provide the initial information needed for this reflection.

## • Which mandate should the landscape body have?

Clarifying which role the body will take on in the governance of the landscape is an important first step, which will determine the answers to most of the following questions, including the level of formality needed. Depending on what is needed and feasible, the mandate of a landscape body can include:

- Exchange of information and experiences;

- Coordination of activities and development of joint initiatives;

- Raising of funds for joint projects;

- Communication: creating public awareness for the landscape, the strategy and goals; this can include the development of a common identity and/or a "brand" to be used for example for products from the landscape;

- Influencing government decisions and policies through advice or lobbying; and

- A formal decision-making mandate on matters that impact the landscape.
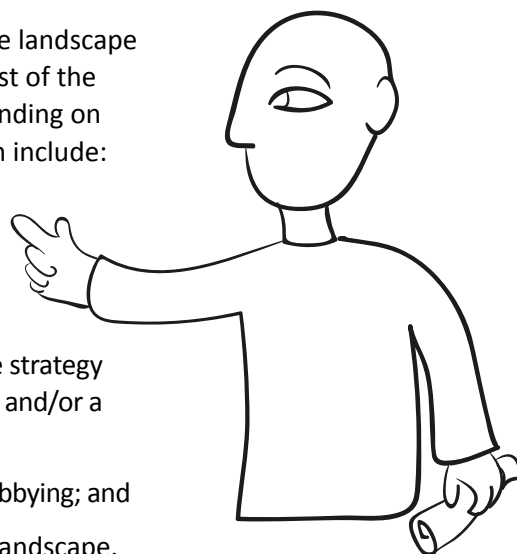
## • What is there already?
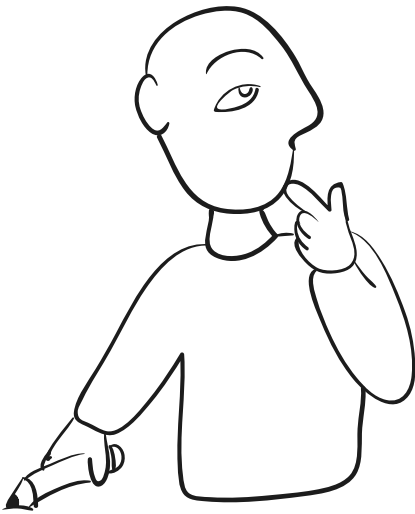
In most landscapes, some form of deliberative spaces or coordination bodies will already exist, even if they are not necessarily organized at the level of the landscape. Before starting the development of a new landscape-level body, it makes sense to have an idea of what is already in place and what works (or not).

Can any of these existing spaces or entities be built upon to create the landscape body? Should they be integrated into the landscape body? Should they be linked to it and how? Examples of such existing spaces include:

- Multi-stakeholder bodies at various levels, for ex. environmental committees at local or provincial level.
- Networks: civil society networks, federations of local user groups, etc.
- Federations of indigenous peoples or traditional community leaders.

## • How should the body be linked to the local level?

When taking a community-based landscape approach, it goes without saying that communities need to be able to participate in the governance of their SEPLS as directly as possibly. This raises a number of questions for the set-up and functioning of a landscape-level body:

- **Who will represent local communities and local interest groups?** Customary authorities, leaders of community-based organizations, and/or specifically designated community representatives can all play a role, the crucial factor is that the chosen representatives are considered legitimate by the community and carry out their role in the community's interest. Civil society organizations can play another central role by bringing expertise, representing certain interests, and supporting community participants to prepare for and attend meetings, but they should not be substituted for direct representation from communities.

- **How will discussions and decisions from the landscape body be conveyed to communities?** Conversely, a landscape-level body can only be effective if the decisions are carried back into the communities and communicated effectively. It should be clear who is in charge of this and how it will be carried out.
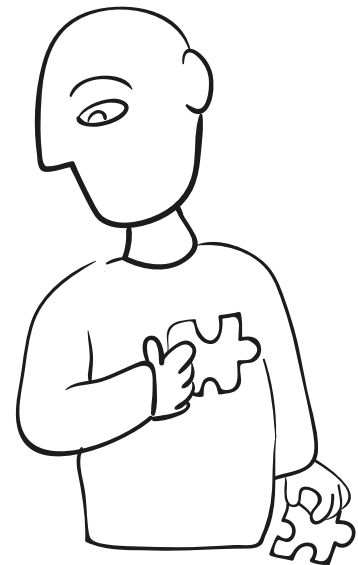
- **Are there barriers for effective community participation and how can they be overcome?** These could include:
  - Geographical or economic barriers, if travel from communities to the meeting place is time and/or resource-intensive;
  - Language barriers, or issues of literacy where written documents such as strategies, plans, or records of decisions are in play; and
  - Power imbalances between participants at meetings of the landscape body, which inhibit open communication.

Not all of these barriers can be easily overcome, but they should be taken into account when building the landscape governance body and, where possible, remedied.
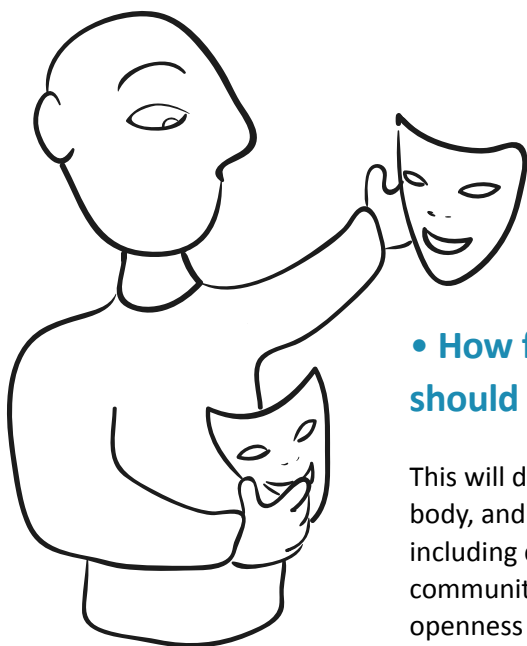
### • How formal should the body be, and which role should the government play?

This will depend on the intended purpose and mandate of the landscape body, and on the current governance realities in the landscape, including current governance arrangements, the level of trust between communities and government institutions, the expected level of openness and buy-in from government officials towards the idea of a landscape approach, etc. Aspects to address include:

- **Does the landscape body need an official mandate** (for example conferred by a government decree or similar), or at least an official seal of approval, to fulfil its mandate? For many of the possible functions listed above, this will not be necessary, and it might make sense to start with a more informal, flexible arrangement to bring key actors together. On the other hand, an official mandate will confer the necessary power to the body to take enforceable decisions, which can make sense further down the line.

- **Which government institutions should be included, and in what function?** Officials from local or provincial administration, and/or government sectors such as forestry, agriculture, fisheries, etc. can play a variety of roles. In more informal bodies, their representatives can serve as advisers and points of contact with the government; or they can play more active roles in decision-making organs of the landscape body; at the most involved level, a provincial or regional administration can even serve as the official host.

# DEVELOPING OR STRENGTHENING INFORMAL NETWORKS

Successful governance of socio-ecological production landscapes does not only rely on establishing formal institutions. It also benefits from mechanisms that create more informal connections between communities and user groups within the landscape. Often, it is difficult for communities to relate to other groups outside of their working domain. A landscape approach with a joint planning process and support for local actions can provide a mechanism for creating larger communities of interest and connection over the landscape. These networks are essential if a larger "landscape community" is to develop, taking ownership of a joint landscape strategy and creating connections and synergies among its activities.[28]

Networks of community groups such as, for example, producers groups, allow their members to learn from each other, to join forces for market access or to realize economies of scale for transformation activities. Other forms of networks can include broader civil society networks, which also serve to share information and lessons and to jointly influence policy; or federations of traditional community leaders, which can give more visibility to customary governance systems and their importance for the landscape.

These informal networks can also, by disseminating information, building their members' capacities, and developing joint positions, help communities and their organizations to take part more effectively in formal governance processes. As mentioned previously, power imbalances are a main challenge for good landscape governance, and well-organized networks can play a part in reducing these imbalances. Support such as developing management and negotiation skills, legal empowerment and other actions mentioned above, can also be very useful at the level of networks. Informal networks can also become a counterpart for formal governance processes, enabling members to join forces and articulate their demands for advocacy and to propose reforms.

**BOX 10 | EXAMPLES: INFORMAL NETWORKS**

In the **Weto Landscape in Ghana,** the landscape approach helped to revive the Ho West Beekeepers Association, which now provides support to communities throughout the landscape to establish apiaries, and support standardization and marketing of the honey. Supported grantees also facilitated the formation of a Weto landowners association, which has a seat on the governing council of the Weto Platform.

In the **Laborec-Uh region in Slovakia,** a local farmers market was established, and a network was formed among participating small farmers to share experiences and help generate new ideas for marketing local products.

In the **Gilbel Bige Catchment in Ethiopia,** a landscape-wide CBO network was established to share experiences. Within each of the four districts, grantees meet regularly with the coordination of local government to interact, and twice since projects began all grantees within the landscape have come together to exchange experiences, providing the initial impulse to create a landscape-wide network of organizations and communities with shared goals under the Gilgel Gibe Landscape Strategy.

Around **Lake Issyk-Kul in Kyrgyzstan**, a network was created among NGOs and CBOs participating in COMDEKS activities, which continues to serve as an exchange platform through workshops and knowledge fairs.

In the **Central Selenge in Mongolia,** partner organizations have formed an association, the Mongol Satoyama Group, to unite and coordinate their future work. They jointly built a community development centre to convene community dialogues, meetings and trainings.

