BUKIDNON-MISAMIS ORIENTAL: LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE JOURNEY

2018-2020

START
Efforts to harness landscape governance are not at all new; but as times move forward, resources get depleted, and people grow at an exponential rate, the dialogues must be redesigned to be more inclusive, and promote sustainability at a landscape level. Dialogues help people from different sectors see their different development agenda, and identify how they can work together towards common sustainable pathways.

Since 2018, the Forest Foundation Philippines and Tropenbos International have been facilitating Sustainable and Inclusive Landscape Governance (SILG) dialogues in three focal landscapes – Sierra Madre, Palawan, and Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental. SILG aims to build on landscape experiences, and to promote best practices. It also aims to develop methodologies and tools that can help landscape stakeholders to co-create, co-implement, and co-own landscape governance mechanisms, and practices.
Sectors and organizations now realize the complex nature of environmental problems we face. As such, landscape approach as a lens to look at existing dynamics brings the reality of these problems to the surface. For example, some look at the forests as conservation and restoration areas; whereas other groups can also see these areas for timber harvesting, timber poaching, possible expansion areas for agricultural production, and eco-tourism sites. These varying intentions for forest areas depict a reality that these spaces are governed by different regulatory mechanisms, and subsequently by different groups of people and communities.

Another layer that contributes to the complexity of the problem is that ecosystems are under both natural and anthropogenic drivers of changes, and pressure. As these uncontrolled interventions, and unmonitored changes happen over time, problems become more difficult to address at a landscape level.

This is a general storytelling of where the dialogues are anchored on – bring people with varying perspectives, intentions, and advocacies together, and vision for probable futures.

Futures that are grounded on the pillars of landscape governance – sense of place, multi-stakeholder participation, institutions, sustainable economic development, and management.
TONE SETTING & WALKTHROUGH OF THE SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE LANDSCAPE

**why LANDSCAPE APPROACH?**

1. Complexity of Global Problems

**LANDSCAPE is HOME**

- Our Heart & Lives
- Bringing these people together in protection

**LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE**

- Cities
- Forests
- Agriculture
- Mining Areas

**INTEGRATIVE CONCEPTS**

- People + Nature
- Tradition
- Coherence & Diversity
- Management of Resources

**SUSTAINABLE DEV'T GOALS**

- State Reform

**FEDERALISM**

- Decentralization
- Spatialization

**PHILIPPINE LANDSCAPE DIALOGUE**

- NED 2019

- "We will envision together the landscapes we want. How to get there?"

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**Forest Foundation Philippines**

Let's grow together.

**PUSHPIN VISUAL SOLUTIONS**
LANDSCAPE JOURNEY: HOW WE CAME TO KNOW OUR LANDSCAPES & OUR PARTNERS
Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental stakeholders saw their landscapes as lifescapes that can support, and sustain lives. They centered on responding to their landscape issues with life-centered approaches. To jumpstart landscape governance work in Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental, the landscape dialogue provided opportunities for both laying down a conceptual framework, and as well as re-looking at their landscape from this perspective. Their group was composed of representatives from CSOs, local government units, Indigenous communities, and academic institutions. Participants identified a number of landscape issues, and concerns. What’s interesting was how the participants were able to link all of these issues, and concerns with Indigenous culture, and governance systems.

Their discussions can be categorized into these five overarching themes:

1. Community livelihood options;
2. Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES);
3. Risk and threat reduction among IP leaders, and members;
4. Continuing intergenerational practices, and culture; and
5. Halting land conversion from forests to plantations (mostly oil palm)

Revisit our 2019 landscape dialogue summary here.
VISIONING FOR THE LANDSCAPE: HOW DO I SEE THE LANDSCAPE IN 5 TO 10 YEARS?
Participants of the breakout session formed smaller groups to focus their discussions on their watershed areas. From the smaller groups, the resulting identified problems and joint visions include prioritizing good governance and sustainable livelihoods through advocating against certain development efforts such as road and dam constructions, and expansion of oil palm plantations. Participants also envisioned to have stronger community inclusion in development agenda setting and planning, with the hope as communities get involved in conversations, their aspirations can be taken into consideration.
Participants from the landscape subdivided into smaller groups to discuss in detail the current situations of the watershed they belong to, and eventually discussed in a bigger group. The group was able to thresh out landscape issues on water provisioning, some of which include clarifying roles and responsibilities of the Cagayan de Oro River Basin Management Council (CDORBMC); lack of multi-stakeholder participation in development plan; absence of cultural inputs in water governance; contribution of agricultural areas and livestock to water pollution; changing climate; mining; and increasing settlement areas. All these contribute to declining landscape integrity, and the landscape's capacity to provide quality water to the people.

