

## Local contributions to the Rio Conventions



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**Both ENDS Working Paper Series – April 2005**  
***Local contributions to the Rio Conventions***

In this Working Paper, six non-governmental organisations from Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Ecuador, the Netherlands, South Africa and Peru show how local initiatives on sustainable land use and water management contribute to the implementation of the Rio Conventions.

Based on practical examples of AEDES, CDP, EMG, FURARE and Hope for the Horn, the project analyses the links between civil society initiatives and national and international policies related to climate change, biodiversity conservation and desertification.

The paper also presents a set of policy recommendations on:

- 1) the implementation of the Rio Conventions through local initiatives; and
- 2) the ways in which the Conventions can enhance the replication and up-scaling of such initiatives and thus improve the development and implementation of national policies related to the Conventions.

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## **Acknowledgments**

This project has been made possible thanks to the financial support of the:  
*Dutch Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment (VROM).*

The project team likes to express their gratitude to: Mrs. Simone Lovera (Friends of the Earth International); Mr. Matthias Duwe (CAN Europe); Mr. Saleemul Huq (IIED); Mr. Arthur Nogueira (CBD Secretariat); Mr. Marcos Montoiro (UNCCD Secretariat) and Marie José van der Werff ten Bosch (Both ENDS) for providing helpful input and comments in their areas of expertise.

A special thanks to Ana V. Rojas Blanco for her valuable contribution to this paper.

## List of abbreviations

AHTEG	Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group
AIA	Advance Informed Agreement
BCF	Bio-Carbon Fund
BIONET	Biodiversity Action Network
CAN	Climate Action Network
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDCF	Community Development Carbon Fund
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CER	Certified Emission Reduction
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRIC	Committee to Review Implementation
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CST	Commission on Science and Technology
CTE	Committee on Trade and Environment
ENID	European Networking Initiative on Desertification
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GHG	Greenhouse gases
GM	Global Mechanism
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
IFI	International Financing Institution
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPO	Indigenous People Organisation
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
JLG	Joint Liaison Group
KP	Kyoto Protocol
LDCF	Least Developed Countries Fund
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
NAP	National Action Program
NAPA	National Adaptation Plans of Action
NCC	National Coordinating Committees
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Operational Program
PCF	Prototype Carbon Fund
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RAP	Regional Action Program
REIO	Regional Economic Integration Organisation
RIOD	International NGO Network on Desertification
SBI	Subsidiary Body of Implementation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SCCF	Special Climate Change Fund
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRAP	Sub-regional Action Program
TREM	Trade Related Environmental Measures
TRIPs	Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations Organisation
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNU	United Nations University
WB	World Bank
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Trade Organisation

## **Introduction**

### ***Contribution of civil society organisations to the Rio Conventions***

The 1992 Rio Conference adopted the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). In 1994, the third global environmental convention related to the Rio Summit, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was agreed upon.

Ten years later, the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation stresses that, although progress has been made serious efforts to further the implementation of the Conventions are urgently required. One of the main challenges to the Conventions is to translate global agreements into national policies and implementation in the field.

At the same time, local initiatives related to sustainable land use and water management exist that contribute significantly to the implementation of the Rio Conventions. However, such local expertise has not been sufficiently recognised by policy makers on national and international levels. As a direct consequence, these initiatives are seldom used as valuable inputs into national and international policy discussions. Furthermore, local initiatives are hardly ever supported by these policies, and sometimes even hindered by them. Invaluable opportunities for effective implementation, replication or up-scaling of these initiatives are therefore missed.

The WSSD Plan of Implementation also explicitly recognises that the Rio Conventions are interrelated. Still, effective mechanisms to increase synergy and coordination between the Conventions are limited. Since local communities interact directly with their environment, their experiences can contribute to an understanding of the complexities and practical implications of biodiversity conservation, land degradation and climate change. They are valuable elements in the evaluation of the effectiveness and sustainability of national and international policies.

In this Working Paper, a number of promising local initiatives in the field of sustainable land use and water management are described. It will be shown that much can be gained if such initiatives are recognised and supported through national and international policies.

### ***Readers' guide***

This Working Paper is divided in four chapters. The first chapter provides a short description of the Rio Conventions, as well as a brief analysis of the current state of affairs of the Conventions. Chapter 2 analyses the potential for synergies between the Conventions. In chapter 3, five NGOs present their practical experiences in sustainable land use and water management and show how these initiatives contribute to the implementation of the Rio Conventions. In the last chapter, the project team presents concrete policy recommendations on how to enhance participation of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and how to operationalise the Conventions using local contributions.

***Para un resumen ejecutivo y recomendaciones en Español, véase página 43***

# 1 The Rio Conventions

## 1.1 General content

### The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was agreed upon in 1992. This legal body recognizes the serious threat of global warming. From the start, the UNFCCC process has concentrated mainly on mitigation, i.e. activities that will reduce the release of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere.

Three categories of countries are distinguished in the UNFCCC:<sup>1</sup>

- *Annex 1 countries*: industrialised countries and those countries making a transition into a market economy;
- *Annex 2 countries*: industrialised countries only: the biggest historical polluters<sup>2</sup>; and
- *Non-Annex 1 countries*: developing countries.

The UNFCCC recognises as a principle that industrialised countries and, to a lesser extent, those with economies in transition (Annex 1) are historically responsible for the highest GHG emission rates, and consequently hold most of the responsibility for climate change. Thus, they should take the first steps to combat this threat through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. More specific requirements regulating the activities of Annex 1 countries can be found under article 4.2 of the UNFCCC. Despite the commitments and historical recognitions, the UNFCCC did not include in its text specific reduction targets for Annex 1 countries. This was later corrected with the agreement of the Protocol to the UNFCCC.

Non-Annex 1 countries also have the obligation under article 4 of the UNFCCC to prepare a list of anthropogenic emissions and establish mitigation programs in order to reduce these emissions.

Among the common responsibilities for all signatory countries, national implementation plans must include adaptation measures to the impacts of climate change (article 4.1.e. of the UNFCCC). Adaptation measures are adjustments made in the face of inevitable, irreversible climatic changes. These adjustments are especially needed in developing countries, which are most vulnerable to climate change.

The Kyoto Protocol (KP) was adopted in 1997 to realize the obligations established under the UNFCCC. The KP focuses mainly on mitigation efforts, and its primary goal is to establish binding reduction commitments (targets) for Annex 1 countries. In the Protocol, Annex 1 countries commit themselves to reduce their overall emissions of six greenhouse gases<sup>3</sup> (Annex A of the KP) by at least 5% below 1990 levels, over a period between 2008 and 2012. Specific targets vary from country to country, and they can be found in Annex B of the KP. Ultimately, the mitigation efforts should be reflected in national policies and legislation.

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed list of countries please refer to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992), Annex 1 and Annex 2.

<sup>2</sup> Annex 2 countries are also listed in Annex 1

<sup>3</sup> The GHG included in Annex A of the Kyoto Protocol are: Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>); Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>); Nitrous oxide (NO<sub>2</sub>); Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); Perfluorocarbons (PFCs); Sulphur hexafluoride (SF<sub>6</sub>).



The Protocol does include references to the importance of adaptation to adverse climatic events. Under article 10b of the Protocol, all countries are called on to create National Adaptation Plans of Action (NAPAs). These initiatives should address energy, transport, industry, agriculture, forestry, waste management and spatial planning activities necessary to adapt to climate change.

In practice however, adaptation concerns are still at a distant second place in the negotiations and policy-making processes under the UNFCCC and its Protocol. There is a strong need for better understanding of the meaning of adaptation, and for identification of concrete adaptation activities and measures.

### The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), agreed upon in 1992, has three main goals:

- The conservation of biodiversity;
- Sustainable use of the components of biodiversity; and
- Sharing the benefits arising from the commercial and other utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way.

The agreement covers ecosystems, species, and genetic resources. It explicitly sets out to link traditional conservation efforts to the economic goal of using biological resources in a sustainable way.

Under the CBD, Parties are obliged to put forward national strategies, as well as plans and programs for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Parties are also called on to adapt already existing programs and plans to such concerns.<sup>4</sup> These strategies must be developed under a participatory framework, in order to involve different sectors of society in their design. This presents an opportunity for communities and social organisations to participate in the development of the national strategies on biodiversity.

In 2000, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD adopted a supplementary agreement to the Convention known as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, or the Biosafety Protocol. The Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks resulting from modern biotechnology. It establishes an Advance Informed Agreement (AIA) procedure to ensure that countries are provided with the information necessary to make informed decisions before agreeing to the import of such organisms into their territory.<sup>5</sup>

### The United Nations Convention on Combat to Desertification

The United Nations Convention to Combat to Desertification (UNCCD) was adopted in 1994. The main objectives of the UNCCD are:<sup>6</sup>

- To combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective action at all levels, supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements, in the framework of an integrated approach which is

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<sup>4</sup> Convention on Biological Diversity (1992), article 6.

<sup>5</sup> For more information on (the opportunities and limitations of) the Biosafety Protocol, as well as general information on gene-technology, see for example: <http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/default.aspx> (Cartagena Protocol home page), [http://www.twinside.org.sg/bio\\_1.htm](http://www.twinside.org.sg/bio_1.htm) (Third World Network), or <http://www.bothends.org/service/ip-gen.htm> (Both ENDS information package).

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (1994) article 2.

consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in affected areas.

- Achieving this objective will involve long-term integrated strategies that focus simultaneously, in affected areas, on improved productivity of land, and the rehabilitation, conservation and sustainable management of land and water resources, leading to improved living conditions, in particular at the community level.

The Convention integrates environmental concerns on the loss of ecosystems and biodiversity with social elements such as the recognition of poverty, poor health, malnutrition, and food security.

An important element of the UNCCD is the focus on a bottom-up approach. Countries that have ratified the UNCCD are obliged to include NGOs and representatives of local communities in the decision-making and actual implementation of the Convention.<sup>7</sup> Thus the Convention may act as a tool for local communities to influence decision-making processes, prioritisation of actions and design of local, regional, and national projects and plans.

Signatory party countries affected by desertification must propose National Action Programs (NAPs) to the Secretariat. These must identify and combat the factors contributing to desertification, as well as mitigate the effects of droughts.<sup>8</sup> The NAP process must assure an effective participation of different local stakeholders during project planning, decision-making and implementation.

The UNCCD identifies a series of activities to mitigate the effects of droughts, including: the establishment of early warning systems, the creation of drought contingency plans, the establishment of food security systems, the development of sustainable irrigation programs for crops and livestock, and the establishment of alternative livelihood projects if relevant. These activities should be incorporated in the individual NAPs.

## **1.2 State of affairs: ratification and implementation**

The Convention on Biodiversity was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in December 1993. There are currently 188 Parties to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which established a regulatory framework to control the harm arising from Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) on biodiversity and human health, was adopted in 2000. The protocol has 101 Parties to the Convention and has entered into force in September 2003. COP 7 of the CBD took place in February 2004 in Malaysia. Their next meeting will be held in Brazil in May 2006.

The Framework Convention on Climate Change was adopted in 1992 and entered into force in March 1994. There are currently 189 Parties to the Convention. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in 1997. The rules for entry into force of the KP required 55 Parties to the Convention to ratify (or approve, accept, or accede to) the Protocol, including Annex I Parties accounting for at least 55% of the total carbon dioxide emissions by Annex I countries' in 1990. This last requirement of 55% was problematic due to the rejection of the Kyoto Protocol by the USA. However, another important country, Russia, has recently ratified the Convention. This means that the Protocol will enter into force in 2005. COP 9 was held in December 2003 in Milan, and the 10<sup>th</sup> sessions of the COP took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina in December 2004.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, article 14.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, article 10.

The Convention to Combat Desertification was adopted in 1994 and entered into force in December 1996. Currently, there are 191 Parties to the Convention. The sixth session of the COP of the UNCCD was held in Havana, Cuba, August- September 2003. The third CRIC (Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention) will be held in Bonn, Germany, from May 2 - 11, 2005. As of 2001, COP sessions will be held on a biennial basis. The venue and date of the next COP are still unknown.

Once ratified, governments must create appropriate legislation and policies to fulfil the objectives of the Conventions. They are obliged to develop national action plans and strategies. The Conventions leave it up to the different Parties to determine the policy and institutional framework for implementation. No particular institution is required to be established at the national level.

Efforts to implement the Conventions have so far mainly focused on the development of National Action Programmes (NAPs). Although progress has definitely been made since Rio<sup>9</sup>, NAPs generally have had limited impact and progress on the ground has been slow. Focus on progress on the implementation level is thus essential, since, while national governments need to provide an enabling environment, real, physical implementation of each of the Conventions is the one and only way to meet concrete objectives.

