

Summary

"Livelihoods and Landscapes" is an approach to poverty reduction that seeks to enable the rural poor to expand their economic opportunities while sustaining and enhancing forest and other biological resources. By working together, a shared understanding of the value of forests for improving local livelihoods can be built, with a view to influencing policies that can reduce poverty and conserve forests.

"The Livelihood & Landscapes programme of IUCN takes up the challenge to improve poor peoples livelihoods by sustainable use of biodiversity while advancing good environmental stewardship"

Ton Boon von Ochssee,
Ambassador for Sustainable Development,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.



On average, forest products account for more than 20% of total household income. (World Bank)

The value of the trade in non-timber products, pharmaceuticals and medicinal plants arguably matches the US\$150 billion traded annually in timber and primary wood products. (Rights and Resources Group)

"Livelihoods and Landscapes" is currently working with the World Bank, International Tropical Timber Organization, World Agroforestry Center, Center for International Forestry Research, Rights and Resources Initiative. From 2007-2010, the total budget is estimated to be €60 million, with 16 million in core funds already secured.

LLS operates in

Africa

- Upper Guinean Forest Landscapes, Ghana and Liberia
- East and Southern African Forest Landscapes, Uganda, Tanzania and Mozambique
- Sahelian Landscapes, Burkina Faso, Mali and Sudan
- The Congo Basin, Cameroon, Republic of Congo, Central African Republic
- Great Lakes Region, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda

Asia

- Mekong Region, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam
- India
- China
- Indonesia

South America

- Brazil

Central America

- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Mexico

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Livelihoods and Landscapes

Better forests, better lives



Forest Conservation Programme

Forest landscape

A landscape that is, or once was, dominated by forests and woodlands and although now modified or degraded continues to yield forest-related goods and services



Two of the most pressing issues facing the world today are poverty and biodiversity loss. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) has responded by emphasizing, and guiding policy on, the valuable role forests can play in improving the lives of the rural poor. Recognizing the need for a more concerted effort, IUCN introduces “Livelihoods and Landscapes” which aligns field based action with national policy efforts to reduce poverty. Funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, through its development agency DGIS, “Livelihoods and Landscapes” takes the next step to substantiate and document the contribution that forest resources continue to make to the livelihoods of the rural poor.



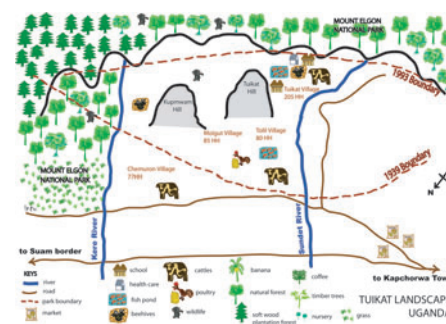
Unsustainable land use at the local level directly impacts rural poverty

“Livelihoods and landscapes” is based on the understanding that the rural poor, like everyone else, need natural, financial, human and social assets as a basis for their livelihoods and favourable local and national policies to improve their livelihoods. Forests resources continue to play a vital role in the lives of the rural poor and complement income from agricultural activities. Together, forests, agriculture and other land uses create ‘landscape mosaics’ that can provide most of the income, goods and services that the rural poor need on a day to day basis. The rural poor have significant locally adapted knowledge to maintain the productivity of their landscapes. Men and woman, young and old, bring varied skills and practical experiences of how their landscapes can be managed to provide a diverse and balanced mix of goods, services and uses. However, if their legal rights are not protected or they have no access to markets for their products and existing financial or policy incentives encourage excessive use and degradation of their landscapes, economic pressures on the rural poor mount.

Forests cover 1/3 of the earth’s surface, yet 60% of forests are fragmented or degraded, providing less of the services that people depend on.

Societal choices

Working in 11 areas around the world, “Livelihoods and Landscapes” facilitates discussion between communities, government agencies, NGOs and businesses to address these issues. “Livelihoods and Landscapes” is rooted in a commitment to participatory processes that stress the importance of listening and learning. Working in collaboration with partners on local and national levels, “Livelihoods and Landscapes” leverages additional resources and identifies the reasons for rural poverty so that optimal scenarios for improving livelihoods and reversing land degradation can be incorporated into national laws and policies.



Community maps, such as these, provide local people with the opportunity to set their own priorities for change



Having better understanding of multiple perspectives and competing demands at the local level means that the opportunity for balanced, negotiated agreements will be increased. Through honest debate and transparent compromise, the will to act together can be strengthened. “Livelihoods and Landscapes” is a learning platform for adaptive management designed to identify and support locally driven outcomes that will produce:

- Measurable reductions in rural poverty including significant increase in the household incomes of the rural poor
- Increased local trade of forest products for the rural poor
- Equitable and secure access and tenure for land and forest related resources
- Enlarged net area of restored forests, enhancing related land uses

When specific outcomes for each of the 11 areas are in place, “Livelihoods and Landscapes” will:

- Capture detailed information on the value of forest assets, their contribution to local economies and their role in poverty reduction
- Increase awareness of the importance of property, land use and access rights for people dependent on forest resources
- Examine how forest related decisions and policy arrangements are made and how they affect the livelihoods of the poor.
- Support the development of new income generating opportunities, including markets for ecosystem services
- Promote policy and market based incentives that can curb illegal logging, a measure that has the potential to contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation

The measure of it all

Through its outcome based monitoring system and by establishing clear baselines and indicators at the household and community levels, “Livelihoods and Landscapes” will demonstrate that locally identified outcomes can be achieved.



Performance will be quantified and qualified to generate information that is robust and credible, that can be defended in a measurable way and allow for ongoing learning, lesson sharing and adaptive management. This will lead to evidence based learning for the overall “Livelihoods and Landscapes” strategy. Lessons learned during the process will be shared amongst partners and ongoing results will be used to positively influence choices and policy change now and in the future.