SIERRA MADRE: LANDSCAPE GOVERNANCE JOURNEY
2018-2020
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
2. Integrative Concepts
3. Sustainable Dev't Goals
4. State Reform
5. Federalism Decentralization Spatialization

Landscape is Home
- Cities
- Forests
- Agriculture
- Mining Areas
-bringing these people together: landscape governance

Philippine Landscape Dialogue

State Reform 2019

“We will envision together the landscapes we want, how to get there.”

Forest Foundation Philippines
Let's grow together.

PUSHPIN VISUAL SOLUTIONS
LANDSCAPE JOURNEY: HOW WE CAME TO KNOW OUR LANDSCAPES & OUR PARTNERS
To provide opportunities for more in-depth landscape dialogues, Sierra Madre landscape was divided into Northern and Southern Sierra Madre. Participants found it hard to link issues of different provinces, and to think of inter-province solutions. Most of the sectors are used to working in their own boundaries, without much consideration of the dynamics in the nearby areas.

Most pressing issues for **Northern Sierra Madre** are land conversion, water provisioning function of watersheds, and pending infrastructure projects. The dialogue opened opportunities for the stakeholders to discuss lacking institutional arrangements on land use and land zoning, which they identify as the prime reason for agricultural expansion to forest areas.

In **Southern Sierra Madre**, participants are more focused and pressed on the issue of Kaliwa Dam. Most groups advocate not to push through with Kaliwa Dam, for reasons of community displacements, and projected flooding hazards.
EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES, & CSOs WITHIN THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT SYSTEM (EISS)
This dialogue was designed to capacitate communities, CSOs, and LGUs within the Environmental Impact Statement System (EISS). In order to help communities, and CSOs better appreciate, and fulfill their rights, and responsibilities within the EISS, representatives from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), and academic institution provided them with detailed discussions on the EISS framework, and specific roles of each stakeholder in the full process.

**COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS**

- **The EIA process is unjust**

- **Walkouts during public hearings are effective**

- **There are no more remedies once the environmental compliance certificate (ECC) has been issued**

**A planning & decision-making tool**
- Helps identify and reduce negative impacts of projects on the environment
- Designed to provide appropriate preventive, mitigating, and enhancement measures to address impacts (for welfare of environment and community)

**Only effective if the community’s issues and concerns have already been well-documented prior to the walkout**
- It’s important for communities to engage in the public hearings and sparingly use walkouts as strategies
- More vital to ensure their positions, concerns, and complaints are well-documented and furnished to the DENR

**ECC is issued to the project to proceed with securing approvals from other gov agencies and LGUs**
- Project should not commence w/o approvals
- There are still open venues to participate & available remedies

**THE AVAILABLE REMEDIES**

1. Communities can request DENR to organize public hearings to resolve unaddressed issues.

2. LGUs must issue clearance & permits before projects are initiated in their area. Communities may also voice their concerns to their local public officers, including the mayor’s office.

3. For projects within ancestral domains, proponents must procure the required EPIC from affected IP communities.

4. A writ of Kalikasan case can be filed to protect communities constitutional right to a healthy environment.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**CAN YOU DELAY THE ISSUANCE of an ECC?**
- Yes, if all the questions raised by the community were not addressed by the proponent.
- DENR-EMB director may stop issuance.
- An ECC may be suspended/revoked if conditions were not complied with.

**HOW DO YOU ADDRESS COMPLAINTS ON THE CONDUCT of PUBLIC HEARINGS?**
- Position papers detailing the ground of the complaint may be addressed to the DENR-EMB director which shall be forwarded to the case handler.
- While DENR DAO 2017-15 provides periods for submission of position papers, complaints will still be considered prior to the issuance of an ECC.
- Submit complaints as early as possible.

**WHAT’S THE ROLE of the CASE HANDLER? DO THEY ADDRESS the POSITION PAPERS?**
- Case handlers = mediators between proponents and communities.
- Proponent = answers issue raised in position paper.
- Usually addressed during public hearings or provided to the review committee.

**HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY FIND OUT THE RESULTS of the SUBMITTED POSITION PAPERS?**
- Communities can request a response or a specific action from DENR-EMB.
- However, discussion shows that this is discretionary and is a gap in the current regulations on public participation.

**HOW DO WE ENSURE CREDIBILITY of CONSULTANTS?**
- Only consultants accredited by DENR can act under EIA proj.
- It was raised that bias still exists since the proponent is given the right to choose the consultants for an EIA project.

**HOW/TO WHOM DO WE REPORT MEMBERS of the MMT?**
- Procedures should be part of the manual of operations (prepared 1yr after MMT was established).
- Gaps exist in selection process for MMT members that fail to ensure competency and impartiality.
RECOMMENDATIONS TO STRENGTHEN PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE EIA PROCESS

**For DENR**
- Include a specific & immediate monitoring and remedial measures for EIA stages with public participation.

**For CSOs**
- Increase communities' awareness of EIA process and their vital participation.

**For DENR & LGUs**
- Strengthen links of communities with technical experts and academe.

**For DENR**
- Provide a feedback mechanism for all complaints.

**For LGUs & CSOs**
- Train communities on effective monitoring of activities and ensure proper qualifications of MMT members.

