

Building Resilience and Weaving Gender Responsive Approaches to Biodiversity Governance

TECHNICAL TRAINING WORKSHOP

15 - 20 MAY 2023

ECO RESORT

CHIANG MAI, THAILAND



WOMEN4BIODIVERSITY

SwedBio

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ACRONYMS AND TERMINOLOGIES TABLE

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CFA	Community Forest Associations
CONADIBIO	National Advisory Commission for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity
CoopeSolidar R. L	Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Profesionales para la Solidaridad Social
COP	Conference of Parties
FARN	Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales
FPIC	Free Prior Informed Consent
GYBN	Global Youth Biodiversity Network
IMPECT	Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand
KMGBF	Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NIPS	Network for the Indigenous Peoples Solomon
NTFPs	Non Timber Forest Produce
PACEP	Pastoral Communities Empowerment Programme
REFACOF	The African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests
SDF	Thailand Sustainable Development Foundation
W4B	Women4Biodiversity



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CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

To better understand the role of women towards ecosystem restoration, it is important to situate policies with current ground realities that provides a deeper understanding of what and how these restorations are being carried out when it is led by the women of the communities. In order to bring these examples to the forefront, *Women4Biodiversity*, in collaboration with *Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN)*, with the support of *Sida Funding* through *SwedBio* at *Stockholm Resilience Centre* at the *Stockholm University*, have embarked on a project that aims to document such initiatives which will go on to inform local, regional and global policies in the future.

The *Building resilience and weaving gender-responsive approaches to biodiversity governance* project aims to strengthen gender-responsive ecosystem restoration approaches into national goals and international commitments through research and documentation of women-led ecosystem restoration initiatives in six (6) pilot restoration sites.



Photo from wetland restoration pilot site in Paraná City, Entre Ríos province in Argentina

These pilot restoration sites and their initiatives are:

<p>Wetland restoration in Paraná City, Entre Rios province in Argentina facilitated by FARN and FUNDACIÓN CAUCE</p>	
<p>Forest restoration in Kamatira Forest, West Pokot County in Kenya facilitated by Pastoral Communities Empowerment Programme (PACEP)</p>	
<p>Forest restoration by the Hageulu community in Gao district, Isabel Province in Solomon Islands facilitated by Network for the Indigenous Peoples Solomon (NIPS)</p>	
<p>Mangrove restoration by Chomes community, Puntarenas Providence, Costa Rica facilitated by Cooperativa Autogestionaria de Servicios Profesionales para la Solidaridad Social (CoopeSoliDar R.L)</p>	
<p>Coastal wetland restoration in Londji Area, Cameroon facilitated by The African Women's Network for Community Management of Forests (REFACOF)</p>	
<p>Forest restoration and biodiversity survey led by women research group in Salween Peace Park, Myanmar facilitated by Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN)</p>	



The pilot restoration sites were finalized between 2021-2023. They have completed the first phase of the project, which involved carrying out legal reviews to understand gender considerations within their existing laws and policies. The findings of these legal reviews were then shared with the communities who will be carrying out the restoration, also to initiate a consultative process. An [introductory workshop](#) was organized on 13 - 14 September 2022, where the pilot restoration site partners briefly shared their case studies and discussed the learnings and challenges from the session. The objective of the workshop was to develop a co-learning space for pilot restoration site partners to be able to share their learnings and challenges among each other.

Box 1: Summary of introductory workshop

The pilot restoration sites reported some key progress they have achieved since the inception of the project. These include: restoration of Kamatira Forest in West Pokot, Kenya by the indigenous women since the forest acts as a water catchment area, and provides medicine and grazing area for the Pokot pastoralist community. In Argentina, women capacities have been increased to restore and produce native flora which are aimed at preventing, stopping and reversing the degradation of wetlands. In Solomon Islands, local women initiated forest restoration sites to conserve their forested areas and halt the deforestation resulting from nickel mining. In Costa Rica, the local women formed cooperatives aimed at ensuring the sustainable uses of mollusks through defining and taking care of the mollusks' habitats.