In the **Napo River Watershed in Ecuador,** SGP and COMDEKS specifically encouraged the formation of CBO networks to maximize impacts, which improved landscape connectivity and demonstrated to local community organizations the benefits of joining together in partnerships with the aim of maximizing their impact on environmental management, economic development and participation in policy-making. Also, ahead of the project work, several federations of indigenous peoples were organized, including the Kijus Association of Kichwa Communities (known as ACOKI); Cotundo Union of Kichwa communities (UNCOKIC); and the Kichwa organizations of Loreto (OCKIL)

These are only a few examples: informal networks of participating organisations have emerged in many of the 20 landscapes supported through COMDEKS. Some of these networks are already taking steps to consolidate themselves and become the starting point for larger, more permanent landscape governance bodies in the future.

As a first step, a dialogue and coordination body can be created in the frame of a landscape initiative or programme, and include the actors involved in its implementation. The COMDEKS experience shows that such initiatives can play a seminal role: the fact that a variety of stakeholders within a landscape are jointly responsible for formulating a single area-wide landscape strategy means that the parties to this strategy are already aware of each other and their interdependency, and ultimately, the need to govern the landscape's resources cooperatively.[29] Then, as the concept of the socio-ecologic production landscape as a unit becomes more widely accepted and actors increase their collaboration, the body can be expanded to include actors beyond the original programme, and if necessary and possible, formalized and conferred an official mandate.



Information posters on GMO and biosafety issues, SGP/COMDEKS Kyrgyzstan

# 2.5. Influencing law and policy

The legal and policy framework determines to a large extent what is possible in terms of landscape governance, and which roles communities and their organizations can play. However, sectoral laws and policies rarely take into account the complexities of multi-purpose landscapes, and are usually developed in a top-down manner by authorities far removed from the landscape, which can result in provisions that are inadequate for the outcomes sought by landscape actors. Landscape-level governance bodies can help to influence policy-making, but so can informal networks, with the necessary support, by exerting pressure on decision-makers. Importantly, agencies that fund and/or coordinate landscape initiatives, such as GEF SGP in the case of the COMDEKS programme, can use their connections at the national level to further bridge the distance between the local, landscape and national levels. Concrete experiences with collaborative landscape management can bring insights on gaps or flaws in national legislation and can be used to inform policy reform, for example to obtain more decentralization and devolution of management and resource rights.

**BOX 11 | EXAMPLES: INFLUENCE OF LANDSCAPE PROGRAMMES ON LAW AND POLICY**

In **Ghana,** a new Wildlife Resource Management Bill was drafted during the implementation of the Weto landscape strategy. UNDP and GEF SGP were able to share experiences from the landscape concerning the declaration and management of Community Resource Management Areas and to provide advice on the reform of the law.

In **Kyrgyzstan,** one of the COMDEKS projects around Lake Issyk-Kul specifically aimed at strengthening the legislative framework on biosafety and the regulation of GMO products. The implementing NGO, CSR Central Asia, supported the development of the framework by providing expert input, organizing information meetings with stakeholders and reviewing the draft law.

Landscape initiatives can include the following actions and support measures to influence law and policy:

- Perform an analysis of the current legal framework at the beginning of a landscape initiative, if possible as part of a landscape-level governance assessment.
- Share the results with local communities in the landscape, especially concerning their rights and obligations regarding land and natural resources.
- Bring the lessons learned through the implementation of landscape strategies to the attention of policy-makers.
- Be aware of planned policy and legal reforms and provide specific recommendations based on the experiences in the landscape.
- Assist local communities and their organizations in their efforts to advocate for the inclusion of their rights in law and policy.

## BOX 12 | ENABLING LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

Ideally, legal frameworks should provide enabling conditions for community landscape governance by:

- Providing options for the official recognition of landscape-level governance bodies.
- Devolving decision-making about natural resources to the local level as much as possible, and to institutions close to the landscape level (e.g. provincial or regional government).
- Providing incentives for sustainable production in sector policies (such as agriculture, forestry, fishing etc.).
- Recognizing and supporting community efforts to manage resources in their landscape, including for example community conserved areas, traditional management practices, seed varieties etc.
- Recognizing the customary institutions and decision-making processes of local communities.
- Providing options for the legal recognition of community rules (such as the registration of by-laws).
- Recognizing community rights over land and natural resources, including communal land tenure, as well as procedural rights such as Free, Prior and Informed Consent.



A local development volunteer explaining the history and aspirations of the people in the landscape during the baseline assessment, SGP/COMDEKS Malawi

Seaweed farmer in a mangrove restoration area, Semau Island, SGP/COMDEKS Indonesia. Photo credit: Harry Jonas

# Self-Assessment Tool

# 1. Why and how to use this tool

## GOALS OF THE ASSESSMENT

This governance self-assessment tool is meant to be used by local communities and other actors who want to understand, and where possible improve, the current governance systems in their landscape. The tool will allow you to get a better idea of who takes the decisions influencing the landscape and how, which institutions hold the actual power, authority and responsibility, and who is – or should be – accountable.

The goals to conduct such an assessment are:

- To understand and document what the de facto governance situation is in the landscape – meaning the real, on-the-ground situation, not only what official laws say. This includes:
  - The institutions, decision-making processes, rules and laws, and values that influence how people make decision about resources in the landscape; and
  - Formal government systems, but also traditional and new community systems, and informal systems of community groups and civil society.

- To describe what works well in these systems and what does not: do they contribute to the resilience of the landscape? If not, then why?

- To discuss what should be improved in the future and how.
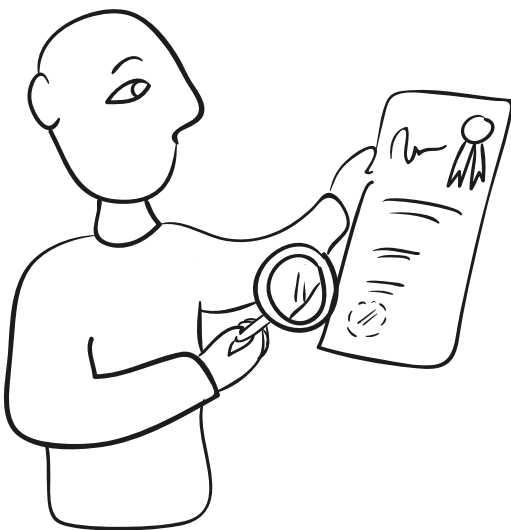
## WHY ASSESS GOVERNANCE?

The assessment will provide landscape actors with the necessary information to inform future action:

**At the local level:**
- What is already there? What values, rules, institutions need to be made more visible, need to be strengthened or improved?

- What is missing? What new organisations, rules, agreements should be created?

**At the landscape level:**
- Which groups of actors and institutions are present in the landscape, which kind of powers and influence do they have? Who should be involved, and how, in future landscape-level governance?

**Beyond the landscape:**
- Which laws and policies need to be improved at national or provincial level to create positive conditions for collaborative landscape governance?

## WHO IS THIS TOOL FOR?

This is a self-assessment tool, which means that it can be used by community actors and their supporting organizations. It is not a tool for expert assessments or in-depth studies of landscape governance dynamics. Nor is the tool designed to generate data, but is rather a tool for self-reflection, and for taking action based on the results.

## WHEN TO USE THIS TOOL?

The landscape governance assessment can be useful in any situation when communities want to understand and improve the governance of their landscape. However, it should if possible be used as part of a strategic landscape approach as described in Part 1. The assessment should form part of the baseline assessment at the beginning of the process. The resulting ideas for action can then be fed directly into the landscape strategy and planning. It can also be useful to revisit the results in the ex-post assessment of the landscape strategy, to see how the governance setting has evolved.

## THE METHODS: A PARTICIPATORY SELF-ASSESSMENT IN A WORKSHOP SETTING

The process described in this tool consists of:

• A series of steps to assess and evaluate the main aspects of a landscape's governance system;

• Questions to be posed at each step; and

• One or two participatory methods or exercises to help answer these questions.

The steps are divided into four consecutive phases:[30]

• **PHASE 1: Setting the scene,** where participants review what they know about their landscape, and are introduced to the concept of landscape governance.

• **PHASE 2: The assessment,** in which the steps help participants to describe, discuss and understand the governance reality in their landscape.

• **PHASE 3: The evaluation,** where participants use the insights from phase 2 to determine how well the current governance system is functioning, and what needs to be improved.

• **PHASE 4: Planning for action,** which caps of the assessment with a discussion of concrete ideas to improve the governance system of the landscape. This phase can be kept at a relatively general level to feed ideas into a future planning process.

This process is designed to be conducted in a workshop setting at the landscape level. Depending on the size and complexity of the landscape, the number and type of participants, the time and resources available etc. this could stretch over one to several days.

At the end of the process, the participants will have gained a better understanding of the governance realities in their landscape, will have had important exchanges of perspectives and discussions, and developed ideas about how to address key challenges related to governance.
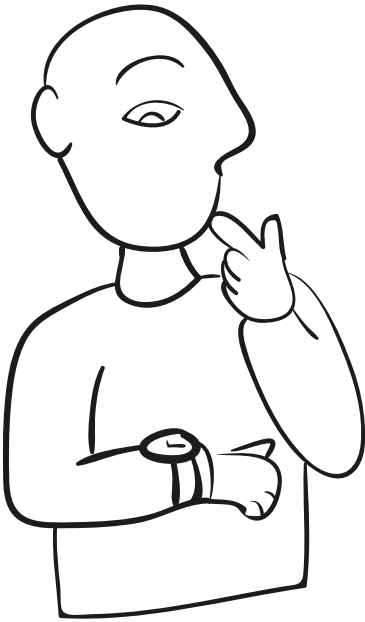
## WHEN TO CONDUCT THE ASSESSMENT?