To address these pressing issues, participants envision to have proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms in place, where malpractices will be reported, and apprehended. Ultimately, they envision a governance system where stakeholders are regularly consulted, and provided space to contribute.

Revisit NED 2019 summaries here.
TULOY ANG USAPAN: ON LAND USE & WATER GOVERNANCE
As the pandemic continues to challenge our ways of working, so we must continue to adapt. Our dialogues have transitioned to digital platforms. These digital platforms are not replacement of our usual in-person conversations; but they also offer new possibilities of working together.

- How has COVID-19 reshaped the land use choices of communities in the landscapes?
- How can we continue banking on inclusivity, and participation for land resources amid challenges on mobility?
This dialogue session was designed to identify emerging and prevalent land conversion issues during COVID-19; and to determine key factors for success in addressing such issues. Ultimately, the session aimed to co-identify actionable points that can be taken on by specific landscape actors.
ON LAND CONVERSION

SITUATIONER FROM
ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE FOR
SOCIAL CHANGE'S (ESSC)
LANDSCAPE-WIDE MAPPING PROJECT

- RAPID AGRICULTURAL EXPANSION (FOLLOWING FROM THE 70s)
- ADDITIONAL FOREST AREAS (GAINS)
- DECREASE IN FOREST COVER, PREVALENT IN AREAS WITHOUT EXISTING LAND TENURAL INSTRUMENTS
- VOLATILE PEACE AND ORDER SITUATION
- PROTOCOLS OF ENGAGEMENT BECAME MORE COMPLEX (MILITARY COMMANDS)
- IDENTIFY CHANGE AGENTS
- ENHANCING CAPACITIES IS NOT JUST ABOUT ACQUIRING SKILLS
- DELAYS ARE PART OF THE SOCIAL REALITY

LAND USE CHANGES DURING COVID-19

NOT MUCH REPORTS ON RECENT LAND CONVERSION INCIDENCES
PRIMARILY DUE TO FOCUS ON
RESOLVING THE CURRENT HEALTH CRISIS
AND THE NEED TO BE VIGILANT DUE TO VIRUS

EVIDENCE FOR CASES

USE AVAILABLE DATA AND INFO AND MAPS
★ CDORBMC IS DEVELOPING A DECISION SUPPORT TOOL (DST)
ON LAND CONVERSION

HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT COMMUNITIES REALLY EARN FROM THEIR FARMING ACTIVITIES?

PROTECT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

INCREASE ENGAGEMENT WITH
- GOVERNMENT AGENCIES
- INDIGENOUS PEOPLES
  - ENSURE TO ALSO PROTECT THEIR CULTURAL INTEGRITY

EXPAND THE NETWORK

1. INVOLVE THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (NCIP) IN THE DIALOGUES TO HELP BETTER GRASP THE CONTEXT AND BE INFLUENCED TO TAKE ACTION.

2. REACH OUT TO IP COMMUNITIES ESPECIALLY TRIBE LEADERS TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE INCLUDED IN THE DISCUSSION.

3. STRENGTHEN EFFORTS TO INVOLVE PRIVATE SECTOR & FINANCERS TO INCLUDE THEM AS NETWORK THAT CO-CREATE SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS AND FINANCING MECHANISMS.
As the pandemic continues to challenge our ways of working, so we must continue to adapt. Our dialogues have transitioned to digital platforms. These digital platforms are not replacement of our usual in-person conversations; but they also offer new possibilities of working together.

- How has the landscape designed, and implemented water governance mechanisms pre-, and during COVID-19?
- Who were the necessary actors that helped implement the mechanisms?
- What sectors are still missing in the network?
This dialogue session was intended to provide updates on the ongoing Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) mechanisms in the landscape; and to identify bottlenecks on the implementation of PES, and other water governance efforts. Ultimately, the session intended to help participants set a collaborative path that all participating organizations can contribute to.
ON WATER GOVERNANCE

**EMBRACING LANDSCAPE APPROACHES**

- A holistic approach in addressing issues
- Compartmentalization usually occurs when dealing with projects/initiatives
- Increase and strengthen community participation
- Find a cross-cutting issue that can help stakeholders understand and tackle the situation more effectively

**IMPROVING THE EDUCATION SYSTEM**

- Effectively engage the education sector for a more lasting and systematic change
- CDORMC + DEPED are localizing modules on environmental issues
- TapCHED to help CSOs influence HEI to consider new landscape scenarios in their modules
- CHED's concern: current courses are focused on classroom learning. It's difficult to absorb reality when they don't see it.
TOURISM & WATER GOVERNANCE

- The Dept. of Tourism is developing their sustainable livelihood programs & plans that will help investors & implementers see resource utilization mechanisms better.
- Dept of Tourism is helping promote proper use of water (mostly hotels & restaurants).
- National Economic Dev't Authority (NEDA) and other Gov. agencies must be involved in the discussions to appropriately answer the water shortage problem.