It was evident throughout the presentations by the representatives of the restoration sites that the theme on unequal rights and the non-inclusion of women and girls in the conservation and restoration processes still plays out. In areas where women and girls are still considered as domestic workers, their rights to access and control of land and other natural resources are limited.

Other challenges experienced by these women include unfavourable local and national biodiversity policies, harsh environmental and climatic conditions such as sudden changes in temperature and attacks from wild animals, lack of adequate recognition of the impactful work these women did, technological difficulties in the documentation of the projects and financial constraint to fully cater for the projects' needs. The participants shared their opinions and expectations for the future of the project:

- Improvement of communications between the representatives of the restoration sites
- Training for capacity building on global policies, strengthening work on ground through a Human Rights Based approach and organizing multilingual training
- Facilitate the exchange of experiences
- Use of communication apps
- More regular meetings, both virtual and in-person.

As a follow-up to the first workshop, an in-person workshop was organized with the intention of understanding the processes, documentation and learnings from the various pilot restoration sites so far, which also includes sharing the outcomes from the Fifteenth Meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 15), the implication of the adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework's stand-alone gender equality target (Target 23) and the post-2020 Gender Plan of Action within the national context, their implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The workshop also included sessions on NBSAPs, GIS training, effective tools for documentation and outreach and the future sustainability of the pilot site processes beyond the project period. The workshop's key objectives were:

- To enable pilot restoration site partners to share about their initiatives and their learnings from them
- To enable W4B and restoration site partners to collectively strengthen processes for documentation, effective outreach and gender-responsive and informed national policies within their respective countries
- To build capacities and provide training on specific aspects of documentation including participatory GIS mapping, carrying out FPIC processes with the communities, communication, and building gender-just processes within the initiatives.
- To address the future of the pilot site initiatives and their sustainability beyond the project period, and to address challenges encountered
- To strategize on engaging effectively in various global forums that addresses restoration, including the upcoming COP16.

Women4Biodiversity facilitated and tried to bring in two participants per pilot restoration site to an immersive experience in Chiang Mai, Thailand from 15-20 May. They shared, learned and celebrated women's roles in biodiversity. The workshop included experts who facilitated certain training sessions including a session on integrating human rights-based approach to NBSAPs and integrating monitoring and evaluation into processes. The workshop also had participation from organizations working on biodiversity governance in Thailand, including [Inter Mountain Peoples Education and Culture in Thailand\(IMPECT\)](#), [Thailand Sustainable Development Foundation \(SDF\)](#), [Global Youth Biodiversity Network\(GYBN\)- Thailand Chapter](#) and [Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact](#).



AGENDA

Table 1: Workshop's Detailed Agenda

Time	Sunday 14th May 2023	Monday 15th May 2023	Tuesday 16th May 2023	Wednesday 17th May 2023	Thursday 18th May 2023	Friday 19th May 2023	Saturday 20th May 2023
		Introduction and Walk down memory lane!	Knowledge is Power: Challenging Narrative through evidence building and documentation	It's not all logistics!	Collective Envisioning	Immersive Experience	
9 am - 9.30 am	Arrival	Ceremonial Opening and Opening Remarks	Recap	Recap Communication tools and Tips (Cont.)- Presentations	Recap	Field Trip Huay E Khang village	Feedback Session and Goodbyes
9.30 am - 10.30am		Introduction of Participants	Integrating Human Rights Based approach to the NBSAPs. Review of National Policies and NBSAPs	Admin and Finance Updates	Process Documentation		
10.30 am - 11 am		Introduction to Project and its objectives		Streamlining Pilot Site Processes			
11 am - 11.15 am		Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break	Coffee Break		
11:15 am - 1 pm		Pilot Site vision and updates 6 Pilot sites (15 min per site)	Reflections on Community Mapping Processes (NIPS, REFACOF)	Streamlining Pilot Site Processes- Cont	Process Documentation - Alternative Framework		
1 pm - 2.30 pm		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch		
2.30 pm - 3.30 pm		Pilot Site vision and updates 6 Pilot sites (15 min per site)	FPIC Processes - Learning from Costa Rica (TBC)		Ways Ahead - Discussing sustaining the PS initiatives beyond the project		
3.30 pm - 3.45 pm		Tea/Snack Break	Tea/Snack Break	Tea/Snack Break	Tea/Snack Break		
3.45pm - 5 pm		Introduction to CBD and Updates	Communication tools and Tips	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework			
5 pm - 6 pm		Reception Dinner	Self time	Self time	International Day for Biodiversity (Hybrid Event)		
7.30 pm onwards					Farewell Dinner		