**For DENR & LGUs**
- Earmark a specific budget to strengthen public participation in the EIA process.
VISIONING FOR THE LANDSCAPE: HOW DO I SEE THE LANDSCAPE IN 5 TO 10 YEARS?
Sierra Madre is one of the most challenging landscapes to bring together, mostly because it is geographically large, and there is a high sense of provincialism in terms of how actors think and work. Ultimately, the group’s vision is to have one Sierra Madre where provinces will have mechanisms to access data and information on other provinces, and where provinces can start planning interprovincially. To achieve this, the group envisions to have a unified Sierra Madre map, where most of the biophysical properties and characteristics, and socioeconomic data will be available. The unified map is crucial in proceeding with the succeeding visions of coming up with harmonized plans and implementation.

The overall message of the vision is a picture of united and proactive Sierra Madre stakeholders working towards identifying causes of land conversion, and possible solutions.
The team also came up with a step-wise vision for the water provisioning function of their landscape. For the Sierra Madre participants, it is crucial to start off their grand vision with ensuring that decision making at various levels are transparent and participatory. From this, the participants envision to institutionalize proper multi-stakeholder implementation of development plans that could bring about higher awareness on environmental issues, and consequently behavioral change among stakeholders. Ultimately, the vision highlights proper incentive and penalties implementation, mostly for private corporations that contribute to environmental degradation, and consequently to declining water quality.
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 a replacement of our usual in-person conversations; but an alternative that offers new possibilities of working together.

- How can we ensure that our efforts on improving water governance in Sierra Madre remains, or becomes even more, relevant, and responsive?
- What are the new challenges to advocacies related to Kaliwa Dam?
- How can we increase inclusivity, and participation in a time when our communities are harder to reach?
This dialogue session on water governance was designed to provide opportunities for Sierra Madre stakeholders to reassess issues on water governance, and water provisioning in relation to the impacts of COVID-19. The session was also designed to help recognize different practices and strategies that are being done to resolve issues, identify concrete solutions and develop strategies that are implementable and sustainable.

Ultimately, the hope is to inspire old and new responsive collaborations among stakeholders from different sectors, and institutions.
ON WATER GOVERNANCE

MAXIMIZE USE OF SCIENCE FOR LOBBY & ADVOCACY EFFORTS

1. Action and community-based research
2. Water supply and demand
3. Water use practices
4. Information channels

SHARE THE VULNERABILITY MAPPING & RISK ASSESSMENT (VRA) RESULTS TO STAKEHOLDERS, LOCAL COMMUNITIES, etc.

WATER SUPPLY & DEMAND

↑ HIGHER WATER CONSUMPTION DUE TO PANDEMIC (MWSS)

EIA SYSTEM

CURRENT FRAMEWORKS & POLICIES VS. ON-THE-GROUND IMPLEMENTATION

EIA HAS BEEN REDUCED TO A PLANNING TOOL RATHER THAN A CONDITIONALITY

HOW DO WE ADDRESS THIS ISSUE?

HOW DO WE CONTRIBUTE TO THE DISCUSSION OF CHANGING WATER PRACTICES AT HOUSEHOLD & COMMUNITY LEVELS?
**Systematic Ecosystem Level**

*Kaliwa Dam is not a lone case.*

**How do we address this systematically in terms of:**

- Consolidating available research
- Coordinating on-going advocacies
- Strengthening lobbying efforts

**Water Governance & Agriculture Nexus**

*Issue on irrigation needs more attention, engage NIA in discussions*

-Look into & discuss unsustainable agricultural practices*

**Continuous dialogues**

-Involves urban communities in discussions
- Help network identify issues, action points & to stay updated
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.

As we embark on longer lockdowns, and uncertain periods, ecosystems monitoring become more challenging. It is not just about the issue of immobility, but also of ensuring that proactive monitoring, and reporting processes are still in place. How do communities respond to the lockdowns, and how do these affect their land use decisions?
This dialogue session on land conversion was designed to raise awareness, and provide new information on general drivers of land use and land cover change in the Sierra Madre range; share current practices, and challenges on forest monitoring as organizations bank on community-led initiatives, and reporting.

At the core of the discussion is to enable the network to come up with a sustainable monitoring, reporting, and response framework that can help address current issues on land conversion.
ON LAND CONVERSION

LGU'S CHANGING PRIORITIES
DUE TO COVID-19

LGU INFANTA CONTINUES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EFFORTS

MUST LOOK AT & TACKLE LAND CONVERSION AND WATER GOVERNANCE NEXUS

MONITORING PROTOCOLS

DISCUSSIONS HAVE CHANGED!

ADDRESSING ISSUE OF PANDEMIC: HOW ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION CAN PREVENT NEXT OUTBREAKS

CSOs WILL STRENGTHEN POSITIONS
HIGHLIGHT ISSUES OF LAND CONVERSION (FORESTS & WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING)

DEVELOPMENT & ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY

HOW DO WE REALLY STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT AND ECOLOGICAL INTEGRITY?