Some of the general problems for implementation of the three Conventions are the:

- Low priority of environmental concerns in national planning;
- Steady decline of funding levels from donor countries and organisations;
- Sectoral division of responsibility of implementation of environmental and sustainable development programmes, leading to a lack of integration with national development planning. Economic development priorities and activities tend to undermine environmental priorities;
- Division of responsibility for the implementation of the Conventions over different governmental departments or institutions, causing discrepancies in agendas, and leading to a lack of coordination and cooperation.
- Lack of human and institutional capacities, which are crucial to enable countries to translate the Conventions into actions;
- Lack of information systems and effective information management in implementing countries;
- Insufficient support and involvement of local people, communities and NGOs in the development of national policies in most countries. This means a lack of integration with local development needs, knowledge, and activities.

Two of the major challenges for successful implementation are mainstreaming and securing financial resources, particularly to support developing countries.

### Mainstreaming

Of key importance for successful implementation of the Conventions is the integration of implementation plans in national development policies and programmes. This is often difficult due to the sectoral division of responsibilities and the dominance of development plans over environmental plans.

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<sup>9</sup> The means to identify and assess progress at the national level is through the required national reports. See for the CBD: <http://www.biodiv.org/world/reports.aspx> (parties are currently preparing their responses to the third national report, deadline 15 May 2005). For an analysis of the contents of the second national reports refer to: <http://www.biodiv.org/meetings/cop-07/docs.aspx?tab=1>. See for the UNFCCC: [http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/items/1408txt.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/items/1408txt.php). The UNFCCC synthesis report FCCC/SBI/2003/7/Add.1 provides a good overview on the progress on A1 commitments: [http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/annex\\_i\\_natcom/compilation\\_and\\_synthesis\\_reports/items/2736txt.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_natcom/compilation_and_synthesis_reports/items/2736txt.php) See for the UNCCD: <http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/menu.php>

Mainstreaming is recognized as a major challenge by the Parties and others engaged in implementation of the UNCCD. Policy tools of the Conventions such as the NAPAs, National Strategies, NAPS, Sub-regional Action Programs (SRAPS) and Regional Action Programs (RAPS) are called to be systematically mainstreamed in overall sustainable development programmes, such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSP).

Within the CBD the need to integrate biodiversity into mainstream (economic) policies has been stressed from the start. But the reverse seems to be occurring; with the promotion of markets for ecological services, mainstream economics have been integrated into biodiversity policy. The problem is that without integration of biodiversity policies in development processes, processes that reduce biodiversity are increasing much more rapidly than positive biodiversity policies.<sup>10</sup> Real integration of the objectives of the Conventions is therefore crucial.

#### Securing substantial and long-term financial resources

Another major challenge is to secure sufficient financial resources needed to achieve the implementation of the Conventions. The North has been financing the implementation of the Conventions in the developing countries, providing support through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and through bilateral aid programmes. The 'polluter pays' principle is the ethic backbone of this kind of economic support. However, overall levels of development assistance have declined since 1992, and EU's Rio pledge to provide additional financing of \$3 billion has not materialised (IIED, 2002). Especially in the case of the UNFCCC, it is important (and fair) for the Annex I countries to comply with the polluter pays principle, and provide support to developing countries that suffer the adverse impacts of climate change.

For the particular case of the UNCCD, the adoption of GEF's Sustainable Land Management Operational Program (OP-15) is viewed as a positive development as it ensures more regular financial resources. However, the operational guidelines need to be better defined and take fully into account the needs of the Parties to the Convention.

The effective use of synergies (for example by focusing on projects with multiple benefits and longer-term effects) presents a way of using existing funds more efficiently. However, this should never be used as a disguised excuse to reduce funding. Perhaps it would be better to reconsider existing financial mechanisms and look for innovative and alternative financing methods that ensure that the funds reach local level initiatives and support projects and policies that promote synergies. Or to explore opportunities for common lending criteria, reporting and policies between multilateral and bilateral donor agencies.

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<sup>10</sup> For example, in countries like the Netherlands and Brazil many biodiversity projects are implemented, but the expansion of infrastructure and monocultures destroy more biodiversity than the one being saved by positive policy.

### **1.3 International political context**

Apart from the implementation challenges described above, there are challenges posed by the international political environment of the Rio Conventions. Free trade agreements, policies and practices of International Financing Institutions (IFIs), and different international development initiatives are all part of this context. These elements may be conflicting with, or diverting the attention from, the objectives or practices promoted by the Rio Conventions, and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in general. However, they might as well provide opportunities for synergy and integration.

#### Free trade agreements

Some of the MEAs ban trade in certain products or allow countries to restrict imports in certain circumstances (actions known as Trade Related Environmental Measures, or TREMs). These measures could be in conflict with the general rules of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). As a consequence, free trade agreements may undermine MEAs. Although potential conflicts in this regard may hamper the implementation of MEAs, so far it seems that only the WTO has taken a 'hands on' approach to the issue while the Conventions' bodies (Secretariats, COPs, etc.) do not seem to be pushing for this discussion to prompt into their fora.

In 1995, the WTO created the Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE), which regularly discusses and analyses the links between the WTO rules and the texts of the MEAs.<sup>11</sup> According to the CTE, it is unlikely that many conflicts between MEAs and the trade rules will arise, since from the 200 existing MEAs only 20 include trade provisions. The MEAs, which are most likely to be conflicting with the WTO rules, are the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Protocol on Biosafety, and the Kyoto Protocol. An explanation of these potential conflicts can be found in Table 1.

The Secretariats of the MEAs act more as passive actors in the discussions within the CTE than as active instigators of these discussions. According to the WTO General Council decision of July 18<sup>th</sup>, 1996 on *Guidelines for arrangements on relations with NGOs*, Secretariats of MEAs and NGOs can apply to the status of 'observers' to the CTE. However, the process for admission of new observers is not moving forward and important actors, such as the CBD Secretariat, have applied for this status without success.<sup>12</sup>

Several environmental groups have suggested that it is not appropriate for the WTO to decide on conflicts between its own rules and the objectives pursued by MEAs. They have suggested that the UN system is a more appropriate forum to deal with these conflicts. It is their claim that the principles of international law do not give sufficient guidance on how to deal with conflicts between international rule systems that promote different goals of public policy (in this case: trade and environmental protection);<sup>13</sup> and that such discussions should be dealt with in a higher and independent forum.

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<sup>11</sup> For more information see: [http://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/envir\\_e/cte00\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/cte00_e.htm)

<sup>12</sup> "At the WTO, the CBD has struggled to gain observer status, and OECD countries have resisted calls from developing countries for IPR (Intellectual Property Rights) regimes to incorporate the CBD's objectives. Indeed the structure of the WTO is skewed towards the interests of powerful economies, which have the greatest influence over the agenda and negotiations. This imbalance also affects the implementation of the CCD and other MEAs, and poverty reduction in general since it is difficult for poor countries to gain more favourable trade terms." *Menotti, V. (2002)*

<sup>13</sup> For detail information on the proposal see Friends of the Earth Europe, Greenpeace & German NGO Forum on Environment & Development Working Group on Trade (2004).

Table 1. *Main conflicting issues between WTO rules and the CBD, its Protocol and the Kyoto Protocol*<sup>14</sup>

<b>Convention on Biological Diversity</b>	The most important conflicting aspect of the CBD with WTO rules relates to intellectual property and CBD's objectives on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing. The WTO Agreement on Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) was designed to grant monopoly rights over 'inventions', and allows the appropriation of genetic resources and traditional knowledge from the South without benefit sharing with the countries and local communities of origin, whilst at the same time limiting access to technology for Southern countries.
<b>Biosafety Protocol</b>	The Biosafety Protocol contradicts with WTO rules on what governments can do to regulate GMOs. The Protocol provides that governments have the right to ban imports of GMOs if they suspect damaging impacts, while the WTO Agreement on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures restricts governments from taking such precautionary measures without conclusive scientific evidence of harm.
<b>Kyoto Protocol</b>	Parties of the UNFCCC with emission reduction targets may implement policy related measures affecting trade in order to curb down GHG emissions. Some of these measures could be perceived as affecting the prices and competitiveness of some products, particularly those manufactured through energy intensive processes. For example, increasing the required fuel efficiency of automobiles in some nations has been threatened with WTO challenges on the grounds that such measures would 'discriminate' against imports.

### International Financing Institutions

The International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the regional developing banks often have their own sector strategies and policies, which can be incoherent or contradicting with other frameworks such as those laid down in the Conventions. This is somewhat risky as the World Bank, along with UNDP and UNEP, is one of the implementing agencies of the GEF, which coordinates the financial mechanisms of the Conventions. It is thus important to explore and analyse these relations in an on-going way. For example, the WB intends to promote sustainable land management in Sub-Saharan Africa through a new joint initiative with the UNCCD and GEF called TerrAfrica. At the same time, it is stimulating privatisation and liberalization in the agricultural export sector in Africa, which might produce contradictions in the field.<sup>15</sup>

Although initiatives such as TerrAfrica or the Sustainable Land Management Operation Program (GEF) try to obtain a better coordination of environmental issues, there is still ample room for improvement of the IFI's internal policies. NGO representatives still call for a stronger inclusion of environmental thinking into IFI policies, especially regarding biodiversity conservation and the impacts of climate change.

### Rio Conventions and international development initiatives

Since Rio, international attention has diverted to new initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. Linking up with these initiatives can be beneficial, although it should be kept in mind that initiatives as the PRSP are relatively temporary in nature while the Conventions are permanent international treaties with long term objectives. It is important to link long-term environmental issues to immediate concerns.

<sup>14</sup> Information for this table has been gathered from the following sources: Menotti, V. (2002) *From Doha to Johannesburg*; and Brack, D. and Gray, K (2003) *Multilateral Environmental Agreements and the WTO*.

<sup>15</sup> EniD/GTD (2004), p.2.



## **2 Synergy between the Rio Conventions**

### **2.1 Why synergy?**

The CBD, UNFCCC and the UNCCD share a concern for many environmental issues. They all operate within collective ecosystems, and all work towards sustainable development. The Conventions also contain various overlaps in terms of the obligations required from their Parties, such as obligations for research, information gathering and exchange, national and regional action plans, national inventories, reporting, training and public education.

Although each Convention has its own defined objectives and commitments, there is growing recognition of the inherent relationship and dependency between them. Combating desertification and the conservation of biodiversity are important measures for the control of climate change. At the same time, control of climate change is essential to achieve the objectives of the CBD and the UNCCD. A good illustration of the relationship can be found in article 2 of the UNFCCC, which states that the ultimate objective is the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations " within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change". Its objective thus contributes to the biodiversity conservation objective of the CBD. See for other examples on the relationship between climate change, desertification and biodiversity also Box 1. below.

In order to acknowledge and use this relationship and to ensure that participating countries are not burdened by conflicting or overlapping obligations or different timing in reporting requirements, it can be beneficial for the Conventions to increase synergy and coordination among them. These efforts to increase synergy and coordination should take place from the international to the local level.

It should be noted that increasing synergy and coordination at the Convention and national level can involve the risk of complicating matters in such a way that it makes decision-making on key issues more difficult, providing an easy excuse for countries hesitant or unwilling to make any real commitments. Only where real overlaps exist, specifically in implementation, will synergy be possible, for example when dealing with specific issues (such as forest protection) or within a specific geographical area.

The ecosystem approach can offer a useful framework for realizing synergy among the three Conventions. Comprehensive ecosystem management interventions integrate ecological, economic and social goals to achieve multiple and crosscutting local, national, regional, and global benefits. The ecosystem approach acknowledges the inevitability of change and the framework can thus accommodate consideration of climate change and the need for adaptive responses for example. Its application requires analysis at several spatial and temporal scales as well as interactions among drivers of change at the various scales.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Source: Summary of the fourth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group (2003).



*Box 1. Linkages between the UNFCCC, the CBD and the UNCCD*

**Examples of linkages between the Conventions found in Conventions texts**

*CBD and UNFCCC*

Climate change is not addressed directly as a threat to biodiversity within the Convention's text. However, the CBD contains specific reference to the need of coordinating actions when necessary with other international organisations and Conventions. Lately, the COP to the CBD has established a climate-change-working group, in order to analyze the impacts climatic events may have over biodiversity.

Additionally, some provisions within the Convention can be used in order to link the CBD and the UNFCCC. In its article 6, the CBD calls for an integration of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sector or cross-sector plans, programs and policies by each contracting Party. The language used in the convention leaves room for interpretations on what these plans or programs could be. Therefore, the challenge lies in the capacity to influence the definition process of those plans, and incorporate the adaptation requirements as water management plans, agricultural plans, etc.