DAY 1: 15 MAY

Introduction and walk down memory lane

- Ceremonial opening
- Introduction to the project
- Introduction to restoration sites
- Brief history of CBD, its objectives and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

The Ceremonial Opening was conducted in collaboration with IMPECT, by three elder Karen women from Huay E-Khang Village, Mae Wang District. It began with an invocation ceremony by calling the spirits, which was traditionally carried out by Karen women in their communities. This ceremony is typically performed within the family to call the spirits back for their children. Karen believes there are 37 spirits in all, 6 of which reside in human bodies, while the other 31 spirits are found in natural objects like mountains, trees, water, animals, etc. Following the ritual, women tied the holy cotton thread around the participants' wrists. After the ritual, participants were also given rice cakes which were cooked by the community. They believe that children who eat rice cakes would have good brains.



Team photo taken on the inaugural day of the workshop

Noraeri Thungmueangthong, who is the first woman chief of her community and the only female leader in the whole Mae Wang District, a province in Chiang Mai, shared the importance of secure territories of life to ensure food security for all. She also stressed on building capacities of women in this age of globalization to use various mediums to create and spread knowledge and educate themselves. She shared that Karen women find comfort and security in the idea that all people are their brothers and sisters. Karen people believe that the reason we all are in contact today is because our mothers were once the same. They are happy to see that everyone in this workshop resembles a sibling. The second session was facilitated by Shruti Ajit, programme officer for Women4Biodiversity to introduce the project to all the participants.



Noraeri Thungmueangthong tying the holy thread

The overall objective of the project included:

- ✦ Increased capacities of women and girls to plan, analyse and contribute to conservation and restoration of biodiversity
- ✦ Increased recognition of and support for gender and biodiversity into national and regional policy and planning
- ✦ Supporting to enhance the recognition of gender and biodiversity linkages to shape policy narratives.



Participants on the first day of the workshop

She shared the three-pronged approach that informed the project - grassroots, dialogue and global processes. The grassroots process involves supporting and mobilizing communities towards restoration within their territories as well as building capacities to help document and create narratives towards the role of women in restoration. The dialogue process involves conducting legal reviews of NBSAPs within the respective restoration sites, dialogues with various stakeholders and related campaigns to identify and address gender knowledge gaps and best practices. The global process is the supporting, enhancing and shaping policy narratives including international consultations and inputs to Convention to Biological Diversity (CBD) processes in pursuit of gender-transformative plans and policies including active participation of communities in these processes. This was followed by an Introduction to the restoration sites (See table below for more details). Valerie Enderle, from Fundación CAUCE, Argentina, provided the work that they undertook in Parana City with Cuidadores de la Casa Comun in restoring the wetlands. She highlighted the vulnerabilities of the women working in the area especially in terms of economic autonomy to support their families while trying to engage in the restoration initiatives. Aracelly Jimenez Mora and Nayeli Buzano Valverde, from Chomes, Costa Rica, representing CoopeMolusChomes / CoopeSolidar R. L. presented their work on mangrove restoration that will enable them to revive and sustainably collect one species of mollusk (Piangua) through community mapping, participatory management planning, and building capacities through workshops on employment and decent work.

Priscah Chebet Liman and Rosa Chemkoyu from West Pokot, Kenya provided the background of the work that PACEP has been doing with the forest restoration in the Kamatira Forest through sustainable use of NTFPs, particularly medicinal herbs and for making ropes, capacity building of women in the lower and upper Kamatira region through training of nursery building and management, lessening the dependence of firewood through energy saving Jikos*, as well as advocating within local government for the inclusion of women or women-led Community Forest Associations (CFAs).