The ideas for action are meant to feed into a landscape strategy and planning process such as the one developed with support from the COMDEKS programme.

Ideally, this assessment should therefore be conducted some time during the assessment and planning phase of the landscape process. It is helpful if the participants have already discussed and agreed on basic issues such as the boundaries of their landscape, it's main resources and challenges. If not, this discussion should take place at the start of the governance assessment.

In any case, if conducted at the beginning of a landscape process, the governance assessment should be conducted before a landscape strategy and plan is developed, so that the insights and ideas for action can feed into it.

The assessment can also be repeated, or even conducted for the first time, at the end of a planning cycle or programme, as part of an ex-post assessment process. It can for example serve to look at new governance structures that have been created by the programme and discuss how well they are functioning.

## WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?

If a general baseline assessment and/or planning process for the landscape is already underway, this process should involve the same actors. Ideally it should involve representatives of all the relevant communities in the landscape. If possible, there should be community authorities present, representatives from a variety community organisations and groups, and where relevant, their supporting civil society organisations. It would also be good to strive for a balance or at least representation of gender and age groups from the communities.

Other actors such as government agencies, research organisations or the private sector can be involved as well, depending on the situation of the landscape and of the landscape process. While discussions between only community representatives can provide a safer and more comfortable space of exchange, there are advantages to involve at least the relevant government authorities and administrative bodies. These actors bring other levels of information to the table, and it is important that they achieve a better understanding of the importance of community participation in landscape governance as soon as possible.
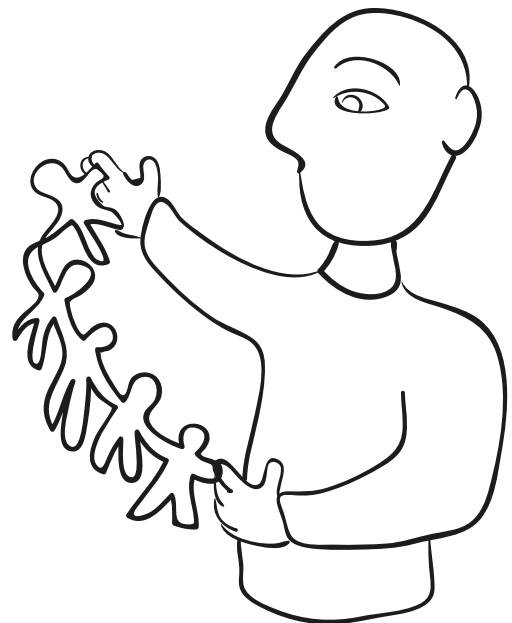
# WHICH INFORMATION AND OUTSIDE EXPERTISE IS NEEDED?

Since **maps** play an important role in the assessment, it is useful to gather existing maps and spatial information beforehand. Previous maps are not absolutely necessary if the participants bring enough knowledge to sketch a broad geographical representation of the landscape or the community's territory. However, if you do have more precise maps at your disposal, this will increase the level of details and accuracy of your discussions and results. It is therefore useful to look for topographic maps, as well as information on ecosystems, land use and administrative boundaries. One piece of information that is very useful for governance discussions, but often harder to obtain, is information on land tenure.

Apart from maps, you will also need information on the relevant **policies, laws and regulations** that influence the management and use of the landscape's resources. If possible, you should enlist the help of a legal expert, or of someone sufficiently familiar with the legal framework, to compile an overview and to present it during the assessment.

Early on in the assessment, the **concept of governance** and its different aspects has to be presented to the participants, and discussed to gain a common understanding. The key points are explained in the guidance note accompanying this tool, but ideally it would be good to find someone with some understanding of the subject to provide this input as well.

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

For the participatory exercises, it is important to be able to visualize the results in plenary, so that everybody can see them. We therefore recommend that you use the following materials, if available:

- Large sheets of chart paper ("brown paper") to write and draw on
- Pin boards to hang the chart paper, if not available you can use walls or windows
- Colour markers
- Cards to write on: they should be large enough to fit 2-3 lines of large handwriting. If you don't have prefabricated cards, you can take A4 sheets of paper and divide them into three pieces
- Pins to pin the cards to the boards; if you are working on walls etc. you can use blu-tack (a kind of sticky, easily removable gum) or adhesive tape instead
- As an alternative to the cards and pins, you can use large post-it notes – but see the note above about the size
- Colour stickers, if you can find them
- Flipcharts if available

# WHO WILL FACILITATE?

While this is meant to be a self-assessment tool that can be used by the actors of a landscape, most of the steps will need some kind of facilitation to manage the discussions, organize the results, and ensure that all participants have their say. The quality of assessment will be partly dependent on the facilitator's skills, integrity and commitment.

The facilitator can be a staff member of the organisation supporting the landscape process (such as GEF SGP), of an NGO working in the landscape, or an external facilitator familiar with community-level work and natural resources and livelihoods issues. The advantage of an external facilitator is their ability to remain neutral and to view a situation objectively when there are different interest groups present.
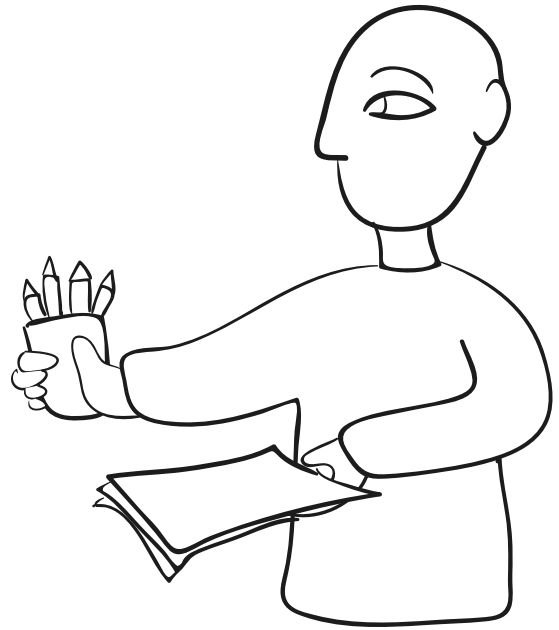
## BOX 13 | WHO IS A FACILITATOR?

A facilitator is a guide to help participants move through a process. The facilitator does not give opinions, but draws out opinions and ideas of the participants. S/he focuses on how people participate in the process of learning or planning, and not just what gets achieved. A facilitator is neutral and does not take sides.

A facilitator is needed to ensure that each tool is lead well, and so that the process is impartial and productive. Qualities of a good facilitator include active listening, respecting culture and traditions, empathy and trust building, clarity and consistency, confidence and taking notice of changes in energy and tone of the group.

The facilitator will have to first familiarise her/himself with the assessment and tools to and understand their objective. At certain points during the assessment, the facilitator can invite any one participant to co-facilitate, i.e. draw on a chart noting down key points, where appropriate, to increase involvement and ownership in the process.

# PHASE 1 Setting the Scene

## PURPOSE

Phase 1 serves to kick off discussions, and to provide the foundation and basic direction for the further steps in the assessment.

First, participants will describe the main features and resources of the landscape, based on an existing map or by drawing a simple sketch map.

Then, the concept of governance is introduced, and linked to the challenges in the landscape. These two discussions are meant for participants to jointly recall the situation of the landscape, and to start building a common understanding of governance.

**TABLE 2: STEPS FOR PHASE 1, SETTING THE SCENE**

| STEPS | QUESTIONS |
|-------|-----------|
| 1.1.  Reviewing the landscape | What are the landscape's boundaries and its main features and resources? |
| 1.2.  Understanding governance | What is governance and why is it important?<br><br>Which challenges in the community or in the landscape have to do with governance? |

## ACTIVITIES

- **Mapping or reviewing** the landscape and its resources
- **Input** on governance and its elements
- **Discussion** of key challenges and their link to governance
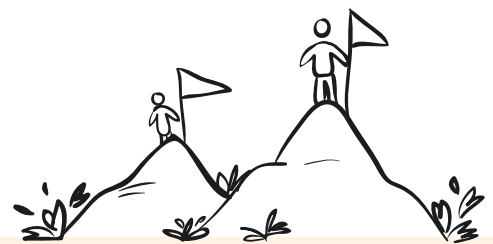
> **BOX 14 | ACTION FLAGS**
>
> As you move through the steps of the assessment and evaluation, challenges of the current governances setting will become apparent, and participants might emit ideas for solutions. It is important to take note of these ideas, without getting side-tracked by the discussions before completing the assessment process. The facilitator should therefore take note of any ideas for action during the discussions. These can be done either by noting them on a flipchart or by flagging them on the chart papers that participants use for their results. Notes or cards of a different color, post-its or stickers can all serve as such "action flags".

# 1.1. Mapping or reviewing the landscape and its resources

This introductory step will kick off the discussions, and establish a common understanding of the landscape and its main resources. If a mapping exercise has already been performed as part of the landscape approach (for example through landscape identification and baseline assessment), it is enough to display the resulting maps. Volunteers from the audience can come up and describe the boundaries, main features and most important resources of the landscape, with additions from the plenary.

If no map exists yet, it is enough for the purpose of this assessment to produce a simple sketch map by using the method below.

## Method: Sketch Map

**PURPOSE:** This tool assists participants in geographically identifying the most important natural resources of their landscape.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Large chart paper, colored markers, topographic or other base map of the landscape if available.