Parties are also called to "... identify processes and categories of activities which have or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and monitor their effects through sampling and other techniques". Therefore, it could be argued that Parties are called to monitor and act upon any climatic disruption that may impact in-situ conservation. Perhaps the clearest link between the CBD and climate change is given by article 14.e, which states that each Party shall:

"Promote national arrangements for emergency responses to activities or events, whether caused naturally or otherwise, which present a grave and imminent danger to biological diversity and encourage international cooperation to supplement such national efforts and, where appropriate and agreed by the States or regional economic integration organisations concerned, to establish joint contingency plans".

The article makes no direct mention of climate related events, however it does include events caused naturally. As a result, it could be argued that governments are obliged to respond to climatic events (events naturally caused), such as the increase in droughts or flood periods, in order to reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems and ensure the protection of biodiversity.

*UNCCD and UNFCCC*

Under National Action Plans special attention should be given to climatological, meteorological and hydrological capabilities and the means to provide for drought early warning. In this respect it may be recalled that under the UNFCCC, countries experiencing serious drought and desertification have been considered as highly vulnerable under climate change. Therefore, it should be on the UNCCD's interest to actively collaborate with the UNFCCC, in order to encourage activities that prevent desertification, and therefore reduce the existing vulnerability in drylands. In an attempt to facilitate collaboration, the Secretariats of both Conventions are based in the same building in Bonn (Germany).

*UNCCD and CBD*

Due to its recent existence, the UNCCD clearly states an obligation for Party States to link the Convention's objectives and work with the UNFCCC and the CBD. The Parties to the Conventions are called to jointly conduct research, training, systematic information collection and exchange programs. In the case of linkages with the CBD, the text of the UNCCD includes specific concerns regarding the loss of ecosystems and biodiversity, as this situation increases the desertification process.

**An example of conflicting objectives and activities under the Conventions**

The Kyoto Protocol promotes so-called forest "sinks" to stabilize atmospheric carbon levels. Some proponents support the use of timber plantations since they can significantly contribute to an increase in carbon sequestration, while also having short-term economic benefits. However, large-scale planting of fast growing exotic species may result in the destruction of old forest ecosystems and severe biodiversity loss, with possible consequences that increase desertification.

During COP 9 of the UNFCCC it was decided to promote reforestation by using GMO-trees to sequester carbon emissions. This decision was taken despite the universal recognition that natural, bio-diverse forests play a crucial role in safeguarding biodiversity. The decision is not in line with the objectives of the CBD and UNCCD, which aim for healthy forests and soils in balance with the natural ecosystems.

## 2.2 Synergy at Convention level

Certain steps have already been taken to enhance cooperation and synergy at the Convention level. The UNCCD for example specifically mandates coordination with the UNFCCC and the CBD including conducting joint programmes (Article 8). Another concrete example is the current initiative on report harmonization involving the Rio and other Conventions. Examples of institutional linkages and joint programmes are the Joint Liaison Group and CBD's Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG).

### ➤ **Joint Liaison Group**

The Joint Liaison Group (JLG) between the UNFCCC and the CBD was created in 2001. Representatives of the UNCCD joined months later. The objective of their joint work is to obtain improved cooperation and coordination between the three Conventions, through the exchange of relevant information and the development of joint work plans and/or workshops to explore further cooperation between the Conventions (FCCC/SBSTA2001/2, p. 11). Under this mandate, the JLG identifies several areas of interest where cooperation may be possible and desirable. These areas include: capacity building, information and awareness, technology transfer, and research. The first attempt on joint work and research between the three Conventions has started under forest ecosystem issues.

In April 2004, a *Joint Workshop on Strengthening Synergy among the Rio Conventions through Forest and Forest Ecosystems* took place in Italy. The workshop was attended by 39 Parties to the 3 Rio Conventions; UN organs; intergovernmental organisations and NGOs. It was concluded that countries could achieve synergistic effects in afforestation/reforestation by formulating projects according to basic principles contained in the objectives of the three Rio Conventions. This would ensure appropriate attention is paid to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, combating desertification, carbon sequestration and other environmental and socio-economic goals. A learning-by-doing process was proposed, as well as increased efforts to raise awareness at national level and to search for much needed investments.<sup>17</sup>

The JLG also met with the GEF to exchange views and discuss issues of common concern. Adaptation, capacity building and technology transfer are priority issues.

### ➤ **CBD's Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change**

In 2001, the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) established an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) to carry out an assessment of the inter-linkages between biodiversity and climate change. It produced in 2003 a Technical Report based on the best available scientific knowledge, including that provided by the IPCC. The report concludes that there are significant opportunities for mitigating climate change, and for adapting to climate change through the conservation of biodiversity.

At its seventh meeting in 2004, the COP of the CBD also requested SBSTTA to develop advice for promoting synergy among activities to address climate change at the national, regional and international level, including activities to combat desertification and land degradation, and activities for the conservation of and sustainable use of biodiversity. It invited the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the UNCCD to collaborate with the CBD to this end.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> See for the final report on this workshop: <http://www.unccd.int/workshop/docs/finalagenda-eng.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Taken from <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/climate/>

### **2.3 Synergy at international level**

Creating synergies at the international level is important. All too often, national authorities are more open to synergy than international institutions, such as funding organisations and other international institutions, although they can play a crucial role in attaining synergy. This has been recognized and some efforts have been made to create synergy at the international level. For example, the UNDP and the World Bank have held meetings to discuss possibilities for synergy. In 1999, The United Nations University held an *International Conference on Inter-linkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements*, followed by a three year programme called the UNU Inter-Linkages Initiative.

As mentioned before, the sectoral and sometimes conflicting approach of most IFIs and other donors is especially problematic to reach synergy. IMF and the World Bank have enormous and specialized staffs that are well divided over various themes but often lack joint programmes or approaches. In general, funding is strictly divided over separated thematic budget lines, and few donors are addressing the linkages between the Conventions and other international policies and programmes.

A positive initiative was taken by the GEF, which has devised new funding strategies to promote coherence between the Conventions. It also increasingly adopted an ecosystem approach to the work by its financing programmes. For example, GEF Operational Program on Integrated Ecosystem Management facilitates inter-sectoral and participatory approaches to natural resources management planning and implementation on an ecosystem scale. It creates synergy between the four GEF focal areas (i.e. biodiversity, climate change and international water and land degradation) to optimise multiple benefits.

### **2.4 Synergy at regional level**

It is argued by some that possible synergies can be best attained at this level. This is because they feel predominant eco-systems tend to be regional by nature. Systems such as river basins, seas/coastal marines systems, island chains, mountain ranges and other geographical landforms are where the impacts of environmental degradation are felt most severely and where the potential exists for learning and developing holistic and comprehensive solutions (UNU/GEIC, 2002). An example of synergy at the regional level is the Central Asian Programme on Synergy run through the Regional Environmental Centre in Central Asia, located in Kazakhstan.

### **2.5 Synergy at national level**

The overlapping and sometimes duplicate commitments under the Rio Conventions can pose tremendous challenges for signatory countries. Often human, institutional and financial resources are limited and coordination is lacking. To establish linkages and reduce overlaps between the Conventions can provide opportunities to reduce costs and efforts, for example by carrying out similar obligations in an integrated way.

So far coordination at the national level in most countries is still limited. Barriers to achieve synergy are often political, institutional or cultural. For example, different departments within ministries may be responsible for implementing each Convention, or may be in competition for limited resources. Also coordination mechanisms may not be in place or are inefficient or impeded according to different priorities and power struggles.

As stated before, the key task of national governments is to mainstream Conventions' implementation plans into national development priorities and policies. On country level, there may be no cohesive planning framework, which makes the integration into

sectoral policies essential. (UNDP, 2002). To develop and make use of linkages with existing policies and planning structures helps to both attain commitment and increase to effectiveness.

Other examples of possibilities to enhance synergy at the national level are institutionalised information sharing or joint information systems, coordination and cooperation of Convention focal points and GEF focal points, joint reporting, joint public outreach and capacity building activities (for common capability needs, such as data and information management, communication, financial management, policy analysis), promoting synergy in curricula of academic education, increasing scientific linkages, and supporting exchange programmes of professionals, nationally and internationally.



### 3 Local contributions to the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD

#### 3.1 Introduction

Many local sustainable land use and water management initiatives contribute to the objectives of the Rio Conventions.<sup>19</sup> Examples of such activities and their link to the three Conventions are summarized in the table below.

Local initiatives usually do not have the direct objective to contribute to the Conventions. Some may not even be aware that they are contributing to these objectives. Most initiatives focus on livelihood issues and do not work directly on biodiversity conservation for example. Still, these projects often bring benefits to biodiversity conservation and enhance resilience to climatic events.<sup>20</sup>

This chapter presents five cases of local, sustainable land use and water management, initiatives, which contribute significantly to the implementation of the Rio Conventions:

1. *Analog Forestry in Nuevo Mundo: A Community in Northwest Pichichinga*, by the Rainforest Rescue Foundation (FURARE), Ecuador;
2. *Empowering Pastoralists Communities in Somali Regional State*, by the NGO Hope for the Horn, Ethiopia;
3. *Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change in the Southwest Region of Bangladesh*, by the Coastal Development Partnership (CDP), Bangladesh;
4. *Enhancing Sustainable Livelihoods in the Suid Bokkeveld*, by the Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG), South Africa;
5. *Integrated Water Management and Up-scaling of Successful Dialogues in the Cotahuasi Sub-basin*, by the NGO AEDES, Peru.

The cases provide practical examples on how international policies related to climate change, biodiversity conservation and desertification could be translated to projects on the ground. For each initiative the linkages with each of the Rio Conventions are described as well as the way in which synergy between the Conventions is created by the initiative.

The case descriptions provide short summaries only. The full case descriptions can be obtained at Both ENDS website at: [www.bothends.org](http://www.bothends.org) (click on *Strategic Cooperation*, then click on *Local Contributions to the UNFCCC, UNCCD and CBD*). For more information on the cases you can contact the authors, whose contact details are provided at the end of each case summary.

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<sup>19</sup> This notion was confirmed by a study carried out by Ana V. Rojas Blanco for Both ENDS in 2004. Based on a questionnaire among partners of Both ENDS, it was concluded that most of the organisations carry out activities with a clear link to one, and often all, of the Rio Conventions.

<sup>20</sup> For example, FUDEU has designed an instrument called Environmental Fragility Index (IFA, in Spanish), which uses environmental variables to analyse and determine if human activities are compatible with the natural and environmental conditions of a specific area. For more information see: [http://www.bothends.org/encycl/cases/viewcase.php?cat=2&id=98&id\\_language=1](http://www.bothends.org/encycl/cases/viewcase.php?cat=2&id=98&id_language=1)

Table 2. Examples of activities carried out by different local partners of Both ENDS, which contribute to the objectives of the Rio Conventions

<b>Type of activity</b>	<b>General description</b>	<b>Contribution to the combat against desertification</b>	<b>Contribution to adaptation to and mitigation of climate change</b>	<b>Contribution to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use</b>
<b>Sustainable land use</b>				
Soil enrichment	Although techniques may vary, soil enrichment can be clustered in two groups: "green manure" –vegetation litter- and nutrient enriching plants.	Soil enrichment techniques are designed to avoid the use of fertilisers, and maintain or recuperate the soil characteristics required for agricultural production.	Healthy soils are less prone to erosion and retain water better.	Refraining from the use of fertilisers for soil enrichment is beneficial for a healthy environment.
Diversification	To go from monoculture in search of systems that allow either simultaneous or consecutive crop production.	Diversification enhances richness of the soil and increases its resilience, thus increasing food security.	Diversification diminishes the possibilities of agricultural patterns collapsing due to changes in rain or drought regimes. Moreover, nurseries are often created to avoid seeds loss as well as to give species time to adapt to weather variability.	Nurseries are often created to avoid seeds loss.
Adoption of environment friendly agricultural practices/ use of indigenous crops	To recuperate land (e.g. under monoculture practices) and/or introduce traditional crops and environmentally friendly agricultural techniques from an environmental or economic perspective.	Good agricultural practices that exclude the use of pesticides or fertilizers, and utilise traditional plant knowledge, can be combined with scientific knowledge in order to extract the best of both branches of knowledge and produce stronger land conservation and restoration practices.	Environmentally friendly agricultural practices are increasingly adopted, a.o. as they are perceived/proven to be able to withstand climatic variability better than monoculture/ conventional practices.	Environment friendly agricultural practices and use of indigenous crops are beneficial for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.
Reforestation, silvicultural practices (Analog Forestry, polyculture).	Silvicultural practices like Analog Forestry aim to recover or mimic the forest architecture. They include not only the use of traditional crops, but	The characteristics comprised by local species help to sustain soil richness. When established in dry regions, silvicultural practices can help to increase humidity in farmed areas, as	The maintenance or recovery of forested sites or forest-like canopies is an important measure in order to maintain cooler and more humid microclimates, avoiding extreme temperature	With the recovery of indigenous vegetation, local habitats are preserved or mimicked, and biodiversity is conserved. It can also sustain the habitat for e.g. non-timber products necessary