Jikos, Photo credit: PACEP, Kenya

* Jikos are simple clay stoves that use less wood and hold more heat to reduce the pressure on using more firewood leading to low smoke emissions.

This was followed by awareness, legal review and capacity building work carried out for mangrove restoration in Londji shared by Rose Masso from REFACOF, Cameroon. James Meimana from Solomon Islands, who was unable to join in Chiang Mai shared the context of Solomon Islands, the mapping processes that they carried out, and the restoration initiative in Hageulu in Isabela Province.

Casper Palmano and Sunita Kwangta from KESAN gave context about Salween Peace Park and the indigenous people's assertion towards self-determination amidst civil war in Myanmar, the need for carrying out an ethnic-biodiversity survey done by Women Research Groups (WRG) which included recording the biocultural species composition of Salween Peace Park, understand and work on the threats as well as document traditional uses, conservation knowledge and governance of the indigenous people within Salween Peace Park.

Restoration Site & Status	Learnings and Challenges	Key Achievements
<p>Wetland Parana City, Argentina</p> <p>Restoration in Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference from government officials • Safety of women in Cuidadores compromised • Incidences of theft and damages in the restoration site • Women often are sole breadwinners in their families, which interfere with the voluntary work in the restoration site. • Developing action protocols in cases of violence against women on site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory baseline survey conducted with biologists • Workshop with an Indigenous elder woman was organized to identify and collect native seeds for a seed bank.
<p>Mangrove Chomes, Costa Rica</p> <p>Restoration in Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large shrimp aquaculture near mangrove that operates illegally and pollutes the area • Violent threats to members of the community • Difficulty with regards to the payment to the Costa Rican Social Security Fund • Not allowed to commercialize other species that are extracted • Development of participatory management plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory mapping process • FPIC conducted • Second workshop of the employment and decent work workshop was held. • Review of Agenda of Women Fisherwomen of Seas, Rivers, Coasts and Wetlands was carried out.
<p>Forest Kamatira, West Pokot, Kenya</p> <p>Restoration in Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election year impacted the progress of activities. • Long periods of drought • Challenges in mobilizing women as they were engaged in household activities • Government officials were not easily available. • Integrating economic livelihood incentives was key to ensuring sustainability of the processes for e.g selling NTFP products in the town centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women have been elected to the climate change committees in 20 wards. • Establishment of women-owned tree nurseries • Formation of Community Forest Associations (CFAs) led by women • 60 women from 15 women groups have had their skills built on tree nursery establishment and management and on how to construct energy- saving Jikos.
<p>Mangrove Londji, Cameroon</p> <p>Restoration in Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning the work with national agenda for larger outreach • Limited resources • Area is significantly degraded due to hotels being set up and only 1 ha has been able to be restored. • The initiative is very well- received by the communities, the administration and even development partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informing the communities of the project • Carrying our legal review of NBSAPs • Information sessions and awareness meetings on biodiversity laws • Technical training workshop to present the output of the review with focal point • Training sessions on mapping
<p>Forest Salween Peace Park, Myanmar</p> <p>Restoration in Progress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing civil war and volatile political situation • Centralized resource control, no legal recognition of traditional and customary rights • Armed conflict and militarized development projects • Erratic rainfall and temperature changes • Illegal trading and overharvesting • Erosion and lack of knowledge of key biocultural species 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women research group to conduct their own survey of key biocultural species



Box 2: Common threads in restoration sites

- Threats from climate change that all communities are reeling from.
- Dire need to address issues of gender-based violence especially those who are defending and protecting their biodiversity.
- External threats like exclusionary conservation practices, inactive institutional structures and lack of information often impact active participation of women, their roles in conservation and restoration often neglected.
- Lack of political will to enable gender-responsive policies and include women and girls within key decision-making spaces.
- Restoration as a form of resilience and climate-adaptive mechanism to address biodiversity loss.

The restoration sites have provided important learnings of resilience navigating some of the challenges that are mentioned above.