KASAMA SA KULTURA NILA NA MAHALARIN AT IRESPETO ANG TUBIG.

LEARNING FROM INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

INTEGRATION OF DEV'T PLANS

Watershed management plan, forest land use plans (FLUP), etc, are not integrated among implementing LGUs.

ACTION POINTS

1. Optimize ESRC Road Show by incorporating sessions on possible use of the data to be shared with the LGUs & PAM/DERA offices.
2. Strengthen efforts to involve private sector for the upcoming Nat'l Dialogue.
3. Explore partnership with Deped, CHED, and other HEIs.
4. Conduct smaller & more targeted dialogues for identified landscape issues.

COMMUNICATING SCIENCE TO POLICY MAKING

1. Communication between scientists, policy makers & decision makers should be open and continuous.
2. Scientists & the academic must convey clearly what science is telling, and how research results can be used as bases for improving policy provisions.

ADVOCACY WORK

- Reality:
  - It's difficult to inculcate environment-related values.
- Strengthen advocacy work for communities, esp. those with conflicts on water resource, they own tenure rights but are not being acknowledged.
The online dialogues helped Bukidnon-Misamis Oriental stakeholder agree on two major points:

1. **Harness using maps**, and up-to-date data for planning, and conservation purposes; and

2. **Expand and strengthen the current network** by inviting representatives from private, and education, sectors.

[Revisit the 2020 online dialogues here.](#)
WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?
As the project culminates, this National Environmental Dialogue was designed to spark conversations on how participants can commit to sustain the dialogues. The sessions also provided specific entry points to institutionalize landscape governance principles in the current local development planning processes.

From here, we ask ourselves, “How can we continue working on our visions for the landscape?”
Taking off from the previous dialogues, the participants continued to build on their specific priorities to strengthen advocacy work to help LGUs adopt an environment-centered approach to development. They also built upon the idea to use maps to unite local communities, and Indigenous communities, spark collaboration, and increase their sense of belonging in the landscape.

Also, as a pre-session before they have a deep dive in exploring local development planning to sustain their existing efforts, they identified initial observable challenges in their landscape.
While not all participating stakeholders had direct work with local development planning, they were able to identify entry points. Most of these are anchored on maximizing their current strengths, and and roles in the landscape; and on banking on their existing relationships with LGUs, and other sectors.
Revisit NED 2020 sessions here.
To cap off their dialogues that started in 2018, the participants agreed to pursue the following:

1. **Capacitate Indigenous communities** in crafting, implementing, and monitoring their Ancestral Domains Sustainable Development and Protection Plans (ADSDPP). This entails more rigorous works from the CSOs to really provide the IPs with necessary skills, and understanding of their rights, and responsibilities;

2. **Develop a collaborative central database** where up-to-date data from different organizations can be stored. This effort can be started off with the existing effort of the Environmental Science for Social Change (ESSC) to host the updated land cover maps of Bukidnon. If the landscapes want science-based, and responsive plans, this central database can provide them with a platform to continuously, and more easily update plans, and identify good practices, and gaps; and

3. **Come up with a strategy to engage other sectors** needed to advance their advocacies. They envision to have more proactive participation from CHED, DepED, PLGU and MLGUs (especially the PAOs, and MAOs), and private sector. They see the critical role of the education sector to integrate the ongoing advances in environmental issues, and solutions in curricula.
Revisit your 2018-2020 Landscape Governance Journey!

The shared Google Drive folder contains summaries of 2018-2020 landscape and national dialogues; and scenarios from our foresight session.
SUPPORTING MATERIALS FOR OUR LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE WORK

- Invitation to Landscape Governance Journey (Video)
- Reading materials on Landscape Governance, and Sustainable Development
- National Environmental Dialogue (NED) 2018 Policy Brief Series
- National Environmental Dialogue (NED) 2019 Materials
- National Environmental Dialogue (NED) 2020 Materials
- 2020 Inter-landscape Kumustahan-Dialogue on Continuing Work amid COVID-19
Maraming salamat sa pakikibahagi!
Tuloy lamang ang mga diskusyon para sa solusyon.

Share your responses, questions, or requests at landscapes@forestfoundation.ph
HANGGANG SA SUSUNOD NA USAPAN