**PROCESS:**
**a)** In plenary, initiate a discussion about key landmarks to be included in the map, such as rivers, coastlines, roads, houses, forests, farmland, etc. Any participant who volunteers can begin drawing these out on the chart. If a topographic or administrative map etc. is available, the resources and their information can be charted out over that map.

**b**) Divide the participants into smaller groups (max. 10 people). If you have used an existing map, you will need to make copies beforehand and distribute them to the groups. Each groups starts by making a copy of the basis sketch map, and then continues by marking the important natural features and resources on the map. Encourage people to include resources that have value for livelihoods, for economic income, and cultural or spiritual value.

**c)** After the group work, hold a discussion with all participants to consolidate information from each group, verify it with all and then chart it out on a final map.

---

**BOX 15 | EXAMPLES OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND FEATURES TO INCLUDE ON THE MAP:**

• Rivers, lakes and other water bodies
• Broad categories of natural ecosystems: Forests, mangroves, wetlands, grasslands,…
• Fields (can be detailed by crop if you have the time)
• Pastureland
• Medicinal plants or other important forest products (where can they be found?)
• Sacred sites or other sites of cultural significance

FIGURE 6: SKETCH MAP



SEA
MANGROVES
FOREST
FIELDS
PASTURE LAND
VILLAGE
WETLANDS
ROAD
BRIDGE
RIVER
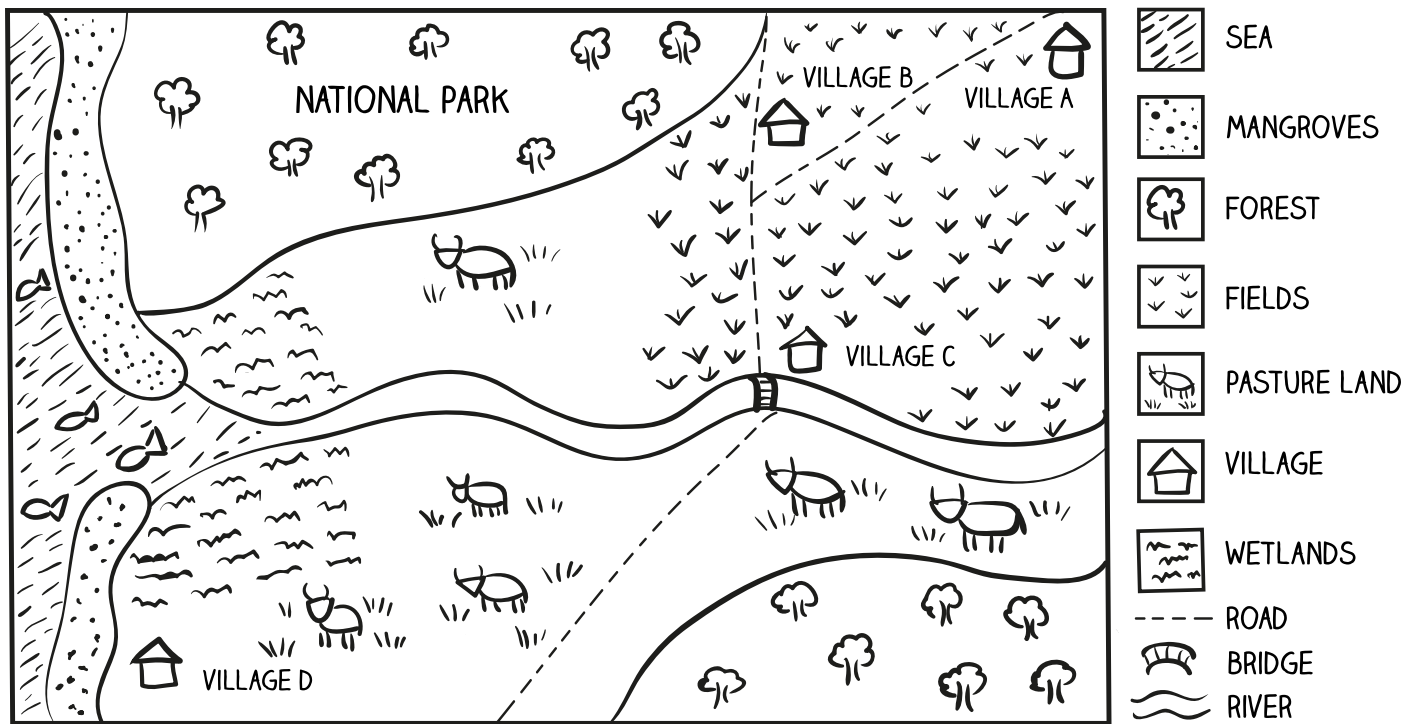




Examples of Community Sketch Map.

# 1.2. Understanding Governance

After discussing the current situation of the landscape, this step introduces the topic of the assessment: governance. It is important that all participants have a common understanding of what governance is, before assessing their governance system in the following steps.

## INTRODUCING GOVERNANCE

**Input: what is governance?**
This is one of the moments in this assessment where a facilitator or an external resource person will give an input. The input-giver takes the participants through the foundations of what landscape governance is about, its elements, and the principles of good governance. Ideally a person with some knowledge of the issues should provide this input, but we provide an outline of the basic concepts in the **Guidance Note,** in **Part 1** of this document.

## MAKING THE LINK WITH CURRENT CHALLENGES

## Method: Rich Picture

**PURPOSE:** A rich picture is a drawing of a situation that illustrates the main elements and relationships that need to be considered. It is based on the idea that 'a picture tells a thousand words'. All members get a chance to express and visualize the connections of their challenges, thus obtaining a systemic overview of the situation. In this case, you will use the method as a starting point to discuss how your challenges are related to governance.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Charts, coloured markers

**PROCESS:**
**a)** Form smaller groups. Each group selects a situation or challenge related to resource governance that they are concerned about.

**b)** Each group then begins to draw a rich picture of this situation on their charts. The picture can include places, actors, resources and influences. People are encouraged to be as creative as they like, using drawings, symbols, text etc.

Once each group has completed their picture, there will be a round of display and explanation for each chart. After each presentation, participants will discuss what the identified situations or challenges have to do with governance. The following questions can guide the discussion:

• What are the causes of the challenges that you identified?

• Which decisions led to this situation?

• Who took those decisions and how?

• How does this relate to the concepts of governance that you heard about in the presentation?

## PHASE 2     Assessing governance

## PURPOSE

In phase 2, the participants conduct the actual assessment of the governance processes in the landscape. Using the common vision and the information that was generated in the previous stage, participants will go in depth to understand and describe their current governance system including its actors, rules and decision-making processes, and its historical and cultural roots.

**TABLE 3: STEPS FOR PHASE 2: ASSESSING GOVERNANCE**

| STEPS | QUESTIONS |
| --- | --- |
| 2.1. Landscape benefits | Which ecosystem services does the landscape provide? Who benefits from them? |
| 2.2. Actors and institutions | Who are the relevant groups, organizations, decision-making bodies? |
| | What are their roles, rights, interests and powers concerning land and resources? |
| 2.3. Rules and laws | What are some of the community rules concerning access and use of resources? |
| | What are the official laws and regulations? |
| | Are these rules and laws known, are the being followed, how are they being enforced? |
| 2.4 Governance diversity | Who has the main authority over different areas and resources in the landscape? |
| | Who has rights (tenure, use, access) to land and resources? |
| 2.5. Decision-making | How are main decisions over the landscape made? Who is involved, at what level and how? |

## ACTIVITIES

- **Identifying** the benefits from the landscape
- **Listing and analysing** the actors and institutions
- **Input** on the relevant government laws and regulations
- **Listing and discussing** community and government rules and laws
- **Mapping** areas of different governance types, identifying rights
- **Sketching** who takes which decisions and how

## 2.1. Landscape benefits

In this step, participants list the most important ecosystems services provided by the landscape, and the benefits that these bring to communities and other actors. Getting an overview of these benefits will help you to understand the variety of interests of actors in the landscape; and some of the motivations behind decisions that they take about resource use and conservation.

## Method: Benefits Assessment

**PURPOSE:** This method serves to have a guided discussion on the benefits that the landscape provides, while also starting to get an overview of the variety of actors that depend on, or have an interest in, the landscape.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Large chart papers, coloured markers, cards or post-its

**PROCESS:**
You will use the template below to list the ecosystems services from the landscape, their level of importance and who benefits from them.
**a)** Transfer the template below to a large chart paper (use more than one if needed)

**b)** Either divide the participants in groups and ask them to fill the table for a few of the services at a time, or conduct the discussion in plenary, with the facilitator noting the results in the table.

You can add services if you feel that any are missing, or remove others that are not relevant.

The categories of actors are very broad and you can also amend them to reflect the situation in your landscape, or to make finer distinctions. For each service, discuss whether it is important for the actors mentioned and mark the level of benefits that this actor derives from the service: 0 = no benefits / 1 = some benefits / 2 = high benefits. These benefits can be in terms of livelihoods, economic benefits, or cultural/spiritual etc.



The Gamri Watershed landscape, SGP/COMDEKS Bhutan.

