



Rio Conventions' ECOSYSTEMS PAVILION

Linking biodiversity, climate change and sustainable land management

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The Rio Conventions' Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion is a collaborative outreach activity involving the Rio Convention secretariats, with the Global Environment Facility and other important partners

Indigenous Peoples and Communities: benefits and livelihoods-Day 3 Wednesday, 20 October, Nagoya

A hope and a prayer—It was with a blessing from the Ainu people—officially recognized as an Indigenous People of Japan—that the Ecosystem Pavilion at the Nagoya Biodiversity Conference began a dialogue on the role of indigenous peoples and local communities in promoting solutions that address climate change, biodiversity and land degradation. “Without local communities and indigenous peoples, it would be impossible to implement the Biodiversity Convention,” according to Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the CBD, and he called them full partners and stakeholders in finding solutions to address climate change and biodiversity loss.



Ainu representatives leading the Blessing Ceremony

Part of the solution—When Thailand's Obluang National Park was expanded, says Prasert Trakansuphakon from the Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand Association, the people from the local communities were forced to resettle outside of the forested areas of the national park, a move that caused conflicts that reached the level of parliament. After the conflict drew international attention, agreement was reached so that now, years later, the Obulang National Park is managed jointly with the participation of local communities, employing their special skills in activities like the establishment of wild fire watching units and the patrolling and monitoring of natural resources.

Looking for space to live— Through a traditional song, Kôji Yûki relates a time when his people, the Ainu, depended on wolf hunting. During the 19th century, the Ainu wolf disappeared. He says the Ainu people are now seeking to recover a lost right to catch and hunt other animals, and not just for rituals.

The missing link—“The news is not all bad,” says Kirsty Galloway McLean who is studying Arctic communities. “These communities have showed the ingenuity in their response to climate change. Indigenous people carry thousands years of history of adaptation in a changing environment. But there is a missing link in all these stories, and that is the link to policy leaders.”

Dodging disasters, the traditional way—It used to be the local practice in parts of Fiji to intentionally build dwellings that would not last, according to Jennifer Rubis from Climate Frontlines. Rather, when cyclones and storms approached, the houses were either intentionally dismantled or left to nature to dismantle and people waited out the storm. Rebuilding was very quick. Similarly, in the traditional culture, hurricane food was prepared - cooked in a special way to sustain and last longer in order to supply the community after a disaster.

Preserving dryland biodiversity, nomadically—The Mbororo nomads in Chad have increasingly found that it is harder and harder to maintain their nomadic way of life, says Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim from the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee. While government and legislation increasingly prevent the nomadic people from moving with their animals, there is a growing awareness of the role of nomadic lifestyle in actually reducing pressure on ecosystems. Accordingly, it was tried to capture the knowledge of indigenous peoples in an exercise of participatory

mapping in order to protect biodiversity in a situation of increasing pressure on ecosystems due to climate change.

Aiding climate mapping—Indigenous peoples, through their traditional knowledge and experience, have an edge in fully understanding the impacts of climate. Onel Masardule, from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, says their experiences make them well placed to participate in a project that maps the impacts of climate change in the Kuna Yala region in Panama. The project aims at directly observing ‘real’ impacts and resulted in a map where experts in collaboration with the local community identified places of increasing flood risks and added the issue to the political agenda in Panama.



Kristen Walker, Conservation International

Traditional feminism—There is an old Adivasi saying, “My first child be a woman,” says Sagari Ramdas, from ANTRA, illustrating the role of women in keeping and transferring the traditional knowledge and thereby maintaining the resilience against climate change. But the Adivasi, who she says, represent about nine per cent of the population of India, are rapidly being displaced by the forces of development and are thereby losing their ability to “read their environment.” This ability, she says, has allowed the Adivasi to predict weather changes, and accordingly adapt their food production activities, like choosing the appropriate crop species from the large diversity of crops known to the community.