	introduce the presence of shadow like vegetation, while taking into account the requirements of local biodiversity.	well as recuperate soil humidity. Shadow crops can also enhance resilience in humid areas, since they receive additional protection against extreme rainfall, and are less exposed to soil erosion. Moreover, water trapped in vegetation litter or by plant roots has a higher opportunity of infiltration in the soil, recharging the groundwater table.	changes in vulnerable areas. In this way, polyculture systems in dry areas withstands extremes much more than conventional dry-hoed crops. Vegetation cover or shadow crops can also help as a buffer towards climatic events such as hurricanes, monsoons, excess rainfall, or droughts as it helps to diminish the strength of winds, and traps water in the soil. Forested areas also have the capacity to absorb carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ) from the atmosphere.	for the community's livelihood. Also the increase of forested areas increases the possibility for exchange of genetic material, therefore reducing the risks of interbreeding and genetic degradation. Local vegetation can also be used to create buffer zones between productive and forested lands.
<b>Water management</b>				
Water conservation	Amongst others: protection of infiltration areas, use of more efficient irrigation methods, or building trenches, tanks, reservoirs or ponds to preserve water, the creation of trenches and excavated tanks, water reservoirs, farm ponds and bunds.	In dry and vulnerable areas different variety of measures are taken to increase water availability and storing capacity, which enhances food security.	Climate variability is resulting in longer dry periods and shorter periods of heavy rain, and highly unpredictable water availability. This situation requires measures to be taken to better conserve and store water when it is there to be used in dry periods.	Water is a basic need for all forms of life, for both people and the environment. Conserving water is therefore crucial to increase biodiversity and to sustainably use nature's resources.
Wetland/ Mangrove protection	Renewing wetlands that have been lost or degraded and reclaiming their functions and values as vital ecosystems.	Mangroves act as a buffer zone between fresh and salty water, protecting the inland from excess salinity and therefore maintaining fertility.	Wetlands and mangroves are natural barriers against climatic events, such as hurricanes or monsoons.	Wetlands/mangroves are important habitats for many species and vital ecosystems.
Small-scale hydroelectric production	Small-scale hydroelectric projects can produce sufficient energy supply for communities and can be designed in a way that causes no distortion to river basins, feeding on the river natural flows.	When communities are aware of the fact that the health of the catchment area and its vegetation cover is crucial for the sustainability of the electricity generating system, they take better care of the catchment area.	Communities' energy needs can be met, while decreasing the pressure on wood and fossil fuels.	Well-maintained catchment areas include conservation of natural processes and habitats. Also, stress on forested areas is reduced, as less wood is needed for energy production.



<b>Other activities</b>				
Design and implementation of "zoning plans" <sup>21</sup>	Zoning plans identify soil characteristics and the appropriate land use required for each soil type.	Readjusting land use can contribute to avoid land degradation, or to maintain the health of river basins. Adequate zoning plans point out degraded areas, which should be recuperated.	Zoning plans can identify the most vulnerable areas and be as such the basis for adaptation plans for different areas.	Adequate zoning plans can help identify and preserve or recuperate biologically important areas, e.g. to develop biological or scenic corridors.
Creation of biodiversity registries.	Registries containing important information on species in a particular area.	Knowledge about biodiversity, held in traditional knowledge systems of indigenous peoples and other local communities, is a valuable source for new products, as well as for sustainable use and conservation of local ecosystems.	Biodiversity registries monitor the health and number of species, and can be used as an indicator of vulnerability.	Biodiversity registries are an important means to assess the local biodiversity. In some cases, biodiversity protection or recuperation is used as a success indicator for interventions.
Use of drought and hydrological analysis	Drought and hydrological analysis are undertaken in an effort to assess water availability in different regions. Results can be used at local level as well as inputs to contingency programs or planning processes at national and/or regional levels.	Results of drought and hydrological analyses can be used to plan agricultural activities.	Results of drought and hydrological analyses can be used as input in adaptation plans for floods or droughts.	Results of these analyses can be used to assess the impact of the hydrological cycle and droughts on biodiversity.

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<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that zoning plans have different legal status among countries. In some of them, zoning plans are binding while in others they are merely a recommendation for developers. It should also be noted that in some discussions surrounding planning analysis, the use of the term "zoning plan" is not well perceived, preferring the use of terms such as "development planning". However, in order to be true to the answers obtained through the questionnaires, the term "zoning plan" will be kept under the understanding that such definition conveys a set of activities and legal consequences, which are not homogeneous throughout countries.

### 3.2 Five cases of local contributions

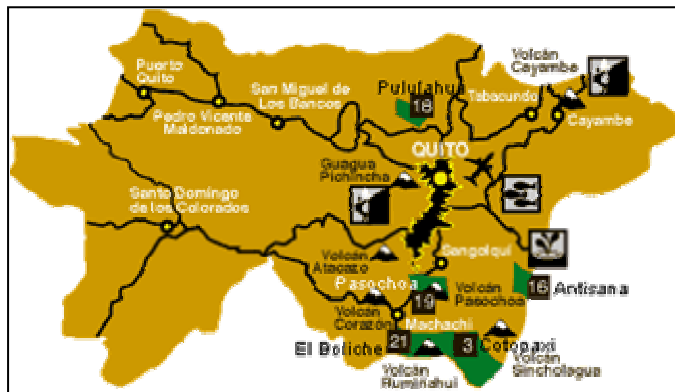
#### **Analog Forestry in Nuevo Mundo: A Community in Northwest Pichincha, Ecuador**

##### 1. Basis statistics

<i>Location:</i>	The Nuevo Mundo community in Los Bancos Canton, in the Northwest of the Pichincha Province, Ecuador.
<i>Average annual rainfall:</i>	Between 2500 and 3000 mm
<i>Description ecological context:</i>	According to Holdrige classification, this area is a humid tropical forest. The community is located in the Chocó bioregion, which is considered one of the most important biodiversity and endemism hot spots worldwide. Large-scale forest conversion in the 60s and 70s left only 4.4% of the native forest covers intact.
<i>Population in the area:</i>	240 people
<i>Main income:</i>	Subsistence farming. Until FURARE's arrival, selling milk products and timber provided the only income for the families.
<i>Average income:</i>	\$250 per year

##### 2. Main challenges in Nuevo Mundo

The forest in the Ecuadorian West has been determined to be among the most threatened regions on Earth, in terms of biological extinction, as a result of deforestation and other human activities. The Pacific Chocó bioregion is mainly being threatened by the unsustainable practices of landowners, and logging and mining companies. This has generated the progressive degradation of the diverse ecosystems that form part of the bioregion, and the impoverishment of the communities that have traditionally sustained themselves by using the forest resources. In Nuevo Mundo, the main causes for deforestation are the extension of grasslands and timber extraction. The resulting loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and limited water flows have great impact on the lives and livelihoods of the Nuevo Mundo community.



##### 3. Implementing organisation

The Rainforest Rescue Foundation (FURARE) is a non-for-profit, non-governmental organisation. FURARE promotes conservation of tropical forests, rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems and recovery of biodiversity. Its work is based on the search for sustainable alternatives, using as its main tool the Analog Forestry methodology. FURARE develops several projects with local communities in the Northwest of Pichincha, and is currently involved in capacity building processes at national and international level.

#### 4. Main activities

As a means to restore the forest ecosystems, as well as to address the need of the Nuevo Mundo community to improve the soil and increase families' income, FURARE adopted the Analog Forestry methodology. Analog Forestry is a system of silviculture, which imitates the architectural structure and function of the original vegetation.

In the design of Analog Forests, a modified environment is created, allowing the species of the original forest to be reproduced in an anthropogenic system. Simultaneously, the system seeks to strengthen rural communities socially and economically, through the use of species that generate marketable products. It provides a broad range of crops and reduces the risks of depending on one product only.



From the start, working with the community has been practical, participatory and democratic. Families in the community selected part of their farms to implement the Analog Forestry system, and an integrated plan for each of the farms was developed. This plan considered the needs of the farmer as well as the environmental characteristics in the design, in order to increase both the ecological and production value of the farm.

The initiative has shown great results. Large numbers of community and family owned greenhouses were established, biological corridors were developed, as well as a 5000 m<sup>2</sup> plant nursery with 80 species. Simultaneously, with the objective of generating income for the families, the production and sale of vegetables, fruits, milk and other nutritional species in local markets was promoted. In addition, capacity has been built in craftsmanship production with materials from the region, such as bamboo and wood.

The experiences with Analog Forestry in the Nuevo Mundo community have now become an important referent for the Northwest region and for the national level. FURARE is already replicating this system in 5 communities in the Northwest and provides training on Analog Forestry to several national and international organisations.



#### 5. Relevance to the UNFCCC: mitigation and adaptation

Analog Forestry reduces deforestation, helps to recover degraded areas and increases the vegetation cover in the community's landscape. This enhances carbon sequestration and its long-term fixation. It also provides adaptation measures, amongst others by means of crop diversification, by selecting species that are less vulnerable to climate change, by establishing plant nurseries for research, and by creating seed banks.

## 6. Relevance to the CBD: conservation and sustainable resources use

Analog Forestry is highly relevant to the CBD. It promotes the preservation of the vegetation cover and in-situ conservation of biodiversity. It also focuses on the reproduction of native endangered species and on the creation of habitats for biodiversity in anthropogenic areas. Moreover, apart from conserving biodiversity, a major strength of Analog Forestry is the promotion of the sustainable use of the forest resources.

## 7. Relevance to the UNCCD: awareness and land restoration

Analog Forestry raises the awareness of the community on the negative effects of deforestation and overexploitation of natural resources. Secondly, it increases the vegetation cover in degraded areas and restores the ecologic structures and functions of the forest ecosystems. Re-vegetation of watersheds and riversides is also important to ensure a constant flow of water even in dry seasons, and to halt the deposit of sediments in the water bodies.

## 8. Synergies created by the project

This table shows how the activities within the Analog Forestry method contribute to the objectives of each of the Rio Conventions.

Activity	UNFCCC objectives	CBD objectives	UNCCD objectives
Conservation of native forest remnants	Conservation of carbon sinks	Biodiversity conservation; sustainable use of the humid forest (critical ecosystem)	Preserving ecosystems to mitigate the effects of droughts and stop desertification
Recovery of degraded areas	Carbon sequestration	Habitat for biodiversity; food for biodiversity	Restoration of structure and functions of the ecosystem
Revegetation of watersheds		Habitat for biodiversity	Stabilize storage and deposit of sediments in water bodies
Establishment of plant nurseries	Mitigation strategies to climate change, and adaptation of species to special conditions	Conservation of rare species or threatened species; germoplasm banks.	Provides food security for the communities
Crops diversification	Diminishes the risks of depending on one crop susceptible to climate change	Promotes agricultural diversity and the sustainable use of the genetic resources	Soil protection; mitigation against erosion and desertification processes.
Creation of biological corridors	Carbon sequestration	Increases dispersion range of biodiversity, stops "biological island" effect	It recreates structures and functions of the ecosystem
Generation of economic alternatives for the communities	Opportunity for a sustainable development of the community	Sustainable use of the components of biodiversity; benefits shared in an equitable and fair way	Improvement of the quality of life of the communities; additional income for peasant families
Generation of databases of promising species	Allows to select species capable of adapting to climatic changes	Allows to select species that promote greater opportunities for biodiversity	Tool to establish food security systems.

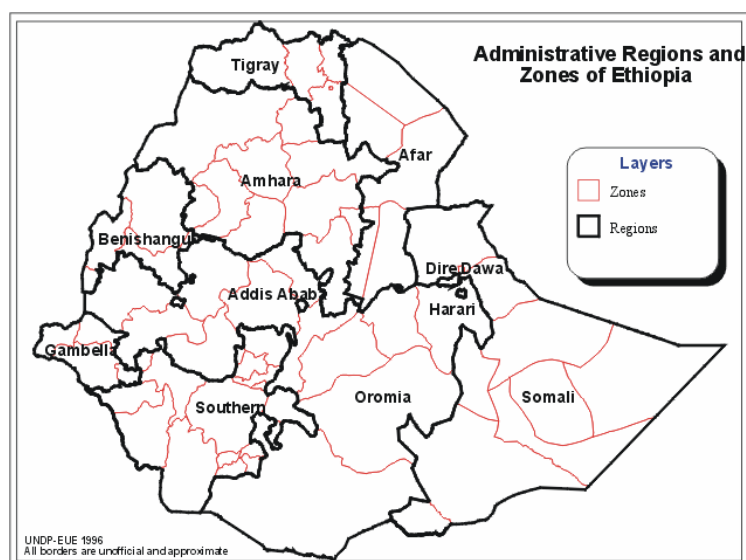
**For more information:** <http://www.laurajamieson.com/furare/> or contact **Lorena Gamboa: [info@furare.com](mailto:info@furare.com).**

## Empowering Pastoralists Communities in Somali Regional State

### 1. Basis statistics

<i>Location:</i>	Eastern part of the Somali Regional State, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
<i>Average annual rainfall:</i>	Between 300 to 500 mm per year
<i>Description ecological context:</i>	The soil in the area is sandy, fragile and highly erodible. A large part of the project area is covered by shrubs, herbs, thorny bushes and xerophilous woodlands that mainly consist of arid land vegetation. This vegetation is the source of feed for livestock and provides commercial forest products such as natural gums, incense and myrrh.
<i>Population in the area:</i>	1,344,507; 54.5% male - 45.5% female; 83% pastoralist - 17% agro-pastoralist
<i>Main income:</i>	Livestock rearing
<i>Average income:</i>	Birr 860 (~US\$ 100) per year

### 2. Main challenges in Eastern Somali Regional State



The main environmental problem of the area is land degradation and loss of biodiversity as a result of deforestation, overgrazing, soil erosion, increasing temperatures and recurrent droughts. Climate change is expected to have further adverse impacts on this ecologically sensitive environment. The climatic changes combined with frequent tribal conflicts, the civil war in Somalia and the subsequent influx and settlement of refugees increase

vulnerability and lead to crises of livelihood security. In addition, measures taken by the government to control cross-border contraband trade have indirectly led to restrictions in the traditional seasonal movement of pastoralists across borders and in their cross-border sales of livestock.