**TABLE 4: ASSESSING LANDSCAPE BENEFITS**

# ASSESSING LANDSCAPE BENEFITS

| SERVICE | | COMMUNITIES | OTHER PEOPLE IN THE LANDSCAPE | NATIONAL POPULATION | GOVERNMENT | INDUSTRY | GLOBAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **FOOD** | AGRICULTURE | | | | | | |
| | LIVESTOCK | | | | | | |
| | FISHERY | | | | | | |
| | HUNTING | | | | | | |
| | WILDPLANTS | | | | | | |
| **RAW MATERIAL** | WOOD | | | | | | |
| | OTHERS | | | | | | |
| **MEDICINAL PLANTS** | | | | | | | |
| **WATER** | | | | | | | |
| **REGULATION** | CLIMATE | | | | | | |
| | EROSION PREVENTION | | | | | | |
| | COASTAL PROTECTION | | | | | | |
| | FLOOD PREVENTION | | | | | | |
| | WATER REGULATION | | | | | | |
| | POLLINATION | | | | | | |
| **CONSERVATION** | CONSERVATION OF WILD SPECIES | | | | | | |
| | AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY | | | | | | |
| **CULTURAL** | HISTORICAL & CULTURAL VALUE | | | | | | |
| | SPIRITUAL VALUE | | | | | | |
| | RECREATION & TOURISM | | | | | | |

# 2.2. Actors and institutions

In this step, you will list and analyse the actors, groups and institutions that take decisions about the landscape. You will include the actors within the landscape, both those at community level and others; and actors at higher levels, or outside of the landscape, but who still have an influence.
You will discuss for each actor:

- Their level of influence;
- Their relationships; and
- Their interests, roles, powers and capacities.

To bring together and discuss this information, you will use two methods:

- **The social diagram,** which is used to map the actors, their influence and their relationships.
- **The actor analysis,** which goes into more details to better understand the most important actors.

## Method: Social Diagram

**PURPOSE:** This method is used to identify actors/stakeholders, analyse their importance and relationships, and present the results visually.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Large chart papers, coloured markers, cards or post-its

**PROCESS:**
**a)** It can be interesting to conduct this exercise in groups of similar actors in parallel. This not only allows all participants to have their say, the results can also be used to compare and contrast the perceptions of different groups of actors.

**b)** Start with drawing a large circle on the chart paper, representing the landscape. Then draw a slightly smaller circle inside the first one, representing the community level. Leave enough space on the paper to place some actors outside of the landscape.

**c)** Participants will write actors they identify on cards or post-its and place them within the circles (actors inside the community or the landscape) or outside of it (actors outside of the landscape, but who have an influence). Encourage them to concentrate on:

- Institutions, organizations and groups – and powerful individual actors, (such as the village chief, the mayor, the custodian of a sacred forest, a powerful business owner, etc.)  if needed.
- Actors at all levels: local, landscape, national.
- Actors from all systems of governance and sectors: government, customary and informal systems; civil society; private sector.

**d)** They will then draw a circle around each actor, which represents their level of influence – the bigger the circle, the greater the influence. Relationships between actors can be shown with lines.

**e)** If you have split the participants in groups, each group will present their diagram. At the end, compare and discuss the differences in perception between the groups.

FIGURE 7: SOCIAL DIAGRAM
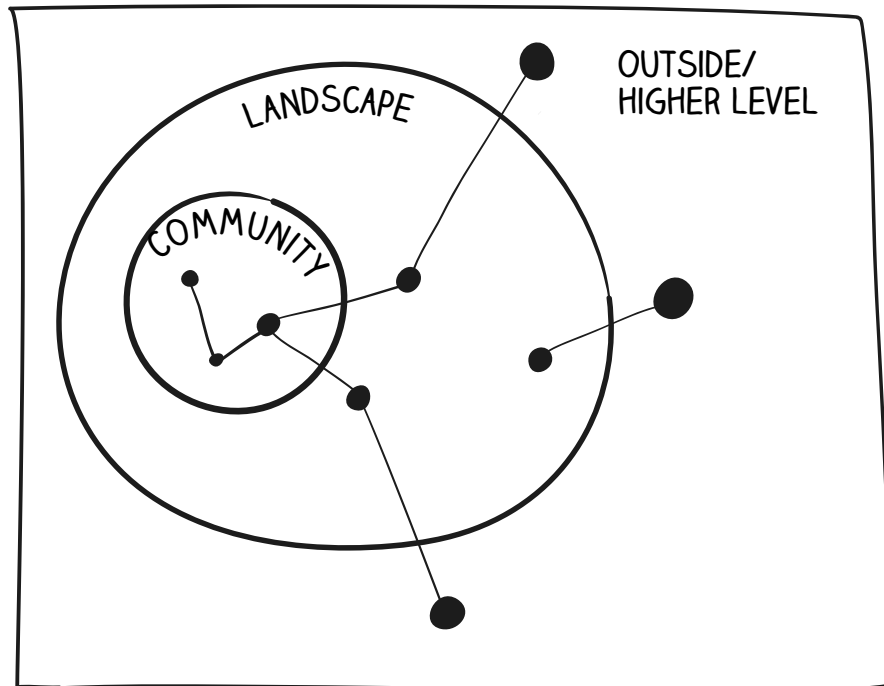


## Method: Actor Analysis

**PURPOSE:** This method will allow you to further deepen your analysis of the actors identified in the social diagram. It is used to discuss the current roles and interests of the main actors, but also their power and their capacities, which provides insight on their potential future roles in a landscape governance system.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Large chart papers, colored markers

**PROCESS:**
**a)** Preparation: draw the template below on a large chart paper.

**b)** The participants look at the social diagram, and decide which actors are the most important to analyse further.

**c)** You can divide participants into groups, each group working on a few of the actors.

**d)** Participants discuss the characteristics of the actors chosen in their groups, then the results are shared in plenary to get a complete picture.

**TABLE 5**

## ANALYSIS OF LANDSCAPE ACTORS

| ACTORS | INTERESTS | ROLE | POWERS | CAPACITIES |
|--------|-----------|------|--------|------------|
| ACTOR 1 | | | | |
| ACTOR 2 | | | | |
| ... | ... | ... | ... | ... |

You can use the **diagram in Chapter 1.2** of the guidance note which describes the elements of landscape governance, and the examples in the table below, as a source of inspiration. The interests, roles, powers and capacities of each actor will however depend on the reality in your landscape:

**TABLE 6**

# EXAMPLES OF LANDSCAPE ACTORS

| ACTORS | INTERESTS | ROLE | POWERS | CAPACITIES |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL NGO | Conservation of natural resources | Technical support to the local community<br><br>Management of conservation area | Revenue generating (fundraising)<br><br>Planning<br><br>Mobilizing<br><br>Know-how | Technical capacities on conservation issues and project management<br><br>Trust of the local community |
| TRADITIONAL CHIEF, COUNCIL OF ELDERS | Local development in the community | Making decisions, enforcing local rules | Regulatory<br><br>Convening | Capacity to take and enforce decisions<br><br>Knowledge of traditional rules |
| FARMERS COOPERATIVE | Agricultural production<br><br>Access to land | Coordination of production and market access | Convening and mobilizing<br><br>Know-how | Knowledge on natural resources of the area, farming techniques, plant varieties |
| GOVERNMENT FOREST DEPARTMENT | Regulating access and use of state forests | Control and enforcement of forest laws<br><br>Technical services | Planning and regulatory<br><br>Know-how | Technical expertise on forestry<br><br>Agents for control and enforcement |
| COCOA COMPANY | Expand production | Buy cocoa from local producers | Buying and spending powers | Knowledge on Cocoa production and markets |

# 2.3. Laws and Rules

This step explores the various laws and rules that regulate the use and management of the landscape. This includes governmental laws and regulations from national to local level, and the laws and rules of local communities, customary or new. The analysis can be done in four steps:

- Participants list the relevant government laws and policies that they know about.
- Facilitators or an outside expert provide input on the legal framework, to complete the information.
- Participants list the customary laws and community rules, agreements etc. that they know about.
- The list of laws and rules is analysed together to discuss their origin and implementation.

## Method: participatory legal analysis

**PURPOSE:** This exercise is used to show the variety of rules and laws that direct decision-making in the landscape, from government to customary to informal, from various sectors and levels. It prompts a discussion on how rules are developed and why they are being followed or not.

**MATERIAL NEEDED:** Large chart paper, cards or post-its, colored markers

**PROCESS:**
**a)** Draw the template below on a large chat paper and put it at the front of the room.

**b)** Brainstorm in the plenary: which laws, policies, regulation do participants know that have an influence on the landscape's management? Think about different sectors (agriculture, forestry, fisheries...but also energy, infrastructure etc.) and different levels (national, provincial).

- You can mention entire laws, or specific rules (such as "interdiction to hunt wildlife in protected areas") that seem relevant. Write them down on cards.
- Someone with legal expertise OR a good overview of the legal framework should be present in the room to note down the laws and regulations that are mentioned on cards, with their proper names.
- Pin the cards to the template, either under "rules" for specific rules or under "source" for the name of an entire law or policy
- The idea is not to be exhaustive here, but to get an overview of people's knowledge of the law.

**c)** Once all cards are placed, someone with knowledge of the legal system gives a general presentation of the relevant legal frameworks. This should NOT be a highly technical and detailed input on the content of all the laws, but an overview. As the presentation is given, someone should note the laws that were not mentioned before, if any, and pin them to the board.

**d)** After the presentation, participants are asked to divide into groups and have a brainstorming session on the local rules and agreements in their community; or in communities they work with / are familiar with. Again do not try to be exhaustive but try to come up with a number of existing rules, including, where relevant:

- Traditional rules about resource use, interdictions, religious or spiritual taboos.
- Newer rules concerning the use or conservation of resources, developed by the community authority or by community groups and associations.
- Agreements such as conservation agreements about certain community areas, etc.