HOW CAN WE USE THE DIALOGUES TO HELP US REFORM OUR STRATEGIES AND ADVOCACIES?

SYSTEMATIC CHALLENGES

SOME ARE EMBEDDED THROUGH ENABLING LAWS

CITIZEN SCIENCE

CITIZEN SCIENCE & REMOTE MONITORING USEFUL OPPORTUNITY TO CONTINUE AND IMPROVE CONSERVATION WORK AMID COVID-19

HOW DO WE ENSURE THAT COMMUNITIES ARE:

- CAPACITATED WITH SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING
- EQUIPPED WITH DEVICES/GADGETS
- INVOLVED MORE THAN JUST FIELD VALIDATORS OR DATA GATHERERS

HOW CAN WE ENSURE THAT REMOTE MONITORING THROUGH CITIZEN SCIENCE CAN BE SUSTAINED?
COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

APPRECIATE and USE SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY FOR THEIR BENEFITS

ASSERT THEIR RIGHTS, CAPACITIES & SKILLS

EXPAND THE NETWORK & PARTNERSHIPS

HOW CAN THEY BETTER PROVIDE CONTEXT & PICTURE OF CHANGES HAPPENING IN THE LANDSCAPE?

HOW CAN WE ENCOURAGE THEM TO INVEST IN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES?

DA, NATIONAL IRRIGATION ADMISSION (NIA):

HOW CAN WE INFLUENCE THEIR DECISION-MAKING TO SUPPORT LANDSCAPE INTEGRITY AND NEEDS OF FARMERS?

HOW DO WE TALK ABOUT SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES AT NATIONAL & LOCAL LEVELS?
SIERRA MADRE LANDSCAPE
GOVERNANCE VALUES

It is interesting to note that participants did not explicitly discuss landscape governance values; but these emerged as their perpetuating values in seeing, and understanding their landscapes. These are also the core values that shape their responses to issues, and challenges.

Trust was highlighted as one of the most important values, especially during COVID-19. This kind of trust refers to having initial contact, and engagement with communities; and eventually enabling both ends (e.g. community and CSO) to continue work, despite limitations on mobility. It was highlighted that online consultations, and dialogues would not have been as easy, and as meaningful had we not been in one way or another worked together before.
The online dialogues point to major action points at a landscape level. These include maximizing available scientific information on the landscape for better planning, and advocacy efforts; and highlighting the role of each organization in the bigger land and water nexus framework.
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?”
The participants identified a major challenge as a take-off point before the in-depth discussions on integrating the dialogues, and landscape approaches in the local development planning. They recognized that it is critical to define who the network is - what their strengths are, what they want to put forward, and to contribute to what - before they can effectively integrate their current work in the local development planning process.
The dialogue centered on capacitating CSOs, POs, NGOs, and other stakeholders in the process of participating in the local development planning, and their roles and responsibilities in the local development council.

Due to the presence of prominent academic institutions in the landscape, best practices on the collaboration between LGU and SUCs are also sought.
DAY 3 BREAKOUT SESSION

SIERRA MADRE

THE AGREED ACTION POINTS

- Conduct regular dialogues among DILG, IPs, LGUs, CSOs, private sector
- Provide capacity enhancement to communities/CSOs, LGUs
- Integration of local development process modules in the curriculum
- Revitalize inactive PoS/CSOs
- Citizen science framework

Harvest the culture of collaboration:
- It requires patience, dedication, effort.
- It rewards you with strength, perspective, confidence.

What kind of resilient future can we build if we continue to learn, imagine, and collaborate?

VISUALIZED BY PUSHPINVISUALS.COM

Revisit NED 2020 sessions here.
After two years of active dialogues, and capacity building efforts, Sierra Madre stakeholders now identify key action points:

1. **Continue regular dialogues, and ensure more active participation of representatives from DILG, LGUs, private sector, and IP communities.** Having sustained participation from the government sector will help the network better strategize, and have better opportunities to institutionalize their approaches at local, and national levels;

2. **Strengthen capacity development programs for communities, CSOs, and LGUs.** Despite the number of programs before that aimed to empower communities, the participants mentioned that these are still not enough for the needs in the landscape;

3. **Start integrating local governance, and development planning processes in curriculum.** This way, students are exposed, and familiarized with the work at an early age;

4. **Revisit or revitalize inactive People’s Organizations (POs), and CSOs who used to take part in environment, and conservation work.** They can be part of the network, and be capacitated to respond to their governance or organizational challenges before returning to the arena;

5. **Craft, and mobilize a citizen science framework.** A kind that does not just use communities as data gatherers, but a kind that optimizes community practices, and knowledge to better respond to local changes, and to craft local actions.
Revisit your 2018-2020 Landscape Governance Journey!

The shared Google Drive folder contains summaries of 2018-2020 landscape and national dialogues; presentations; scenarios from our foresight session; and photos.
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<th>Supporting Materials for Our Landscape Governance Work</th>
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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