



**Session 6.1: Biodiversity and Traditional Knowledge**

24 November 2016, 8:30-10:30

**Moderator: Unnikrishnan Payyappalli (UNU-IAS)**

Co-facilitators: Sonjai Havanond

The session was jointly facilitated by Unnikrishnan Payyappalli and Sonjai Havanond. Around 35 participants were present. The session started with an introductory presentation by Unnikrishnan Payyappalli on the development of various RCE activities in BES and traditional knowledge. The presentation highlighted various projects of the RCEs globally in BES, diverse methodologies, various meetings organized including the ABS (Access and Benefit Sharing) Community to Community Learning Exchange), links to policy processes and publications in the thematic area.

This was followed by an overview presentation of the RCE Cha-am on wetland conservation and multistakeholder partnerships on BES in Cha-am. The presentation highlighted transformation of the wetlands in the region over two decades with the work on Sirindhorn International Park. After this, individual participants were requested to share various BES related activities undertaken in respective regions. RCE Yogyakarta shared the work on Spring Conservation with an emphasis on specific species and their project's link to the sub-national governments. Prof. Omar Santoso from RCE Yogyakarta also presented the ProSPER.Net research project on Health Food Traditions of Asia and the outcomes and recommendations of the International Agrobiodiversity, Health and Nutrition conference held in UGM Yogyakarta on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> Nov. RCE candidate Bhopal works in the area of "Landscape Studio Management"- a unique project documenting the social history of biocultural diversity in the region of Central India. RCE Trivandrum is involved in the National Biodiversity Congress, Jackfruit festival, and the global traditional medicine congress. RCE Nairobi shared their project on "Adopt a River" which is about educating school children the importance of rivers and river basins in preserving life. RCE Phnompenh presented their work on agrobiodiversity, natural farming and community livelihoods. RCE Greater Western Sydney works with aboriginals and indigenous knowledge. RCE Cebu spoke about the local governments' participation in the various conservation and forest restoration efforts in Cebu. RCE Chubu shared the developments in the "bioregion project" and various other projects undertaken in Ishikawa region. RCE British Columbia invited the participants to contribute to the Ecojournal published by the RCE and their plan for the World Environmental Education Conference (WEEC) to be hosted by British Columbia in 2017.

Following this, the session took stock of the various inputs received during the IPBES orientation workshop on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Nov in response to the five questions (on the RCE work on BES; stakeholders; GAPS/challenges; ecosystem assessments; local/national/global policy related work). Around 20 responses received from the participants were summarized in the session followed by a discussion. This was a good scoping exercise and as a general reflection it was understood that the RCE work in the area of ecosystem assessments and BES policy linkages are relatively weak. A summary of this is given below.

This was followed by a discussion on the proposed policy brief. Various elements outlined in the discussion paper were presented and brief inputs were received. Main points highlighted in the

discussion paper are - how to strengthen multistakeholder approach and transformation in Local Governance; methodologies of learning in BES; role of non-formal and informal education; multiple values and value system; locally relevant assessments and methodologies for BES and TK and policy recommendations emerging from these points.

There was also a discussion on the immediate future strategy in relation to the policy processes such as the Convention on Biological Diversity-COP13 in Mexico and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). The opportunities for the RCEs to participate in both these processes were discussed. It was felt that there is a need for a comprehensive scoping of the BES and Traditional Knowledge related projects of every RCE as baseline data in order to strengthen the work further.

### **Three action points emerged from the session are:**

1. Comprehensive scoping of biodiversity, ecosystems and traditional knowledge related activities and methodologies of the RCE network partners
2. Capacity building of RCE network partners in strengthening implementation; in local assessments; policy support tools and methodologies
3. Policy engagement through the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant regional policy initiatives.

### **Summary of the outcomes of the IPBES Orientation Workshop**

#### **1. RCE work on BES and Traditional Knowledge**

1. Raising awareness on coastal biodiversity week; Marine pollution monitoring; Education on various biodiversity themes; Short term courses on permaculture, sustainable use of marine resources; Urban gardening (RC Khamas-Erongo)
2. Scoping of traditional knowledge practices; tree planting (RCE Minna)
3. Fungal species in Vietnam (RCE Southern Vietnam)
4. Conservation and management of Botanical gardens (RCE Greater Pwani)
5. Strengthening protected areas; Forest stewardship council for observing and monitoring forest areas; establishment of botanical gardens (RCE Swaziland)
6. Rehabilitation of rivers through multistakeholder partnership; ESD pedagogy for various learning institutions; adopt a river conservation project (RCE Greater Nairobi)
7. Landscape management research; documentation of ILK (RCE Greater Dhaka)
8. Coordinating National Biodiversity action plan; Implementation through agencies including RCEs; institutional performance assessments; Facilitating access through licenses to biodiversity resources (NEMA, Kenya)
9. Learning programs on biodiversity (RCE Lusaka)
10. Endangered species related studies; biodiversity product value chains/CSR; biogas generation; traditional medicine; land degradation, desertification studies (RCE Kano)
11. Indigenous and local knowledge related networking in Maori Pacific indigenous communities (RCE Waikato)
12. Youth networking including on biodiversity issues (RCE Greater Portland)

13. Integrated watershed research and management; wetlands conservation (RCE Cha-am)
14. Education on ecosystem services and sustainable lifestyles (RCE Bogota)
15. Awareness raising among indigenous people on forest degradation (RCE Greater Phnom Penh)
16. Biodiversity congress; agrobiodiversity and children (RCE Trivandrum)
17. Invasive alien species (RCE Yogyakarta)
18. Co-benefit research on biodiversity (Emmy)
19. Business and biodiversity (IGES)

## **2. Who are the stakeholders**

Ministry of Environment, NGOs, local government bodies, villagers, research institutes, university students, indigenous communities, different government departments, businesses, universities

## **3. What are the Gaps/Challenges**

Networking; funding; implementation of BMP into capital projects of local authority; insensitive policies in relation to natural resources; lack of knowledge/data resources like databases on fungus; integration of traditional knowledge; multistakeholder coordination; social transformation; lack of capacity for comparative ecosystem valuation, cost benefit analysis; conviction of stakeholders in joining the work; community involvement without having livelihood options; human drivers; lack of awareness and lack of respect for nature; lack of benefit sharing; inadequately coordinated departments; methodological; youth participation

## **4. Any work on ecosystem assessments**

Education related studies; waste management related studies; environment related; basic work on economic value of wetlands; baseline surveys of available species; river ecosystem assessment; assessment of coastal ecosystems; government level assessments of various sectors; conservation related work in lower Zambia; assessment of elephants; wetland ecosystem related assessments; socioeconomic studies; water and soil quality; co-benefit studies

## **5. Any policy related work**

Coastal biodiversity management plan; development planning involvement; greening related influence in local governments; NBSAP related; ESD related planning at national level; National biodiversity authority related; national strategic plan for biodiversity related.