Empowerment through education—Lucy Mulenkei, Executive Director of the Indigenous Information Network and a Maasai from Kenya, says, “If you build capacity for people, they really move ahead, they have access to information, they know their rights, and they stand up and speak for themselves.” Only then, she added, will indigenous people be fully recognized by decision-makers, as well as their culture and their knowledge. The education of

women and schooling the youth should be particularly encouraged, she says, to tackle “negative cultural practices” such as child marriage. “The Millennium Development Goals could only be achieved by capacity building”.

From ideas to projects—Community groups and indigenous peoples, with their knowledge of the lay of the land, have ideas on what to do to address environmental concerns, but often not the wherewithal to do it. That is where the Global Environment Facility's Small Grants Programme fits in—with a presence in 122 countries and 13,500 projects funded worldwide, the Programme allows a decentralized, community-centred and country-driven approach to turn local ideas into projects.

Flexibility is key—“You know things that I don’t know, I bring things that you may need,” is how Jose Manuel Perez, from GEF Panama, puts it. The Panama programme, now four years old, allows local groups to take good ideas forward. He also pointed out that GEF is working with community-based organizations (85 per cent) and local NGOs that rarely have access to funds. “Flexibility with the group to foster the trust, move along, and get things done” is the one of the main keys of Small Grant Programme’s success, as well as a humble approach towards communities. “It is not about grants, it is about capacity building”.

Training—To build a team of skilled local trainers who can train people in raising awareness of climate change-related issues, such as REDD+, at the community level, Johnson Cerda says Conservation International has established a programme, “Training of trainers: climate change and the role of forests” that provides indigenous peoples and local communities with the tools and information needed to participate in the decision-making process. “If indigenous people don’t understand these issues, they would never be able to have a real impact on negotiations,” says Viviana Figueroa, from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.



Adam Ole Mwarabi, Tanzania

<http://ecosystemspavilion.org>



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Ecosystems Pavilion Programme Overview

18 October, Monday	<i>The linkages between biodiversity, sustainable land management and climate change</i> With the European Commission and other partners	Evening Sessions – Reducing emissions from degradation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD) <i>With UNEP and other UN REDD members</i>
19 October, Tuesday	<i>Key role of protected areas in climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies</i> With IUCN WCPA and other partners	Session 1: Inter-linkages of biodiversity, carbon and economics
20 October, Wednesday	<i>Indigenous peoples and communities – benefits and livelihoods</i> With UNDP, Conservation International and other partners	Session 2: Traditional knowledge in conserving biodiversity and carbon
21 October, Thursday	<i>Forest biodiversity: mitigation and adaptation – the linked benefits provided by forests</i> With members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other partners	Session 3: Environmental safeguards and REDD
22 October, Friday	<i>Water, Ecosystems and Climate Change</i> With SCBD and other partners	Session 4: Measuring and monitoring of biodiversity and ecosystem services within REDD
23 October, Saturday	UNCCD Land Day 3	Session 5 (11am - 1:30 pm): Empowerment of the biodiversity constituency in REDD processes
		Evening Sessions – Commitments and international cooperation for financing synergies, in partnership with CBD's LifeWeb
25 October, Monday	<i>Economics of ecosystem services and biodiversity, climate change and land management</i> With TEEB and other partners	Session 1: Mesoamerican financing synergies through protected area solutions, featuring Costa Rica Forever and other national initiatives
26 October, Tuesday	<i>Ecosystem-based approaches for adaptation</i> With IUCN, ICLEI and other partners	Session 2: Caribbean and Micronesian financing synergies through protected-area solutions
27 October, Wednesday	<i>Promoting synergies for sustainable development and poverty reduction</i> With UNDP and other partners	Session 3: South American financing synergies through protected area solutions, featuring the Pan-Amazonian Vision
28 October, Thursday	<i>Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion Summit: Moving Towards Rio+20</i>	Session 4: West African Coastal and Marine financing synergies through protected area solutions

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