### 3. Implementing organisation

Hope for the Horn (HFH) is a humanitarian, non-governmental, and non-political indigenous organisation. It was established in 1994 to tackle the recurrent droughts and other social problems in Somali Regional State of Ethiopia. HFH aims to contribute to the quality of life of pastoralists communities by empowering them to develop their resources and promote democracy and human rights.

#### 4. Main activities

In order to protect the people in Somali Regional State from the frequent droughts and subsequent food insecurity and forced migration, Hope for the Horn entered into a Holistic Natural Resources Management (HNRM) based pastoralist development program in 1997. This was done in collaboration with local community, regional and national government, donors and international communities. HNRM involves the integrated management of three elements: quality of people's (pastoralists) life, form of production (livestock) and natural resources development.

Since then HFH has implemented more than 50 different projects in different parts of its operational area, including:

- **Environmental education:** Intensive community training in natural resources conservation, environmental protection and conflict management.
- **Water resources development:** Construction and maintenance of small-scale dams, reducing long travel to fetch water for both human and livestock, and easing conflicts on limited water resources; catchment treatment enhancing the soil (planting trees) and reducing siltation (silt traps); and the establishment of environmental and water management committees.
- **Soil conservation and reforestation:** Construction of terraces and check dams and rehabilitation of degraded land with multi-purpose tree seedling plants.
- **Energy saving:** Introduction and distribution of energy saving stoves in order to reduce deforestation for fuel wood.
- **Fodder Bank:** Production of animal feed throughout the year and storage for emergency situations.
- **Schooling/education:** Construction of one secondary and ten primary schools where environmental education is provided.
- **Women development:** Targeting women associations and girls to train them in different skills and environmental management.
- **Emergency relief operation:** Providing water and animal feed during droughts.



Water availability, vegetation cover and fodder increased as a result of project implementation. Birds and wild animals started to come back while the plantation has turned local areas breathy and cool compared to untreated areas. The gained experiences will be used to expand the interventions and enhance rehabilitation of the degraded land as well as the rational use of the available scarce resources for better livelihoods of the community in the area.

#### 5. Relevance to the UNFCCC: adaptation and mitigation

The different project activities have resulted in increased vegetation cover that promotes, on a small-scale, carbon sequestration and reduction of sunlight reflection from land (albedo). Moreover, the supply and use of energy saving stoves is an

important way of reducing the use of wood for fuel and hence, reducing CO2 emissions.

Meanwhile, the sustainable use and management of the land and water resources promoted in the project have enhanced the capacity of local people to better resist the recurring droughts and increased weather variability, thus strengthening the adaptation capacity of the community to climate change.

#### **6. Relevance to the CBD: enhancement of biodiversity**

The activities have visibly contributed to the enhancement of biodiversity in the area. The water resources development, tree seedling plantations and soil and water conservation measures have resulted in the regeneration of undergrowth of different valuable plant species. In addition, because of the availability of water and increased vegetation cover, some birds such as the migrant European Crane and several wild animals, which had disappeared from the area, have started to come back.

#### **7. Relevance to the UNCCD: rehabilitation of degraded land**

The different interventions have rehabilitated degraded lands and increased the vegetation cover in the area. Communities have been able to re-vegetate and rehabilitate once denuded refugee areas and a number of people plant seedlings and grow their own multi-purpose trees woodlots. The production and use of energy saving stoves have contributed to the reduction of vegetation for fuel wood. Meanwhile, water-harvesting structures have availed usable amounts of water for both human and livestock consumption besides moistening the area and encouraging natural vegetation growth.

The initiative also focuses on raising awareness on environmental issues and builds the capacity of the communities to work towards their own environmental management.

#### **8. Synergies created by the project**

The activities address the objectives and principles of all three Conventions related to HFHs common mission, which is sustainable development. This implies an integration of natural resources management and environmental protection with communities' socio-economic development. The initiative shows that it is possible to integrate the objectives of the Conventions at the local level and that it can be useful and practical to mandate one organisation at ground level to plan and synchronize the implementation of such activities.

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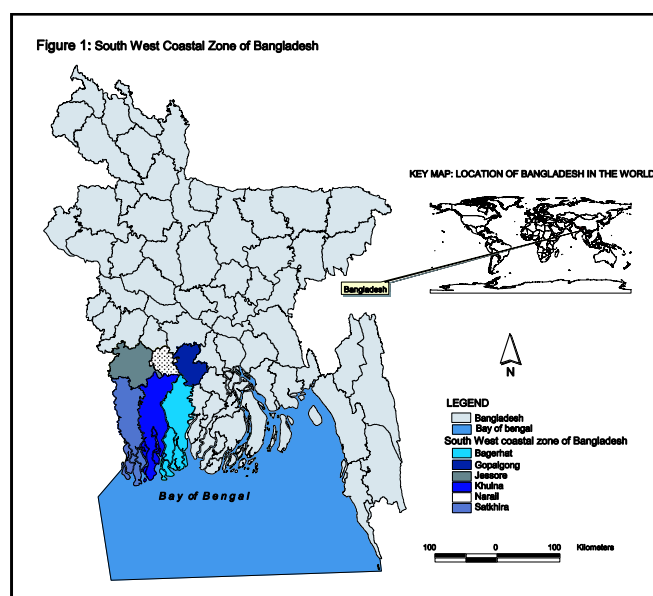


## **Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change in the Southwest Region of Bangladesh**

### **1. Basis statistics**

<i>Location:</i>	Southwest coastal region of Bangladesh
<i>Average annual rainfall:</i>	2084 mm
<i>Description ecological context:</i>	The Southwest coastal region of Bangladesh is a flat, low-lying, deltaic tidal flood plain with an elevation of one meter or less above sea level. The region is subject to frequent natural disasters such as cyclones, floods, droughts and tidal surges, and faces salinity problems. The coastal environment provides a rich and productive environment for its inhabitants, but is intricate, sensitive and fragile. The Sundarbans, world heritage and largest mangrove forest, is situated here.
<i>Population in the area:</i>	7.8 million; rural-urban ratio close to 84:16
<i>Main income:</i>	Agriculture, fisheries and livestock rearing
<i>Average income:</i>	Tk. 18785 (~US\$ 318) per household

### **2. Main challenges in the Southwest coastal region of Bangladesh**



Bangladesh is a country prone to frequent disasters and climate change is expected to aggravate this situation. The Southwest coastal region of Bangladesh is particularly vulnerable, due to its sensitive and fragile ecosystem and livelihood pattern which is highly dependent on natural resources. This region has been identified as one of the areas in Bangladesh that would be most affected by climate change. Water logging, salinity, erosion, and large-scale commercial shrimp cultivation are the major issues that affect the lives and livelihoods of the people in this region.

### **3. Implementing organisation**

Coastal Development Partnership (CDP) is working in the Southwestern part of Bangladesh on local environmental and socio-economic issues. Based on their experience with floods, drought, salinity, shrimp cultivation and water-logging, CDP is currently involved in collecting and disseminating information on adaptation strategies of people who are victims of climate change related disasters.



#### 4. Main activities

In 2002, CARE-Bangladesh initiated the Reducing Vulnerability to Climate Change (RVCC) Project with financial support from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), to increase the adaptive capacity of the inhabitants in the Southwest region of Bangladesh. CDP is one of the 17 partner organisations of the RVCC project, acting as the Central Information Centre (CIC) on climate change. Collection and dissemination of information on climate change and adaptation strategies through popular publications is one of the major tasks of CDP.

The RVCC Project is working in six districts in Southwest Bangladesh through partnerships with local organisations and communities. The project aims to reduce vulnerability of communities by building their capacity to develop and implement adaptation strategies, as well as to strengthen advocacy towards the national government on relevant climate related issues.

Large parts in the coastal districts are affected by salt intrusion and water logging and therefore unsuitable for the production of many traditional crops. To reduce dependency on scarce agricultural lands, several alternative livelihood strategies are promoted, which increase the livelihood security of the local inhabitants. Examples of such alternative livelihood strategies are:

- **Hydroponics:** Hydroponics is a traditional agricultural practice in some parts of the region where water logging is a regular phenomenon. This traditional practice is now being spread to other waterlogged areas. Hydroponics is an agricultural system where crops are grown on beds floating on water. The floating beds are usually made of water hyacinth and straw of aman paddy along with duckweed, and other aquatic plants. After harvesting the crops, the beds are used as organic manure in the fields.



- **Mele cultivation:** Mele (reed) is a saline tolerant plant that can grow in high water levels. Mele cultivation is economically viable for the local communities, as the reed can be dried and used to make mats, which are being sold at local markets.

- **Cage aquaculture:** In cage aquaculture, fish is cultured in an open aquatic body (rivers, canals or wetlands) in cages made of metal nets.



Through aquaculture, local people can profitably exploit household ponds and waterlogged areas. Cage aquaculture provides an important alternative to conventional aquaculture, which is made impossible by large-scale commercial shrimp farmers who buy most of the land and deny access of the local people to the common water bodies. The fish can be consumed, or sold at markets to increase income stability.

- **Saline tolerant non-rice crop cultivation:** Saline tolerant crops like maize and grass are being promoted among the local communities to increase crop rotation, as well as retention of nitrogen and other nutrients in the soil.

## **5. Relevance to the UNFCCC: awareness and adaptation**

The RVCC project aims at raising awareness on climate change and its impacts on people's livelihoods. It also enhances the capacity of local people to cope with these impacts by promoting alternative livelihood options. These options all promote food security and income generation and provide a means to cope with the water logging and salinity problems in the area, which are expected to be aggravated in the future. During the year, only one cycle of paddy cultivation is possible. This is in the monsoon season when salinity is low. The rest of the year the land is left fallow due to salinity. In this period, cultivation of saline tolerant non-rice crops can provide food and fodder for cattle encouraging local people to rear livestock.

## **6. Relevance to the CBD: conservation of biodiversity**

Biodiversity in the Southwestern region of Bangladesh is in a vulnerable condition, due to salinity and the large-scale expansion of shrimp farming. As a result, much flora and fauna have disappeared. Reintroduction of saline tolerant trees with food or income value such as Kewra (a mangrove species), cultivation of saline tolerant crops and Mele, or homestead gardening not only enhance people's livelihood security but also conserve and reduce pressure on the local biodiversity, including the Sundarbans.

## **7. Relevance to the UNCCD: soil enhancement and conservation**

The alternative livelihood options, such as cage aquaculture and hydroponics, decrease pressure on scarce agricultural land. In fact, floating bed agriculture has proven to be more productive than traditional soil agriculture, as the nutrient-rich floating media in hydroponics promote crop growth intensity. The livelihood alternatives often also enhance the quality of the soil. For example, saline tolerant crop cultivation is important to increase the long-term retention of nitrogen and other nutrients in the soil. This increases soil organic matter, moisture and stability of soil texture.