Mrinalini Rai, director of Women4Biodiversity, facilitated the next session on gender responsiveness. A quick exercise was carried out to shed light on social constructs that define gender roles and how work on gender equity and equality tends to address these and go past them. Mrinalini then proceeds to introduce the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), its objectives and what role it has played towards humans rights-based approach and gender-responsiveness within biodiversity governance. Within the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, she particularly focused on the elements of Target 2 which called for restoring 30 percent of total degraded terrestrial and marine ecosystems by 2030. Participants engaged in discussions around the elements that needs to be addressed as part of this target and linking it to other targets, specifically Target 22 and Target 23 as well as the Gender Plan of Action.

DAY 2: 16 MAY

Knowledge is Power: Challenging narrative through evidence building and documentation

- ◆ Legal reviews and integrating human rights-based approach to NBSAPs
- ◆ Participatory community mapping
- ◆ Following Free Prior Informed Consent processes within restoration
- ◆ Communication tools and tips for effective outreach

The second day began with an energetic dance and song which was facilitated by Rosa and Priscah from PACEP Kenya. They also brought gifts from Kenya for the participants in forms of wraps to be tied over the shoulders carrying the quintessential colours of green and yellow with elements of wildlife which could be found in the Kenyan landscape co-existing with women.



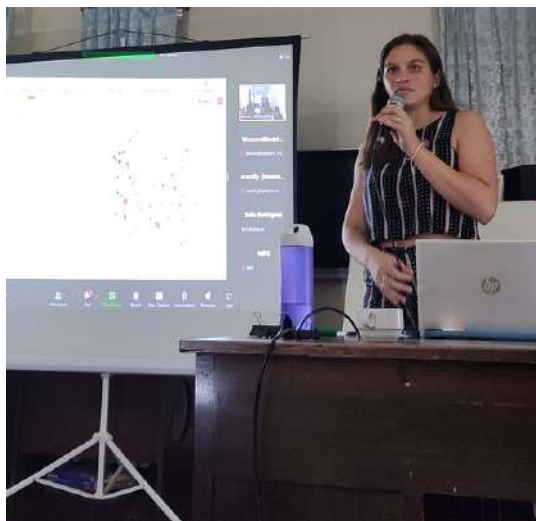
Participants wearing the wraps gifted by friends from PACEP

The first session was to understand the role of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) towards operationalizing the now-adopted Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and to identify how gender-responsive and human-rights based were the already existing NBSAPs as well as the other biodiversity laws within the six restoration sites. As part of this project, the first step of each of the restoration sites was to carry out the legal review of the various biodiversity laws within their countries.

The intention of this review was to evaluate the existing laws and policies including the NBSAPs that each of the country has, including gender-responsive governance and conservation management, equal opportunity and participation for women in decision-making bodies, financial mechanisms and resource mobilization, capacity building, gender budgeting and addressing gender-based violence. This would then inform the future advocacy with their respective focal points through multi-stakeholder meetings and consultations.

The legal review for Argentina was carried out by FARN, which, as shared by Valerie, shed light on the various national policies, especially the creation of a Secretary for Women, first government body for the promotion of gender equality and then in 2019 the creation of Ministry of Women Gender and Diversity under which obligatory training on violence against women for all national civil servants, and the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as well as the establishment of National Advisory Commission for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity (CONADIBIO).

However, there are huge gaps in gender-disaggregated data and women defenders are still threatened at large. The NBSAP (2016-2020) consists of 21 priority targets where women are addressed only once and through general terms of equality and equity which could involve women. This NBSAP has now been extended until 2024 and involves six intersectional approaches, four of which could be inferred to include women's rights. After the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, FARN/CAUCE, through their involvement in CONADIBIO, aims to address these gaps through a consultative process.