**e)** The resulting cards are added to the list of rules and laws on the board in a plenary session. The groups give a very short explanation about the rule. They also write down under "source" where the rule comes from: is it traditional to the community, part of its culture? Was it decreed by a community authority? Was it developed by a community association?

**f)** After the group presentation, the plenary will look at the board together and discuss the last columns. Depending on time you can do this for all the laws and rules listed, or only for some – make sure you choose some government laws, and 1-2 rules from each working group. This can be an open discussion and it does not need to end in a consensus. People should feel free to think and reflect on why certain rules work why others do not.

**TABLE 7:**

## PARTICIPATORY LEGAL ANALYSIS

| RULE | SOURCE | WHO ENFORCES IT? | IS IT WELL KNOWN? | IS IT BEING FOLLOWED? WHY? |
|------|--------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Logging in state forests only with permit | National Law on Forestry | | | |
| No burning on farms next to the forest | Provincial decree on bush fires | | | |
| Fishing is prohibited on certain days | Traditional community rule | | | |
| No use of chemical pesticides | By-laws of community farmers association | | | |
| … | … | … | … | … |

## 2.4. Governance Diversity

As you have seen in the previous steps, decisions concerning the landscape are made by a variety of actors. The resulting governance arrangements are rarely homogenous across a landscape and one can distinguish distinct areas governed primarily by different actors under different arrangements. In order to simplify this often complex reality, these arrangements can be grouped into four main governance types:

- Governance by government – at various levels and by different agencies
- Shared governance – between various actors
- Private governance – usually by the landholders, including individuals or companies
- Governance by indigenous peoples or local communities

A diversity of governance arrangements in a landscape is important, as it ensures that a variety of actors are involved in decision-making over land and resources, and because it makes the system more resilient. In this step, you will distinguish who holds the primary authority and responsibility of different areas in your landscape, and how this correlates with the rights of actors to land and resources in those areas.

## Method: Spatial Analysis of Governance

**PURPOSE:** This tool is used to visualise the governance diversity in your landscape i.e. under what kind of different governance regimes the various areas within the landscape currently are.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** map (ideally with information on land use and administrative boundaries), post-its, coloured markers, coloured stickers, etc.

**PROCESS:**
For this exercise, you can use the map that you looked at or sketched at the beginning of the assessment. However, any additional mapping information that you have at your disposal would be useful, especially maps containing information on land use, administrative boundaries, and where relevant, territories of indigenous peoples, ancestral lands, etc.
a) Select a small group of volunteers from the participants, who will do the actual drawing with instructions from the rest of the group.

b) Using the available information, draw a layer on a base map of areas with relatively homogenous governance arrangements.
 - Start with the main areas of ecosystems of land use; forests, agricultural areas, water bodies, wetlands, etc.
 - While you will not have all the necessary information, you can use what you have and ask yourselves, for example: is this a state forest? Next to it, a community forest or a government protected area? A sacred forest? Community grazing lands? Private agricultural land? A public body of water?
 - Add administrative boundaries and the boundaries of traditional territories.
 - You can draw rough boundaries on the map, or if you are not sure at all you can stick post-its or labels to designate various areas.

c) For each area, try to determine:
 - Land and resource rights: who officially owns the land? Do the same actors own the resources? Who has the right to use the resources? If this is different for different resources, take note of that.
 - Are there any traditional land and resource rights over this area that differ from the official rights discussed before?
 - Who occupies and uses the land and resources in reality?
 - Who takes the major decisions about the land and resources?

d) Based on this discussion yourselves: who primarily holds authority or makes decisions over this area? This is not necessarily the same as who owns the area! Try and mark each area with a colour corresponding to one of the four governance types below.
 - Governance by government – is the area under sole government control?
 - Shared governance between several actors – is the area for example owned by the government, but occupied and used by various actors? Do these actors take decisions together, or do they simply all take decisions over different aspects of the area?
 - Private governance – is the area privately owned and under the sole control of the owner?
 - Governance by indigenous peoples and/or local communities – is this an indigenous territory, or an area under the collective control of a local community (irrespective of who officially owns the land)?

# 2.5. Decision-making Processes

Finally, after mapping out the relevant actors and institutions, laws and rules, and the diversity of governance arrangements in the landscape, this step focuses on decision-making processes. The goal of this step is to understand who takes the major decisions about the landscape's resources, how the decisions are made, and who is involved.

To this end, you will:
• Choose a few major decision-making processes about the management of the landscape, which can be mostly at community level, or about one of the areas defined above, or at the level of the entire landscape.

• Sketch the process, including the actors and institutions involved, the sequence of decisions, who influences who, and how decisions are taken.

## Method: Systems Diagram

**PURPOSE:** This tool builds a visual representation of the current governance system by showing the stages of decision-making and who is involved when.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Charts, markers/ pens

**PROCESS:**
**a)** In plenary, participants decide on which decision-making processes they will explore, such as the creation of protected areas, the establishment of management rules for certain resources (rivers, forests, pastureland etc.).

**b)** Divide the participants into groups. Each group works on one or two of the decision-making processes.

**c)** They begin by placing cards with the names of actors on the chart, and then to sketch the decision-making process with arrows, symbols, text etc. Questions to guide the sketching of the process are:
- Where (with whom) does it start?
- Who is involved at each step?
- Who directs and influences?
- How are decisions taken at each step (vote, decision by one actor, etc.)?
- Who implements? Who enforces?
- How does the information flow?

**d)** The groups present their results to the plenary and discuss them with the other participants.

## FIGURE 8: SYSTEMS DIAGRAM
## REGISTERING A COMUNITY FOREST
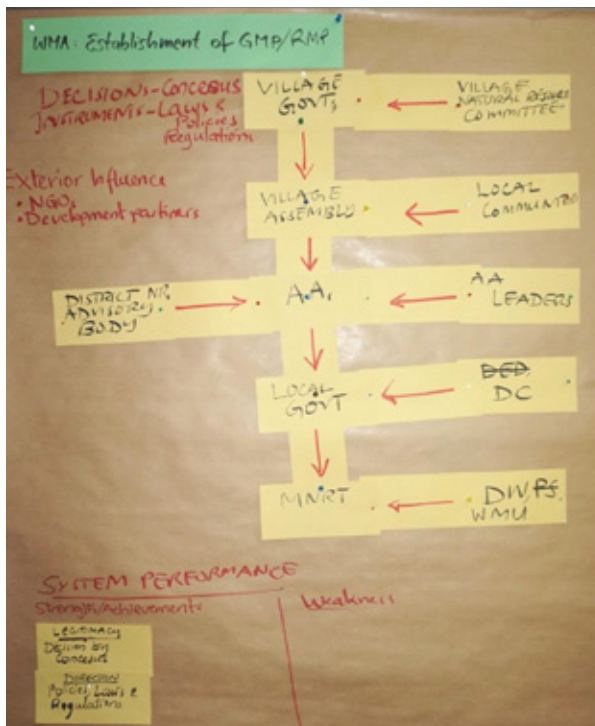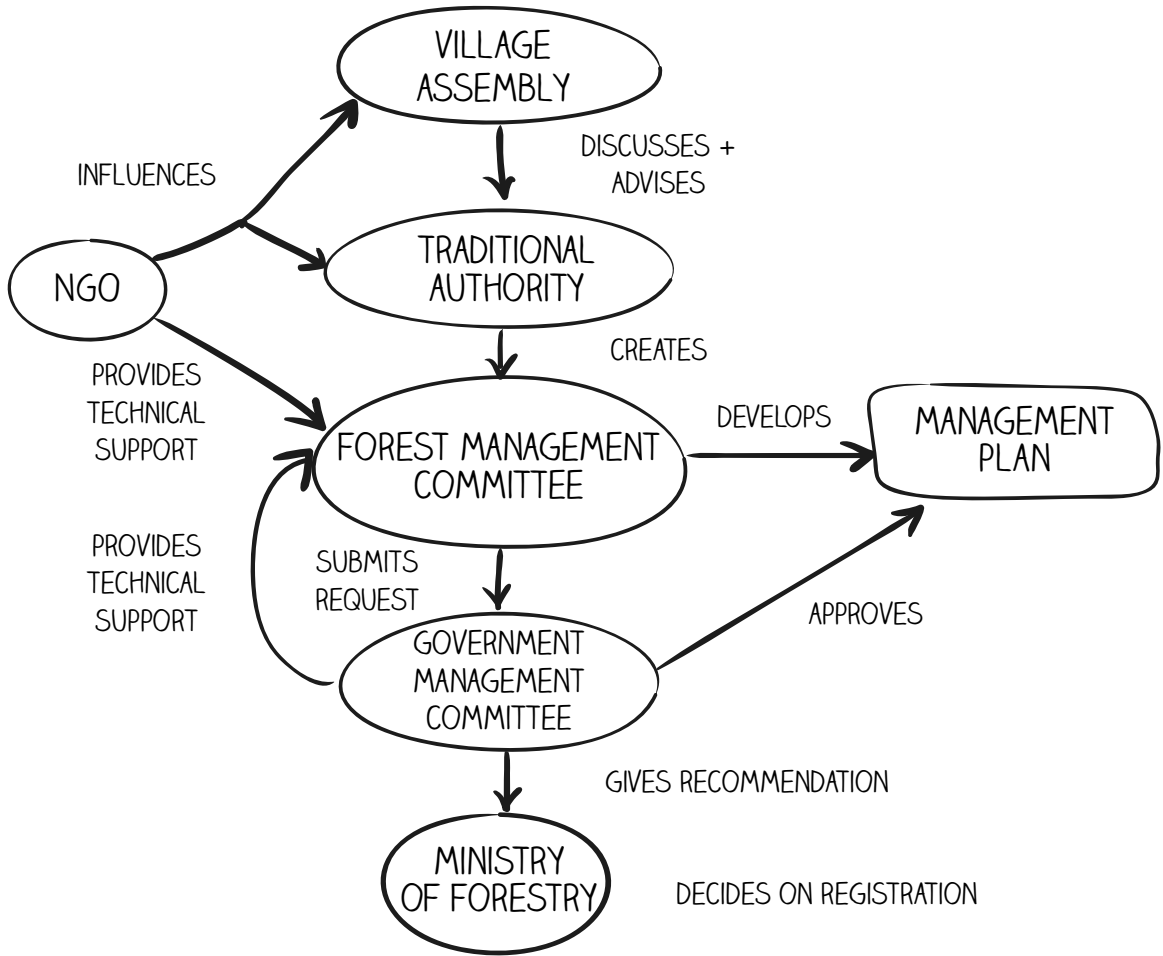


Examples of Systems Diagrams.