## **8. Synergies created by the project**

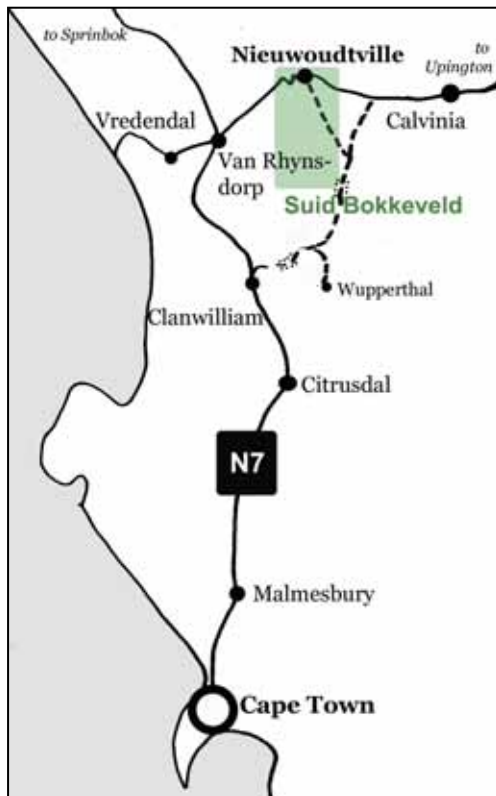
Although the project focuses on adaptation to climate change, important synergies are created between adaptation to climate change, land restoration and biodiversity conservation. Following from the above, the diversified livelihood practices not only enhance the adaptive capacity of local communities to the impacts of climate change, they also conserve and reduce pressure on valuable local biodiversity as well as improve the quality of the soil.

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## Enhancing sustainable livelihoods in the Suid Bokkeveld

### 1. Basis statistics

<i>Location:</i>	Suid Bokkeveld on the Southwestern margins of the Northern Cape Province, South Africa
<i>Average annual rainfall:</i>	Between 125 and 350 mm; mostly during the cooler winter months
<i>Description ecological context:</i>	The Suid Bokkeveld is an area of rugged sandstone and shale plateaux, incised by deep canyons. It lies on the boundary between two biomes of global importance as centres of endemism and biodiversity: the Succulent Karoo and the Cape Floristic Kingdom. These biomes host a vast array of drought-tolerant plants, e.g. the endemic plant <i>Aspalathus linearis</i> , known locally as <i>rooibos</i> .
<i>Population in the area:</i>	Approximately 600; over 90% "coloured" (people of mixed descent) farmers and farm workers. The rest "white" farmers and landowners.
<i>Main income:</i>	Sales of agricultural products (rooibos tea and seed, as well as small livestock), paid agricultural labour
<i>Average income:</i>	R1800 per month (~US\$ 300) for a household with two working adults.



### 2. Main challenges in Suid Bokkeveld

Over many years, excessive burning of veld<sup>22</sup>, over-grazing and cultivation of rooibos and cereals have led to the degradation of large parts of the fynbos biome. Land transformation as a result of the expansion of rooibos tea plantations is a major threat to the biodiversity of the area. The recent upward trend in temperatures, accompanied by drought events has provided a foretaste of the predicted effects of global climate change on the west coast of South Africa. Being a relatively low rainfall, low-income area, the land and people of the Suid Bokkeveld have already felt the impact of increased climate variability changes. The drought of 2003 caused large-scale destruction in rooibos plantations, and 2004 has been another below-average rain year.

### 3. Implementing organisation

The Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) was established in June 1991 to promote broad engagement of civil society in the debate on

South Africa's post-apartheid environmental policy. Since then EMG has played a key role in raising awareness and facilitating civil society engagement in a broad range of policy processes relevant to environmental management and sustainable development.

<sup>22</sup> Afrikaans and South African English word for open, uncultivated country

#### 4. Main activities

Within the framework of the UNCCD, EMG supported the Northern Cape Department of Agriculture in pilot activities at a local level by taking a bottom up approach. Over time this bottom up initiative has grown into a programme within EMG, which is undertaken in partnership with the Surplus People Project (an NGO focused on land reform).

The programme explores and expresses the relationship between sustainable resource use and sustainable livelihoods in various ways. Key activities include: 1) support for institution and capacity building, 2) facilitating farmer participatory research in natural resource management and sustainable rooibos harvesting, 3) support to achieve sufficient land access and establish agricultural livelihoods that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, 4) enhancing and recording indigenous knowledge relating to rooibos, soil and biodiversity conservation, 5) providing learning opportunities to local community members, 6) enhancing participation of CSOs in policy discussions, and 7) investigation by and with farmers of the impacts of climate change on production and vulnerability.



EMG convened consultative meetings and workshops to facilitate the development of a common vision for the people of Suid Bokkeveld. Farmers all experienced similar difficulties with sustainable production and marketing of their rooibos tea. These relate to insufficient information and local knowledge about rooibos production and marketing, inadequate local infrastructure, soil erosion, crop losses due to drought, poor market access, and low prices.

In order to tackle these difficulties, the *Heiveld Cooperative* was established to organise and promote the interests of the farmers engaged in cultivating rooibos tea in the South Bokkeveld. The Cooperative realised that it was in their best interests to



*Establishing hedges and mulched strips to limit wind and soil erosion*

achieve economic sustainability by promoting greener production methods, and that they would need to gain the knowledge necessary to enable them to do so. The Cooperative was able to enter the market for organic and fair-trade rooibos, and its members were all certified as organic producers. The *Heiveld Cooperative* has grown extensively, and has shown impressive financial results based on sound management and healthy trading relations with alternative trade clients in 9 countries.

#### 5. Relevance to the UNFCCC: adaptation

Project activities are focused on enabling land users to maintain the ecosystem functions on their farms in the face of increasing temperatures, lower average precipitation and later onset of the rainy season. Furthermore, activities to increase soil carbon in cultivated fields and to maintain stands of wild rooibos will contribute, albeit in a small way, to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Investigating the impacts of climate change, farmers have shared a number of response strategies to drought situations, such as modified soil preparation, wind control and planting techniques to maximise use and availability of soil moisture. They also put greater emphasis on regeneration and sustainable use of wild rooibos. Conservation of wild populations of rooibos by farmers is a sound way of adapting to anticipated drought conditions, as wild rooibos is more resilient than cultivated rooibos.

## **6. Relevance to the CBD: conservation of biodiversity**

The project contributes to the conservation of the biodiversity of the unique and threatened fynbos biome by promoting the conservation of undisturbed veld for production of wild tea and, to some degree, for eco-tourism. Transformation of land for the production of rooibos in plantations has been identified as the single greatest threat to the fynbos in the region. The creation of bio-diverse buffer strips not only conserves seed banks of indigenous vegetation types, but also provides refuge for predator insects, pollinators and micro-organisms.

## **7. Relevance to the UNCCD: participatory approaches**

The project was conceptualised in the framework of the UNCCD, and has applied the bottom-up participatory approaches promoted in the UNCCD to minimise soil loss and land degradation. These approaches contribute to the development of local capacities through recognising the key role of local people in problem solving and planning for mitigatory measures in the context of land degradation.

The project has demonstrated how, within the framework of sustainable development, desertification can be combated whilst enhancing incomes.

## **8. Synergies created by the project**

The project has consistently sought to address all three Conventions in its planning and implementation. In practice, this has meant an ecosystem approach which seeks to retain, or re-establish biodiverse soil cover, enhance soil organic material, and enhance livelihoods through participatory approaches that lead to enhanced capacities. Most farmers have stopped burning the veld to clear old lands, recognising that the short-term benefits of ease of clearing are outweighed by the longer-term benefits of organic material in the soils. Farming approaches that are based on retaining rainfall in the soil by maximising soil organic content and preventing dehydration of, and wind damage to exposed soil surfaces are inherently more robust in the face of drought events. As such, the project has played an important role in showing officials and policy makers what is possible 'on the ground'.

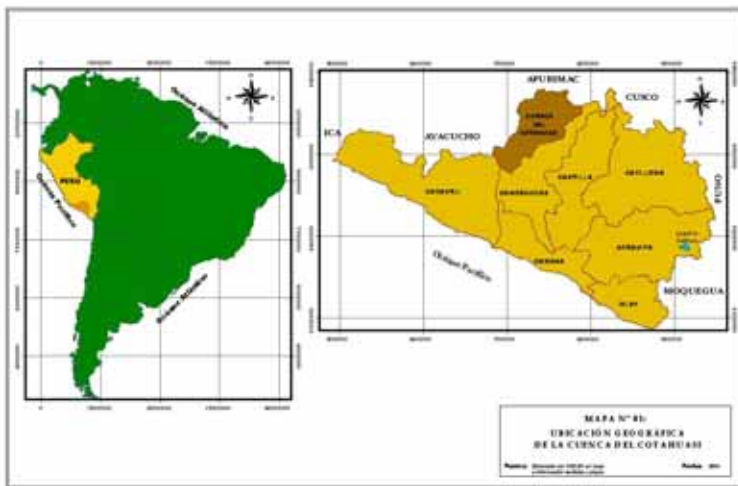
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## Integrated Water Management and Up-scaling of Successful Dialogues in the Cotahuasi Sub-basin

### 1. Basis statistics

<i>Location:</i>	The Cotahuasi sub-basin in the upper mountains of the Western Andes in the Arequipa Region, Southern Perú.
<i>Average annual rainfall:</i>	Between 80 and 1000 mm
<i>Description ecological context:</i>	The Cotahuasi sub-basin has three main categories of landscape, or bio-ecographic provinces: the <i>Subtropical Puna</i> , mostly arid with some marshes and derelict woodland, high density of flora and fauna, and a large number of endemic species; the <i>Southern Subtropical Andes</i> , the wettest part of the basin, with a large diversity of vegetation mosaics; and the <i>Subtropical Pacific Desert</i> , where xerophyte species are to be found. The wide range of geographic characteristics provides a variety of landscapes, making the area one of special cultural, scientific, scenic and touristic interest.
<i>Population in the area:</i>	Approximately 18000. The population is predominantly Quechua.
<i>Main income:</i>	Farming in small units (average 0,91 ha); 87% subsistence food production.
<i>Average income:</i>	US\$ 51 per month

### 2. Main challenges in the Cotahuasi sub-basin



Maps: location of Arequipa within Peru and the Cotahuasi river basin (brown) within the Arequipa region (yellow), resp.

The Cotahuasi sub-basin is a vulnerable area. The soil is fragile, and its water resources are being affected by negative climatic changes, including the El Niño Phenomenon. Studies indicate that during the next twenty years it will become one of the most sensitive zones in the southern coastal region and will suffer a water crisis. It is also foreseen that the increased flow of tourists and the development of mining interests will seriously affect the biodiversity unless preventive and corrective measures are taken. A main

challenge is to encourage the population to carry out profitable yet sustainable economic activities. Through engaging in such activities, people can create sustainable alternatives to tackle the environmental problems they are facing.



### 3. Implementing organisation

AEDES is a non-governmental development organisation. For the past ten years it has promoted sustainable development at three levels: at the local level, in the Ocoña Basin and especially in the Cotahuasi sub-basin; at the regional level, as part of a group of environmental NGOs working on sustainable environmental management; and at the national level, as a member of specialized commissions working on the Rio Conventions.

### 4. Main activities

The Local Agenda 21 activities in the Cotahuasi sub-basin are aimed at showing how planned, participatory and coordinated use of the basin's natural resources can improve the quality of life of people living in extreme poverty. The activities focus on the organisation of people at the local level, and coordination and participation at the micro-basin, sub-basin and Ocoña Basin level.

The activities carried out by AEDES in the sub-basin include the following:

- Awareness raising, mainly among members of farmers associations and schoolchildren.
- Carrying out participatory studies and investigations to gather useful information for the design of sustainable actions in the sub-basin, for example inventories of flora and fauna, investigations on cultural diversity, and exploratory studies of the basin's hydrographical characteristics.
- Strengthening organisations in the sub-basin, and increasing coordination and participation at all levels in the Ocoña Basin to enable an integrated management of the basin;
- Implementation of specific sustainable land use actions such as: *in-situ* conservation with special attention to agro-biodiversity, agro-ecological farming, eco-tourism, soil recovery, and promotion of reforestation.

During the first stage, the initiative of AEDES was oriented towards elaborating the concepts of the Local Agenda 21 for the Cotahuasi basin, focusing on institutional strengthening and development of instruments to lobby for the establishment of the Cotahuasi National Landscape Reserve. Coordination and participation in the management of the sub-basin was increased and people were encouraged to adopt more environmentally friendly economic activities, such as eco-tourism and organic agro-industry.

The second stage of the initiative promotes the up-scaling of the experiences in the participatory management of the Cotahuasi sub-basin to the Ocoña Basin and beyond. This stage was initiated with the inauguration of the Platform of the Water Consumers Boards of the Ocoña Basin.



### 5. Relevance to the UNFCCC: awareness raising and adaptation

The activities in the sub-basin aim at creating awareness on the reality and impacts of climate change. The degree of vulnerability and needs for adaptation are determined together with the population, based on the results of exploratory surveys on productivity. Schoolteachers and schoolchildren are trained in making basic

meteorological measurements and climatology is incorporated in the curriculum. Meanwhile, awareness raising and strengthening of rural and water-users' communities allow them to pro-actively deal with negative climatic effects and to link climate change to the appropriate management of land and water. AEDES also supports reforestation projects and has recently included the recession of glaciers in its investigation program.