Valeria from CAUCE talks about various national policies

Aracelly from Costa Rica shared findings of their legal review which indicated that laws (both at national and international level) have not addressed the rights of fisherwomen and shellfish gatherers particularly, while the FAO Voluntary Guidelines for achieving sustainability in small-scale fisheries in the context of food security and poverty eradication was adopted in 2015 and ratified in Costa Rica in August 2015**, which includes a section on Gender Equality. The Political Constitution of Costa Rica stipulates as fundamental guarantees equality before the law and the possibility of providing special protection to women through affirmative actions. The National Policy on Biodiversity does address protection of women defenders as well as their equal and effective participation

in decision-making bodies. The next step is to recognize and advocate for the role of fisherwomen and mollusk gatherers through the same and include their narrative into the larger aspect of gender-responsive policies within Costa Rica, which up until now has been neglected. They have also begun more active interactions with their CBD focal point to put forward these points.

** Executive Decree No. 39195 MAG-MINAE-MTSS of August 7, 2015

In Kenya, Priscah from PACEP reflected that through their legal review, women have been recognized in key areas including as major stakeholders in raising awareness on biodiversity, co-promoters of nature-based enterprises including ecotourism and community conservancies as well as in small-scale agricultural enterprises geared towards commercialization of African leafy vegetables and other traditional food for nutrition and food security and as actors contributing in the restoration and preservation of medicinal and other indigenous plants through application of traditional knowledge. However, there is a major gap with regards to women being part of biodiversity management and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as women's equal rights towards tenurial rights and towards means of production.

PACEP has been engaged in dialogues with various stakeholders and lobbying for women taking positions within the Climate Change Committees as well as forming a women-led Community Forest Association under the West Pokot Climate Change Regulation.



Rose from REFACOF presenting the legal review

In Cameroon, Rose from REFACOF presented that while the legal review showed that international law recognized the role of women within natural resource management, it is yet to be operationalized in national-level laws and policies. National level plans do not address gender and lack gender-specific budgeting including for Biodiversity and Conservation. REFACOF has been engaging with the country focal point to share the findings of the review and reformulate to include gender considerations in their Sectorial Plans (2022-2024).

Casper from KESAN provided a context to the existing situation in Myanmar where the ongoing armed conflict and displacement has led to the collapse of the National Government and associated institutions, laws and policies as well as the imminent threat from climate change-related occurrences. According to Myanmar's NBSAP (2015-2020) the Aichi Target 14 was adopted verbatim, which addresses the need to restore and safeguard ecosystems, including the needs of women. Other laws like the Farmland Law (2020), the Forest Law (2018), the Vacant Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Laws, etc. are not gender-responsive.



Sunita Kwangta from KESAN

The current de facto of Karen National Union (KNU) policies include the Kawthoolei Land Policy (2015), which recognizes women's land rights through inheritance, redistribution as well as its access, the Kawthoolei Forest Policy (2019), which includes their equal and effective participation in decision-making bodies and the Development Project Review Policy (2021), which insists on reservation of one-third of positions within the environmental protection committee for women. Within the Salween Peace Park, the General Assembly comprises KNU representatives, community representatives and civil society and needs to adhere to the one-third gender policy. KESAN aims to work on strengthening gender responsiveness within KNU policies as well as the Salween Peace Park five-year strategic plan.

Romchat Wachirattanakornkul, Regional Focal Point for Climate and Environment for South East Asia, Office of the High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) provided insights on Protecting Biodiversity through a Human Rights-Based Approach. She stressed on integrating a human rights-based approach into the NBSAPs as it would help address the disproportionate effects of biodiversity loss on various groups and also help recognize the rights of IPLCs, women and youth towards becoming “active agents of change and not passive recipients or victims”. A study conducted by OHCHR highlighted that while the first generation of NBSAPs (1996-2003) failed to include any HRBA, the subsequent NBSAPs have incorporated human rights elements with 44% NBSAPs directly addressing at least one HR and 83% of them have taken vulnerable groups into consideration subject to context.

Finally, Romchat emphasized NBSAPs need to ensure meaningful and effective participation of women during the development, implementation and reporting processes, develop gender-sensitive indicators in line with the KMGBF and GPA, record gender-disaggregated data, gender-responsive resource mobilization, continuous dialogues with rights holders, effective human rights monitoring, reporting and accountability mechanisms and guarantee right to access justice and effective remedies in case of a human rights violation.