# PHASE 3 | Evaluating governance

## PURPOSE

In phase 3, the participants will examine the results of the assessment (phase 2) and evaluate how the current governance system is performing in terms of quality and effectiveness.

**TABLE 8: STEPS FOR PHASE 3: EVALUATING GOVERNANCE**

| STEPS | QUESTIONS |
|---|---|
| 3.1. Governance quality | How does the governance setting perform against good governance criteria: legitimacy and voice; performance; direction; fairness and rights? |
| 3.2. Governance effectiveness | What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current governance systems in the landscape? What works, what needs to be strengthened, what needs to be changed, what needs to be added? |

## ACTIVITIES

- Evaluating how the system performs in terms of "good governance"
- Analysing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the current governance system

## 3.1. Governance Quality

In the assessment you have brought together and discussed the elements of the current governance system in your landscape. This step asks the question of how this system measures against a set of "good governance" principles. The principles we use here are the ones used by the IUCN, and are based on similar global sets of principles. However, you can and should first discuss them and decide whether they need to be adapted or expanded for your situation, and for your cultural context.

The five principles that we are using here are listed below, with some details on what each principle can mean for landscape governance:

**TABLE 9:**

# GOOD GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

**ACCOUNTABILITY**

- Upholding integrity and commitment
- Ensuring appropriate access to information and transparency, including for lines of responsibility and allocation of resources
- Establishing communication avenues and encouraging feedback and independent overseeing

**LEGITIMACY AND VOICE**

- Enjoying broad acceptance and appreciation in society
- Ensuring procedural rights of access to information, participation and justice
- Fostering engagement and diversity
- Preventing discrimination
- Fostering subsidiarity, mutual respect, dialogue, consensus and agreed rules

**PERFORMANCE**

- Promoting a culture of learning
- Being responsive to the needs of actors
- Ensuring resources and capacities and their efficient use
- Promoting sustainability and resilience
- Achieving the landscape objectives as planned (if such objectives exist)

**DIRECTION**

- Following an inspiring and consistent strategic vision grounded on agreed values and an appreciation of complexities
- Ensuring consistency with policy and practice at various levels
- Ensuring adaptive management

**FAIRNESS AND RIGHTS**

- Striving towards equitably shared costs and benefits, without adverse impacts on vulnerable individuals or groups
- Upholding decency and the dignity of all
- Being fair, impartial, consistent, non-discriminatory, respectful of procedural rights as well as substantive rights, individual and collective human rights, gender equity and the rights of indigenous peoples, including Free, Prior and Informed Consent
- Promoting local empowerment

In this step, you will:

• Discuss each of the good governance principles as they apply to the governance of your landscape.

• Try to arrive to a consensus about how well the system currently performs in terms of governance quality.

• Discuss what would need to happen to improve this performance.

# Method: The Human Spectrogram

**PURPOSE:** This tool is used to present perspectives on a spectrum. It is a dynamic way to visualize and discuss scores and brings out differences in thoughts and perception among participants. In this variation, the dynamic element is paired with more in-depth discussion in small groups to score the good governance principles and discuss possible improvements.

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Open space, paper cards, marker, board or flipchart

**PROCESS:**
Make sure you have a room or space clear of any furniture, so there is enough space for all the participants to stand. Place number cards from 1 to 5 in line on the floor. The numbers represent a score for each governance principle, 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest quality.

Perform the following steps for each governance principle in turn. If this takes too long, you can divide the principles among the working groups.

**a)** Divide participants into smaller groups. For each quality principle, ask the groups to discuss the questions listed below. At the end they should agree on a score on the scale from 1 to 5 for the current principle.
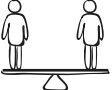
**b)** When the groups are done, each group chooses a representative who goes to stand behind the chosen number on the floor. The facilitator goes around and asks people to explain why their group chose those numbers.

**c)** Afterwards the participants return to their groups and discuss for each principle: what would have to change to move us from our current number, to one number higher? (e.g. if we are now at a 2 on legitimacy and voice, what would a 3 look like?)

**d)** The groups share their results and the facilitator takes note of the suggested improvements on a flipchart or board.

**TABLE 10:**

# QUESTIONS ON GOVERNANCE QUALITY

| | |
|---|---|
| **LEGITIMACY AND VOICE** | • How easily and effectively can communities participate in the decisions that affect the landscape, their lands and resources?<br>• Are local communities and user groups represented in decision-making bodies?<br>• Are community authorities, decision-making processes and management rules officially recognized? |
| **DIRECTION** | • Is there a jointly agreed vision for the landscape?<br>• How well does this vision match government plans and policies or vice versa?<br>• How coherent are government policies: do they go in the same direction or do they contradict each other? For example, between sectors (forestry, agriculture, energy…) or between levels.<br>• Do government laws and community rules support or contradict each other? |
| **PERFORMANCE** | • Do the main institutions and organizations in the landscape have the necessary capacities to play their role?<br>• Are there sufficient resources (financial etc.) for landscape management?<br>• Is there support (financial or technical) for community efforts at resource management?<br>• Are there processes to monitor changes in the landscape? To learn from experiences? |
| **ACCOUNTABILITY** | • How transparent is the distribution of permits and fees (for example for fishing, forestry, etc.)<br>• Do communities have access to information about decisions and plans that affect their landscape?<br>• Are there environmental and social impact assessments before projects (for example infrastructure) in the landscape?<br>• Are there official mechanisms for complaints? |
| **FAIRNESS AND RIGHTS** | • Are the laws and policies identified earlier helpful to manage the landscape?<br>• Do communities have rights to land and resources, and how clear are these rights?<br>• Are government laws and local rules being enforced fairly?<br>• Is there a fair sharing of the costs and benefits of managing the resources in the landscape? |

# 3.2. Governance Effectiveness

In this step, you will use all the information and understanding that you arrived at during the assessment about the actors, rules and decision-making processes, to discuss how effective the current governance system is. If you think back to the community vision that you developed at the beginning – do the current governance structures and processes help you to move towards your vision of your landscape? If not, why?

## Method: modified SWOT analysis

**PURPOSE:** This tool provides a frame of assessing the effectiveness of the current governance system through four parameters - Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. For this exercise, the SWOT framework has been modified a bit to steer the discussions in the direction of possible ways forward.
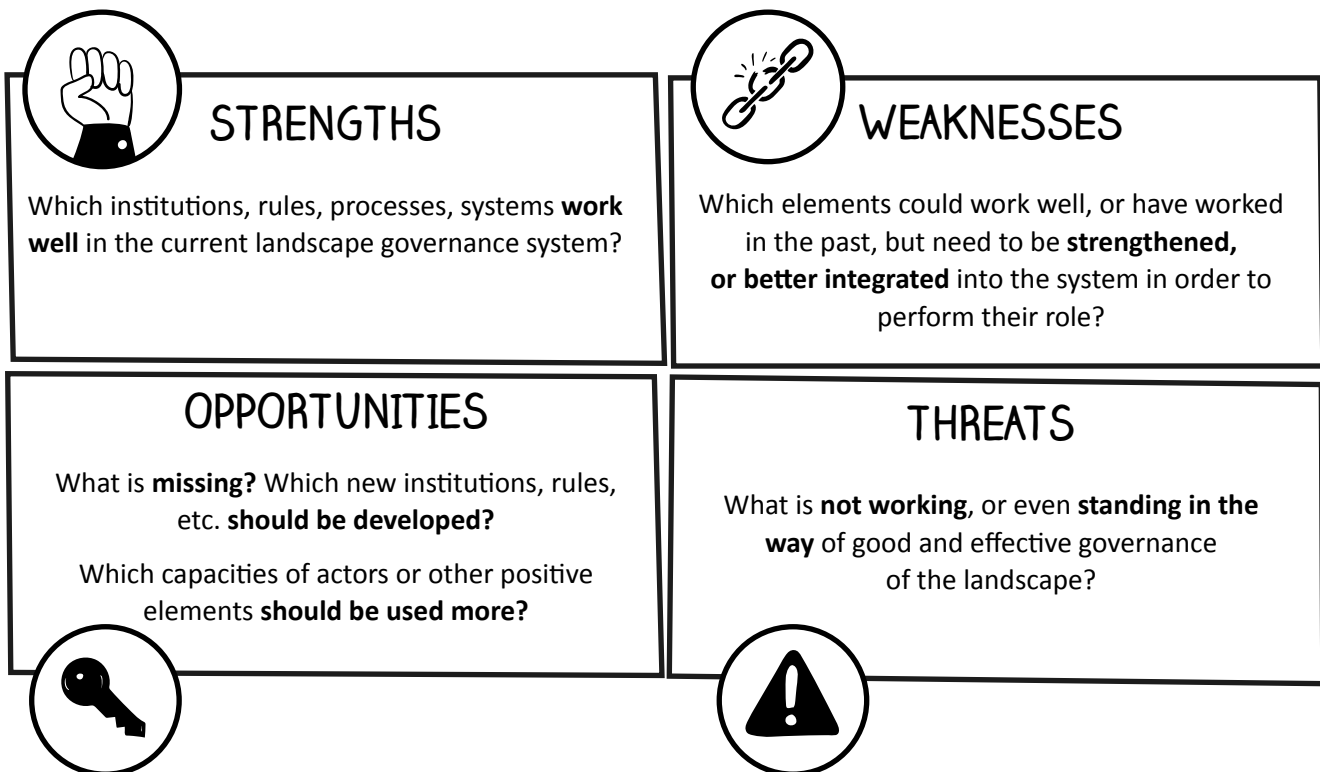
**MATERIALS NEEDED:** Chart papers, markers/pens

**PROCESS:**
**a)** Draw up the frame of the SWOT analysis: a table with four quadrants, one each for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

**b)** Participants can be divided into smaller sub groups. Think about the insights that you generated the assessment. Then fill in each quadrant of the SWOT table as defined below.