## **6. Relevance to the CBD: organic agriculture and biodiversity conservation**

The initiative of AEDES in the Cotahuasi sub-basin has been primarily concentrated on the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity. At local level it has promoted organic farming and eco-tourism, and biodiversity has been studied through inventories of flora, fauna, and resources for agriculture and food supplies. At the regional and national level, the experiences and the information gathered at the sub-basin level were successfully used to lobby for the creation of protected natural areas. Also, they have provided valuable input into biodiversity related regional and national policy plans and programmes.

## **7. Relevance to the UNCCD: participatory approaches**

As water and land use management are closely related, many of the activities carried out in the sub-basin are relevant to the UNCCD. Awareness is being raised among the members of rural communities on managing fragile soils, marshes and water resources, and organisations are strengthened to be able to face the problems related to land degradation and desertification in the area. Activities also aim at increasing the vegetation cover and improving the quality of the soil through the recovery of marshes, natural pasture and woodland, and by cultivating fodder crops.

## **8. Synergies created by the project**

The core of this initiative is the creation of opportunities for dialogue between the different groups in the basin, promoting the active involvement of the population in managing their own sustainable development. Managing the basin ecosystems calls for an integrated approach, taking into account the close relations between water, land and biodiversity. Biodiversity conservation is therefore explicitly linked to soil and water resources management and people are encouraged to adopt sustainable economic activities, and incorporate the negative effects of climatic change in their resources management. This way, synergies are created between water and land use management, livelihood security, biodiversity conservation, and adaptation to climate change. These synergies are not only visible on a local level: Water User Associations are now engaging in basin level negotiations to generate support for the local activities, and scale up the integrated approach developed by AEDES. In addition, the communities have managed to gain recognition of the ecosystem values of the up-stream Ocoña Basin. Since 2003, the area has been given the legal status of a national protected area, allowing them to develop sustainable economic activities while simultaneously closing the area for large-scale interventions.

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## **4 Summary and recommendations**

### **4.1 Summary**

Local communities depend on their environment for their livelihoods and well-being, and interact directly with that environment. They therefore tend to address problems related to climate change, biodiversity loss and desertification simultaneously in the context of ensuring the sustainability of their livelihoods. Their practical experience thus provides valuable lessons for the enhancement of synergy and coordination between the Rio Conventions.

The cases described in the previous chapter clearly show how local initiatives can contribute to the implementation of the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD. They also show how effective synergies can be created between livelihood security, biodiversity conservation, adaptation to climate change, and the combat against desertification and land degradation.

Recognition of such initiatives and the key role of CSOs in the implementation of international and national policies related to biodiversity, climate change and land degradation is crucial. Successful local initiatives should be supported by appropriate financing mechanisms and policies, and the Conventions and national governments should promote and facilitate their replication and up-scaling to higher policy levels.

Furthermore, CSOs must be allowed and supported to participate in relevant policy discussions. Their knowledge on local needs and root causes of biodiversity loss and land degradation, and their insight into local adaptation strategies against the impacts of climate change, are indispensable in the development and implementation of appropriate national policies and action plans in the context of the Rio Conventions.

In the next section concrete policy recommendations are provided on how to enhance CSO participation in relevant policy fora, and how to operationalise the Conventions using local contributions.

### **4.2 Recommendations**

#### **1. Raise awareness and share information**

The Conventions recognise CSOs and local communities as key actors in the development and implementation of the global environment agreements on national and local level. Therefore, civil society organisations and local actors should be well informed about the existence and implications of the Conventions, and the related funding mechanisms.

Communication and information should flow both ways. While governments and the scientific community should recognise and have much to learn from local knowledge and experiences, CSOs need increased understanding of national and global policies and existing scientific knowledge. To assure accessibility of these types of information and knowledge, it is important to make this available through user-friendly documents in appropriate languages.

#### **2. Pro-actively look for promising initiatives**

Case studies such as those presented in this paper provide useful input into policy discussions related to biodiversity, land degradation and climate change.

With regard to climate change, they provide examples to policy discussions on adaptation, and can be considered as a first step towards practical guidelines on the implementation of adaptation projects. The cases show how communities react to threats to their environment. Policy makers should search pro-actively for similar initiatives and assess possibilities for replication and up-scaling.

### **3. Support promising initiatives and stimulate replication and up-scaling**

#### ➤ ***Facilitate access to funds***

The funds created by the international Conventions aim at increasing the capacity of Member States to comply with the objectives of each specific Convention. As a result, CSOs only have access to financial resources through governmental projects. In addition, funding schemes created by multilateral and bilateral donor agencies demand elaborate and complicated applications. Smaller grants and funds should be established to facilitate access by CSOs.

Funding mechanisms should take more cognisance of the close relationship between local or regional environmental concerns and global issues. The GEF was established to fund global environmental priorities. As many of the activities focusing on these global priorities have implications for local livelihoods, the focus should always include local realities and priorities. For example, national biological strategies have mainly focused on conserving rare species of global value, while much less attention has been paid to biodiversity of local value, which sustains the livelihoods of the poor. Efforts that ignore or override local priorities will be opposed by local resource users.

#### ➤ ***Promote consistent and easily understandable funding***

Donor organisations tend to divide their funds over different sectors or issues, and promote these in ways that are not easily understood by CSOs and local communities. Furthermore, since funding priorities follow the international policy agenda, the focus of funds also tends to change frequently. On the other hand, the challenges faced by local actors are complex and inter-linked, and therefore often difficult to describe in terms of current donor focal areas, especially if these change regularly over the years. It is crucial to bridge this gap between local needs and national and international support systems and donor programs.

#### ➤ ***Avoid dependency on donors and stimulate economic sustainability***

In order to avoid dependency on donors and ensure projects and initiatives continue after donor or government support stops, it is important to address the financial sustainability of local initiatives. The Suid Bokkeveld and Analog Forestry case studies provide good examples of how economic sustainability can be created. The Suid Bokkeveld case shows how small-scale rooibos tea farmers are involved in the creation of a market for organic, fair-trade rooibos tea, which brings additional economic benefits for farmers engaged in biodiversity conservation. In Analog Forestry, forestry conservation and maintenance are combined with the production and sale of forestry products, which provides the communities with needed financial resources.

On the other hand, supporting the role of local governments in assuring long-term administrative sustainability is of crucial importance. They are essential players that can assure that these initiatives are properly embedded in long-term investment and development plans.

#### ➤ ***Facilitate information sharing at the local level***

Replication of promising initiatives and approaches can be enhanced by facilitating information sharing and exchange of experiences between practitioners such as farmers' cooperatives, resource managers or female entrepreneurs. Peer learning is

a powerful tool because resource users are able to learn about the problems and solutions of people with similar social and economic circumstances. Similarities in belief and knowledge systems are equally important in enabling people to identify with and adopt innovations.

#### **4. Provide an enabling policy environment**

Whereas enabling policies enhance the implementation of promising projects by CSOs, inappropriate policies have the opposite effect. Linking reality with policy-making processes should become a joint effort of national policy makers and practitioners that can share knowledge on implementation given environmental and social realities. Governments should implement environmental protection policies in line with the Conventions and adopt policies that support community based natural resources management.

#### **5. Enhance participation of CSOs in national policy development**

➤ ***Engage in a long-term dialogue***

Long-term dialogue processes between government representatives and CSOs enable mutual learning, and can bridge the gaps between local needs and capacities, and national and international policies. Such on-going learning processes should be designed to enhance local participation.

➤ ***Ensure equitable, informed and representative participation***

Equitable, informed and representative participation of local stakeholders in the development of national plans must be ensured, to secure that the priorities and visions of local communities are reflected. Community representatives must be allowed to fully participate and take leadership in project initiation, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Since many CSOs do not yet have the capacity and experience to participate in policy discussions, it is crucial to support and strengthen organisations in order to be effectively involved in policy discussions.

➤ ***Promote local and regional meetings***

In order to involve all stakeholders from the local, district, provincial or regional level effectively, it is useful to promote meetings in the local or regional level. The conclusions and recommendations of these fora could contribute to the discussion process at national level, while they simultaneously can contribute to awareness raising efforts and allow for information sharing between actors.

#### **6. Enhance participation of CSOs in international policy discussions**

➤ ***Increase CSO capacity for participation***

For many CSOs, attending international fora is expensive and time consuming. Taking into account that Meetings of the Conventions take place in different countries around the world several times each year, and organisations need to invest time, effort and money in order to be heard. For many CSOs this is impossible, as traveling and lodging expenses may well over-run their budgets.

It is difficult for CSOs to obtain funds for participation in meetings of the Conventions from donor organisations. On the other hand, sponsoring of civil society representatives through national governments may undermine their independency. To increase capacity, independent and accessible funding and training should be available for CSOs.

- **Promote the role of international CSO networks**  
International CSO networks have a vital role in developing capacities to ensure effective and accountable CSO representation and participation at international meetings.
- **Strive to overcome language barriers for CSOs**  
Language presents another barrier to participation. Specific knowledge and understanding not only of English but also of the legal implications of the terms involved, and of the scientific background of the discussions is required. These barriers should be addressed.
- **Try to overcome imbalance in negotiation capacities**  
Related to the technical language barrier is the imbalance in negotiation capacities. Northern countries often dominate international negotiation processes, since many southern countries lack the resources, information and skills for effective negotiation. This should be taken into account, and efforts are needed to train and enhance the negotiation capacities of southern CSOs.

## **7. Enhance synergy between Conventions from a local, operational perspective**

- **Stimulate synergistic projects**  
This research shows that, in reality, water management, sustainable land use, livelihood security, biodiversity conservation and adaptation to climate change are difficult to separate. It is therefore crucial and beneficial to stimulate the development and implementation of comprehensive projects contributing to several environmental issues. The enormous added value of projects that are capable of interlinking solutions to different environmental stresses should be recognized and rewarded.

In order to stimulate comprehensive project proposals, flexible-funding mechanisms are needed which explicitly recognize the added value of such projects.

- **Enhance cooperation between those responsible for implementing the Conventions**  
Often, the responsibility for the implementation of the Conventions is divided between different people or departments, as is their reporting responsibility. However, in many cases activities implemented in the context of one Convention have beneficial impacts in the context of others, as may be seen from the cases. Some of the activities may have a much larger scope and may be implemented by other governmental ministries or agencies (for example: agriculture, water, health, housing, etc.).

In order to achieve synergy at national and local level, strong efforts at national level are necessary to enhance communication and cooperation among the different people or departments responsible. At international or Conventions level it is important to look for ways to provide incentives for such cooperation, for example by integrating reporting requirements.

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## **Resumen ejecutivo y recomendaciones**

### ***Implementación de las Convenciones de Rio***

La Conferencia de Rio de 1992 adoptó la Convención Marco de Naciones Unidas sobre Cambio Climático (CMNUCC) y la Convención sobre Diversidad Biológica (CDB). En 1994, se acordó la tercera convención ambiental mundial relacionada con la Conferencia de Rio, la Convención de Naciones Unidas sobre Combate a la Desertificación (CCD).

Diez años después, el Plan de Implementación de la Conferencia Mundial sobre Desarrollo Sostenible (WSSD) del 2002 enfatizó que a pesar del progreso obtenido, se necesita contar urgentemente con esfuerzos serios para lograr implementar las convenciones. Uno de los retos más importantes que enfrentan las convenciones es traducir los acuerdos mundiales en políticas nacionales y lograr su implementación en el campo.

Al mismo tiempo, existen iniciativas locales relacionadas con el uso sostenible de la tierra y el manejo del agua que contribuyen significativamente a la implementación de las Convenciones de Rio. Sin embargo, este conocimiento y experiencia locales no han sido suficientemente reconocimientos por parte de los tomadores de decisiones a nivel nacional e internacional. Como consecuencia directa, estas iniciativas son raramente utilizadas como aportes valiosos a las discusiones sobre políticas nacionales e internacionales. Además, las iniciativas locales son excepcionalmente apoyadas por estas políticas, e incluso en algunos casos se ven afectadas por estas. Perdiéndose así oportunidades invaluable para la implementación efectiva, la replicabilidad o formalización<sup>1</sup> de estas iniciativas.

### ***Contribuciones de organizaciones de la sociedad civil a las Convenciones de Rio***

Las comunidades locales dependen del medio ambiente que las rodea para su subsistencia y bienestar, e interactúan directamente con el ambiente. Por lo tanto, ellas tienden a tratar problemas relacionados con cambio climático, pérdida de biodiversidad y desertificación de forma simultánea, en el contexto de asegurar la sostenibilidad de sus medios de subsistencia. Su experiencia práctica por lo tanto provee lecciones valiosas para el mejoramiento de las sinergías y coordinación entre las Convenciones de Rio.