Romchat Wachirattanakornkul from OHCHR



Kittikun Saksung, GYBN Thailand Chapter

To emphasize the role of youth in the development and monitoring of NBSAPs, Kittikun Saksung, Coordinator of GYBN Thailand, shared some of the activities that the youth in Thailand have undertaken to understand, build awareness and engage with policies both at global as well as national levels. This included Thailand youth policy recommendation for Post-2020 GBF, organizing public hearing on the draft Biodiversity Act, building capacities through youth leaders programme and creating focus groups for the 15-year Biodiversity Targets currently being developed.

The next session was sharing of community mapping processes undertaken by some of the restoration sites. Rose from Cameroon shared the five steps towards the community mapping process which included:

- Meeting (information and awareness for community, informing leaders and other stakeholders (including local groups into the entire processes).
- Visit the site (including consultation with youth and women and cartographer, gathering GPS coordinated by a cartographer who is recommended by community members).
- Cartographer comes back to validate the GPS coordinate and finalize the map and check for missing information.
- Include the coordinate into the software.
- Final map

In Argentina, CAUCE, with the help of biologists, have conducted a participatory mapping process where community members mapped the fauna and flora using GPS tracking equipment. In Chomes, the community members in collaboration with CoopeSolidar have developed a map which provides the location of restoration and fishing spots which gets updated every month and is a combination of traditional knowledge especially from women and scientific methodology. KESAN has worked with communities within Salween Peace Park where they first developed a hand-drawn map which was then substantiated with GPS through a boundary walk. The territory also included areas where women have identified significant biodiverse species. Ravadee from SDF shared that it is important to build awareness of the larger goal and objective of the mapping process and also include targeted groups like women, youth and elders within the community. Participants from IMPECT stressed on the need to involve local government in the mapping process and include various categories towards boundary demarcation including land use like shifting agriculture, habitat preservation, community forestry as well as use and access of certain areas by other communities. The mapping process can also help with conflict resolution in between communities and government officials and could be used as a tool for self determination and autonomy. In Solomon Islands, NIPS have developed 3D maps in protected areas to show community restoration areas and conservation areas in a participatory manner.



All smiles on Day 2



Women4Biodiversity members summarized and stressed on the use of mapping as an important negotiating tool towards rights recognition including land rights, access rights and sustainable use of natural resources. The objective of the mapping process should also outline why the mapping is being carried out, who it will be targeted towards, who will own the information shared through the mapping process and how much of this information needs to be publicly available. Principles of inclusivity, reciprocity, democratic and informed decision-making needs to be followed through the participatory mapping process.

The second half of the day was where participants got their creative juices flowing through expressing themselves in the Women4Biodiversity mural. There were elements of nature, wildlife and a splash of colour!



Participants painting the canvas mural

In the next session, Costa Rica shared the Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) process that was carried out prior to the restoration. Processes of FPIC-enabled communities within Chomes brought awareness on the objectives and intentions of the larger project, and communities were able to make informed decisions at every step of the process. Participants discussed the various challenges, learnings and principles for the full implementation of FPIC.



Box 3: Following processes of Free Prior Informed Consent: A Case Study from Chomes, Costa Rica

CoopeMolus Chomes R.L in collaboration with CoopeSolidar began organizing meetings where they explained in a simple and clear way the process with Women4Biodiversity and its larger goals and objectives. Later, after the legal review, a meeting was organized to inform the women in Chomes regarding the history and vision of CBD. This was followed by a meeting to finalize the workplans, budgets and timelines for the activities envisioned under the project. Every decision was put to vote and consensus-building through the use of green and red paddles, the former indicating that they agree and the latter showing disagreement.