**c)** If you have worked in groups, share the results and summarize the findings in one common table.

FIGURE 9: SWOT ANALYSIS

### STRENGTHS
Which institutions, rules, processes, systems **work well** in the current landscape governance system?

### WEAKNESSES
Which elements could work well, or have worked in the past, but need to be **strengthened, or better integrated** into the system in order to perform their role?

### OPPORTUNITIES
What is **missing?** Which new institutions, rules, etc. **should be developed?**

Which capacities of actors or other positive elements **should be used more?**

### THREATS
What is **not working**, or even **standing in the way** of good and effective governance of the landscape?

# PHASE 4 Planning for action

The assessment concludes with a discussion of options to improve the current landscape governance system, building directly on the new insights gained by participants, and the motivation generated by the exercise. The results from this discussion can then be used in a strategic landscape planning exercise. Or local communities and their support organisations can repeat a similar exercise at the level of their community, or a smaller area of the landscape, to refine the results before taking local action.

This phase is not meant to be a planning exercise per se yet. You may wish to move into planning right away, but how far you can already go at the end of the assessment will depend on who is present (do the participants have the mandate to develop a detailed action plan?), and which resources are available for putting a plan into action (if you develop a plan, will there be a budget to deliver on it?). A plan with specific goals, activities and responsibilities is useful to ensure that the proposed actions really take place, and that they can be monitored, thereby increasing transparency. However, generating yet another plan when it is not clear that the participants present have the authority or resources to implement all the proposed measures, can also be counter-productive. In this case, it might be more useful to compile a list of ideas, recommendations and demands for improvements. This list can then be used for future planning exercises, for advocacy and lobbying with government authorities, and for raising funds.

At the end of Phase 3 of the assessment, participants should have a better idea of:

- The elements of the current governance system;
- Its strengths and weaknesses as a framework to achieve their aspirations for the landscape; and
- How it performs against good governance criteria.

Before starting this last phase, have another look at all the results produced throughout the assessment. This can be done in several ways:

- If you were able to keep the chart papers, and have enough space, hang them around the room and have people take a moment in small groups to circulate and look once again at the results.

- If this is not feasible, use the pictures that you took of all the results to prepare a power point presentation to run through. Ask participants to highlight their main insights from each exercise.

- At the very least, have a list of the "action flags" that you noted during the assessment displayed prominently, and use them as a starting point for the discussion.

**Here are some general questions that can guide your discussions:**

Based on the SWOT analysis, which are the opportunities for improvement that you can seize right now? Which possible ones come to mind at this point?

• Looking again at the good governance principles, which measures would improve legitimacy, direction, performance, accountability, and fairness?

• Based on the roles and capacities of actors: are there actors that could play a larger / different role than they do now?

• Which capacities need to be built?

• Based on the legal analysis: which policies or laws, and/or which community rules should be changed?

• Are there laws and rules that are not properly implemented or respected, and how could this be changed?

• Based on the analysis of governance diversity: are there forms of governance that contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of the landscape, but that are not formally recognised? Would such a recognition help?

• Are there issues of ownership and tenure that need to be resolved?

Below are a few ideas of actions to strengthen community and landscape governance. However, the discussion should start from the assessment results and from the suggestions of the participants. Some of these actions can be taken by communities themselves; some will necessitate support; and others can only be implemented by the concerned government authorities. You can find further details on these actions in Chapters 2.3 to 2.5 of the Guidance Note in Part 1 of this document.

**IN YOUR COMMUNITY:**

• Strengthen and/or improve the governance of customary institutions.

• Create new community decision-making bodies where necessary.

• Create or strengthen community groups or organisations with specific roles, such as user groups, women's associations, etc.

• Document your customary rules and laws, decide which ones need to be updated, and develop new ones where needed. Register these rules legally as by-laws or similar, if necessary and where this option exists.

• Develop agreements between actors (for example, conservation agreements at community level, or between communities and government bodies).

**AT LANDSCAPE LEVEL:**

• Start to create a network or platform of communities, customary leaders, community groups and support groups. This kind of informal network can serve to exchange information, plan actions together, learn from each other, and transmit demands to higher level governance bodies.

• As appropriate, you can involve government agencies in this network; with time you can even move towards building a formal landscape-level governance body.

• Propose steps for the improved representation of actors, including community authorities, in landscape decision-making

- Develop land use plans that recognize a variety of governance types

- Take steps to clarify land tenure, especially to secure community land rights, and to resolve issues related to access and rights to resources.

**CONCERNING THE LAW AND POLICY FRAMEWORK:**

- Disseminate information about relevant laws and rights to your communities. Consider working with support organisations on legal empowerment measures.

- Build a relationship with government agencies in your landscape, by seeking spaces for dialogue through your landscape network.

- Through your landscape network, and/or through supporting organisations, stay informed of developments at the legal and policy level, and seek ways to influence relevant legal reforms.

- Advocate for necessary changes in laws and policies, such as the recognition of voluntary conservation by local communities.

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[5] Adapted from Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013

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[15] Colfer et al. 2010

[16] Adapted from Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013

[17] Please refer to the "Toolkit for the Indicators of Resilience in Socio-ecological Production Landscapes and Seascapes" for further information and guidance on how to apply them. This toolkit was developed as part of a Collaborative Activity by UNU-IAS, Bioversity International, the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), and UNDP under the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI).

The toolkit is based on the experiences of field-testing of the first set of the indicators conducted by Bioversity International and UNDP. SGP National Coordinators in the 20 COMDEKS countries provided valuable inputs to the development of the first set of the indicators, and have been playing a pivotal role in the testing of the indicators, capturing the perspectives of communities in the field.

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[30] The process of this landscape governance self-assessment was inspired by the process described in the IUCN Guidelines No. 20 "Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action (Borrini-Feyerabend et al. 2013).

Individual tools were drawn and adapted from a number of other tool boxes and guidelines, including:

- Brouwer, G., J. Woodhill, M. Hemmati, K. Verhoosel and S. van Vugt, 2015: The MSP Guide: How to Design and Facilitate Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships. Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen.

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### Satoyama Initiative

The Satoyama Initiative is a global effort, first proposed jointly by the United Nations University and the Ministry of the Environment of Japan (MOEJ), to realize "societies in harmony with nature" and contribute to biodiversity conservation through the revitalization and sustainable management of "socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes" (SEPLS). In October 2010, the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative (IPSI) was established to promote the activities identified by the Satoyama Initiative. IPSI is a global partnership of over 200 diverse member organizations, including national and local governments, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, universities, and private sector organizations, aiming to facilitate and accelerate the implementation of activities under the Satoyama Initiative. With the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) serving as its Secretariat, IPSI coordinates and supports related activities, including on-the-ground activities, policy development, and knowledge sharing activities.
**www.satoyama-initiative.org**

### Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF)

The Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF) was established by the Presidency of the 10th Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 10) in support of the implementation of the Nagoya Biodiversity Outcomes. One of its key objectives is to support, at regional and sub-regional levels, Parties for the translation of the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 into national priorities. The Convention on Biological Diversity was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development and entered into force in 1993. Its three main objectives are to 1) conserve biological diversity, 2) promote sustainable use of the components of biological diversity, and 3) ensure fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
**www.cbd.int**

### Global Environment Facility (GEF)

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), established on the eve of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, is a catalyst for action on the environment — and much more. Through its strategic investments, the GEF works with partners to tackle the planet's biggest environmental issues. Our funding also helps reduce poverty, strengthen governance and achieve greater equality between women and men. As such, we occupy a unique space in the global partnership for a more sustainable planet.
**www.thegef.org**

### Small Grants Programme (SGP)

The Small Grants Programme (SGP) is a corporate programme of the GEF implemented by the UNDP since 1992. SGP grantmaking in over 125 countries promotes community-based innovation, capacity development, and empowerment through sustainable development projects of local civil society organizations with special consideration for indigenous peoples, women, and youth. SGP has supported over 20,000 community-based projects in biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation and adaptation, prevention of land degradation, protection of international waters, and reduction of the impact of chemicals, while generating sustainable livelihoods.
**www.sgp.undp.org**

### United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, a nd drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in more than 170 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.
**www.undp.org**

The Napo River Watershed, SGP/COMDEKS Ecuador