A pesar de que el Plan de Implementación del WSSD reconoce explícitamente que las Convenciones de Rio se interrelacionan entre sí, los mecanismos efectivos para aumentar la sinergia y coordinación entre las convenciones son limitados. Por lo tanto, las experiencias locales pueden contribuir a la comprensión de las complejidades e implicaciones prácticas de la conservación de biodiversidad, la degradación de la tierra y el cambio climático. Estas son elementos valiosos en la evaluación de la efectividad y sostenibilidad de las políticas nacionales e internacionales.

Mucho se puede ganar si iniciativas locales similares a las aquí descritas fuesen reconocidas y apoyadas a través de políticas nacionales e internacionales. Las Convenciones y los gobiernos nacionales deben promover la replicabilidad y formalización de las iniciativas locales exitosas, estableciendo para ello mecanismos de financiamiento apropiados. Además, la participación de las organizaciones de la sociedad civil (OSCs) en discusiones políticas importantes debe ser permitida y apoyada. Su conocimiento sobre las necesidades locales y la problemática incluida en las Convenciones de Rio son indispensables para el desarrollo e implementación de políticas y planes de acción nacionales apropiados dentro del contexto de dichas convenciones.

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<sup>1</sup> El término formalización (*up-scaling*) debe entenderse como la integración de iniciativas locales exitosas en la legislación y políticas nacionales, regionales o internacionales.

## **Recomendaciones**

### **1. Concientización e intercambio de información**

Las Convenciones de Río reconocen que las OSC y las comunidades locales son actores clave en el desarrollo e implementación a nivel nacional y local de los acuerdos ambientales mundiales. Por lo tanto, las organizaciones de la sociedad civil y los actores locales deben estar bien informados sobre la existencia e implicaciones de las convenciones, así como de sus respectivos mecanismos de financiamiento.

La comunicación e información debe fluir en ambas vías. Por un lado, los gobiernos y la comunidad científica deben reconocer tanto la importancia del conocimiento y experiencias locales, como que tienen mucho que aprender de este conocimiento. Por otro, las OSCs necesitan aumentar su entendimiento sobre las políticas nacionales y mundiales, así como sobre el conocimiento científico existente. Para asegurar el acceso a este tipo de información y conocimiento, es importante ponerlo a disposición a través de documentos amigables para los usuarios, utilizando un lenguaje apropiado.

### **2. Búsqueda proactiva de iniciativas promisorias**

Estudios de caso tales como los que se presentan en este documento generan aportes útiles para las discusiones políticas relacionadas con biodiversidad, degradación del suelo y cambio climático.

Con respecto al cambio climático, estos proveen ejemplos para las discusiones políticas sobre adaptación y pueden ser considerados como un primer paso hacia guías prácticas sobre la implementación de proyectos de adaptación. Los casos muestran como las comunidades reaccionan ante las amenazas a su medio ambiente. Los tomadores de decisiones deben buscar proactivamente iniciativas similares y evaluar la posibilidad de replicarlas y formalizarlas en sus políticas nacionales.

### **3. Apoyar iniciativas promisorias y estimular la replicabilidad e integración a nivel de políticas ambientales**

#### **➤ Facilitar el acceso a fondos**

Los fondos creados por las convenciones internacionales apuntan a aumentar la capacidad de los estados miembros para cumplir con los objetivos de cada una de las convenciones. Como resultado, las OSCs sólo pueden acceder a recursos financieros a través de proyectos gubernamentales. Adicionalmente, los esquemas de financiamiento creados por las agencias de cooperación bilaterales y multilaterales demandan aplicaciones elaboradas y complicadas. Deberían establecerse donaciones y fondos de menor tamaño para así facilitar el acceso por parte de las OSCs.

Los mecanismos de financiamiento deberían tomar mayor conciencia de la relación cercana entre los problemas ambientales locales y regionales, y los temas a nivel mundial. El GEF (Fondo para el Medio Ambiente Mundial) fue creado para financiar prioridades ambientales mundiales. Como muchas de las actividades enfocadas en estos temas de prioridad mundial tienen implicaciones en el sustento local, el enfoque debe incluir siempre las realidades y prioridades locales. Por ejemplo, las estrategias nacionales sobre biodiversidad se han enfocado en conservar especies raras de valor mundial, mientras que se ha dedicado poca atención a la biodiversidad de valor local, que sirve de sustento para las comunidades de escasos recursos económicos. Los esfuerzos que ignoren o hagan caso omiso a las prioridades locales sufrirán la oposición de los usuarios locales de los recursos naturales.

➤ **Promover financiamiento consecuente y de fácil entendimiento**

Las organizaciones de donantes tienden a dividir sus fondos de acuerdo a diferentes temas o sectores, y estos son promovidos de forma tal que no son fácilmente comprendidos por las OSCs y las comunidades locales. Además, las prioridades de financiamiento siguen la agenda política internacional, por lo tanto el foco de los fondos tiende a cambiar con frecuencia. Por otro lado, los retos encarados por los actores locales son complejos e interrelacionados, y por lo tanto generalmente son difíciles de describir en términos concordantes con las áreas focales de los donantes, especialmente si estas cambian regularmente a través de los años. Es crucial cerrar esta brecha entre las necesidades locales y el sistema de apoyo nacional e internacional y los programas de los donantes.

➤ **Evitar la dependencia de los donantes y estimular la sostenibilidad económica**

En aras de evitar la dependencia sobre donantes y para asegurar que los proyectos e iniciativas continúen aún cuando el apoyo de los donantes o del gobierno cese, es importante tratar la sostenibilidad económica de las iniciativas locales. Los casos de Suid Bokkeveld y de Forestería Análoga proveen buenos ejemplos sobre cómo la sostenibilidad económica puede ser creada. El caso de Suid Bokkeveld muestra como los agricultores a pequeña escala de té de rooibos se encuentran involucrados en la creación de un mercado para té de rooibos orgánico de comercio justo (*fair-trade*), que genera beneficios económicos adicionales a los campesinos involucrados en la conservación de biodiversidad. En Forestería Análoga, la conservación y el mantenimiento del bosque se combinan con la producción y venta de productos forestales, que generan recursos económicos necesarios para las comunidades.

Por otro lado, apoyar el papel de los gobiernos locales para asegurar la sostenibilidad administrativa a largo plazo es de crucial importancia. Estos son actores esenciales que pueden asegurar que estas iniciativas sean incorporadas de manera apropiada en los planes de inversión y desarrollo a largo plazo.

➤ **Facilitar el intercambio de información a nivel local**

Replicar iniciativas y enfoques prometedores puede ser mejorado al facilitar el intercambio de información y experiencias entre expertos locales tales como cooperativas de agricultores, administradores de recursos, o mujeres empresarias. El aprendizaje entre iguales es una herramienta poderosa ya que los usuarios de los recursos naturales son capaces de aprender sobre los problemas y soluciones de personas que viven en circunstancias sociales y económicas similares. Similitudes en sistemas de creencias y conocimiento son igualmente importantes para facilitar que las personas se identifiquen y adopten innovaciones.

#### **4. Generar un ambiente de políticas facilitadoras**

Mientras que las políticas facilitadoras de actividades mejoran la implementación de proyectos promisorios por parte de las OSC, las políticas inapropiadas poseen el efecto contrario. La unión entre la realidad y los procesos de toma de decisiones debe convertirse en un esfuerzo conjunto de los tomadores de decisiones a nivel nacional y los expertos locales que pueden compartir su conocimiento sobre la implementación a partir de las realidades ambientales y sociales. Los gobiernos deberían implementar políticas de protección ambiental conformes con las convenciones y adoptar políticas que apoyen la gestión local de los recursos naturales.

## **5. Mejorar la participación de las OSCs en el desarrollo de políticas nacionales**

### ➤ ***Participar en diálogos a largo plazo***

Los procesos de diálogo a largo plazo entre representantes del gobierno y las OSC facilitan el conocimiento mutuo y pueden cerrar brechas entre las necesidades y capacidades locales y las políticas nacionales e internacionales. Este tipo de proceso de aprendizaje dinámico debe ser diseñado para aumentar la participación local.

### ➤ ***Asegurar una participación equitativa, informada y representativa***

La participación equitativa, informada y representativa de los actores locales en el desarrollo de planes nacionales debe ser asegurada, para lograr que las prioridades y visiones de las comunidades locales se vean reflejadas. A los representantes comunales se les debe permitir participar de lleno y tomar el liderazgo en la iniciación, formulación, desarrollo, vigilancia y evaluación de los proyectos. Debido a que muchas OSCs todavía no poseen la capacidad y experiencia para participar en las discusiones políticas, es crucial apoyar y fortalecer a estas organizaciones de manera que puedan involucrarse de forma efectiva en las discusiones políticas.

### ➤ ***Promover reuniones locales y regionales***

En aras de involucrar eficazmente a todos los actores a nivel local, distrital, provincial y regional, es útil promover reuniones a nivel local y regional. Las conclusiones y recomendaciones de estos foros pueden contribuir al proceso de discusión a nivel nacional, mientras que simultáneamente pueden contribuir en los esfuerzos de concientización y permitir el intercambio de información entre actores.

## **6. Mejorar la participación de las OSCs en las discusiones de políticas internacionales**

### ➤ ***Aumentar la capacidad de participación de las OSCs***

Para muchas OSCs, el participar en foros internacionales es costoso y consume mucho tiempo. Además, hay que tomar en cuenta que las reuniones de las convenciones se llevan a cabo varias veces al año en diferentes países alrededor del mundo, y las organizaciones necesitan invertir tiempo, esfuerzo y dinero si desean ser escuchadas. Para muchas OSCs esto es imposible, ya que los costos de transporte y alojamiento superan sus posibilidades presupuestarias.

Para las OSCs es difícil obtener financiamiento por parte de las organizaciones donantes para participar en las reuniones de las convenciones. Por otro lado, el patrocinio de representantes de la sociedad civil a través de los gobiernos nacionales puede comprometer su independencia. Para aumentar la capacidad de las OSCs es necesario que estas tengan a su disposición procesos de capacitación y financiamiento independiente y accesible.

### ➤ ***Promover el papel de las redes internacionales de OSCs***

Las redes internacionales de OSCs juegan un papel vital en el desarrollo de capacidades para asegurar una representación y participación efectiva y capaz de rendir cuentas de sus actividades en las reuniones internacionales.

### ➤ ***Esforzarse por superar las barreras del idioma***

El idioma presenta otra barrera para la participación. No sólo es necesario poseer un conocimiento y comprensión precisos del inglés, sino que además es necesario conocer las implicaciones legales de los términos utilizados así como del trasfondo científico de las discusiones. Estas barreras deben ser atendidas adecuadamente por parte de las OSCs.

➤ ***Intentar superar el desbalance existente en la capacidad de negociación***

El desbalance en las capacidades de negociación se encuentra ligado con las barreras técnicas del lenguaje. Con frecuencia, los países del Norte dominan los procesos de negociación internacionales ya que muchos de los países del Sur carecen de los recursos, información y habilidades para negociar efectivamente. Esto debe ser tomado en consideración y se requiere de esfuerzos de capacitación para mejorar las habilidades de negociación de las OSCs del Sur.

**7. Mejorar la sinergia entre las Convenciones desde una perspectiva local y operativa**

➤ ***Estimular proyectos sinérgicos***

Esta investigación demuestra que, en la práctica, el manejo del recurso hídrico, el uso sostenible del suelo, la garantía de medios de subsistencia, la conservación de la biodiversidad y la adaptación al cambio climático son difíciles de separar. Por lo tanto, es crucial y beneficioso estimular el desarrollo e implementación de proyectos integrales que contribuyan al tratamiento de varios temas ambientales. El enorme valor agregado de los proyectos que son capaces de interrelacionar soluciones a diferentes problemas ambientales debe ser reconocida y compensada.

En aras de estimular la propuesta de proyectos integrales, se requiere de mecanismos de financiamiento flexibles que reconozcan explícitamente el valor agregado de estos proyectos.

➤ ***Mejorar la cooperación entre los responsables de implementar las convenciones***

Con frecuencia, la responsabilidad de implementar las convenciones y generar informes sobre estas actividades se encuentra dividida entre diferentes personas o departamentos. Sin embargo, en muchos casos las actividades desarrolladas en el contexto de una convención posee impactos beneficiosos en el contexto de otras, como puede ser visto en los estudios de caso. Algunas de las actividades pueden tener un alcance mucho mayor y pueden ser desarrolladas por otros ministerios o agencias gubernamentales (por ejemplo: agricultura, agua, salud, vivienda, etc.)

En aras de alcanzar la sinergia a nivel nacional y local, fuertes esfuerzos a nivel nacional son necesarios para mejorar la comunicación y cooperación entre las diferentes personas y departamentos responsables. A nivel internacional o de las convenciones es importante buscar formas de generar incentivos para tal cooperación, por ejemplo, al integrar los requisitos de los informes.