The process provided them with information including:

- How decisions were going to be made
- How budgets would be handled
- Conflict resolutions
- Creating a group of women who were going to be the point of contact with CoopeSolidar R.L. and also mentioning in case of travel opportunities to participate in various forums and meetings to present the work being carried out in Chomes

This process also assumed responsibilities which were:

- Being at meetings on time
- Showing dissent
- Work hard and cheerfully

The final session for the day was to discuss communication tools and tips facilitated by Sumina Subba, visual communications officer of Women4Biodiversity, where she shared some of the common ways to build outreach materials and documentation throughout the period of any activity. The objective of this session was to build capacities of participants to document their own work within the project through audio-visual tools and exploring the variety of options available to be able to document beyond just reporting. The day ended with participants being asked to create short video clips of each other based on some of the tools and tips addressing the question, "What do women want in terms of gender equality and women's rights now that the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework has been adopted?"



DAY 3: 17 MAY

It's not all logistics!

- Timelines and workplans
- Monitoring, evaluation and learning

The third day began with a quick recap of going through all the videos that the participants shot the previous day as part of the communications sessions.



A screen capture from the video

Watch the video at bit.ly/CNXVideos

Shruti introduced a brief timeline of the entire project, including the various reporting and financial timelines. This was followed by each of the restoration sites partners working on updating and sharing their work plans for the future and how they intend to carry the work forward. The objective of this session was to inform participants of possible outcomes which they can prepare for while leaving flexibility for possible challenges that may arise including elections, pandemic lockdowns, climate change-related issues, etc. While understanding the complexities within each of the pilot site landscapes and the diversities in the kind of documentation taking place, these work plans are intended to be a guiding tool to understand the work they have planned for themselves based on what they had first intended to achieve. Each restoration sites then shared a quick update on the work plans that they hope to achieve at the end of the project period with the rest of the group.

Ashanapuri Hertz from SwedBio facilitated the next session on *Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)* where she highlighted the guiding tools that would help monitor impact within the project. She also stressed on developing actions based on the larger goal/vision one has intended through their project. She shared a few methodologies that could be used as tools for reflection and to evaluate whether one is deviating from the original objective of the work they had undertaken for e.g. Theory of Change. Ashanapuri then moved to highlight some key quantitative and qualitative indicators which could be used as a tool to evaluate and measure change. One of the ways could be through understanding visible indicators like changes in biodiversity, engagement, advocacy and lobbying with various local and national level stakeholders, through outputs generated through this process. However she also redirected the participants to reflect on invisible indicators, including examples of being invited to be part of committees in local/regional level due to the work that they had done. She also mentioned that while those are all examples of positive qualitative indicators, there could be negative indicators which need to be recognized and reflected upon to ensure that these are addressed or brought to the cognizance of communities. Simple reflection methods like use of sticky notes, guided questions and process documentation could all be part of the MEL process. Ashanapuri ended the session by sharing an example of a visual tool of devising a workplan which could aid some of the participants within their work and activities.



A session on MEL with SwedBio



DAY 4: 18 MAY

Collective envisioning

- ✦ Process documentation - Exploring through the River of Life activity
- ✦ Addressing indicators and impacts - Alternative Transformation Framework
- ✦ Ways ahead and strategies for future actions
- ✦ International Day for Biological Diversity hybrid event

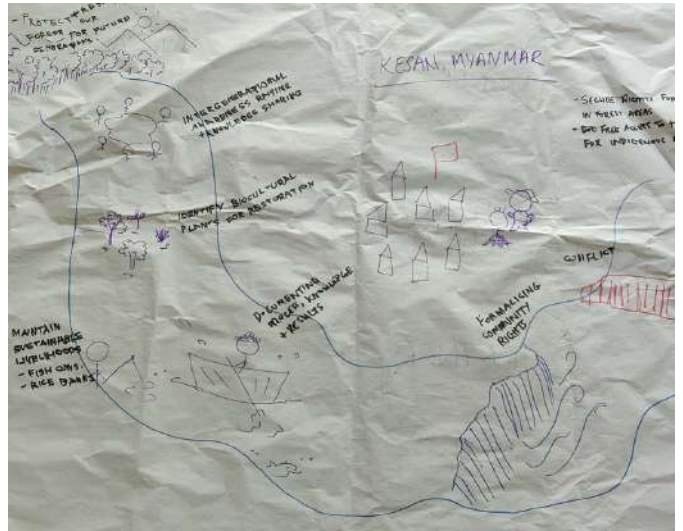
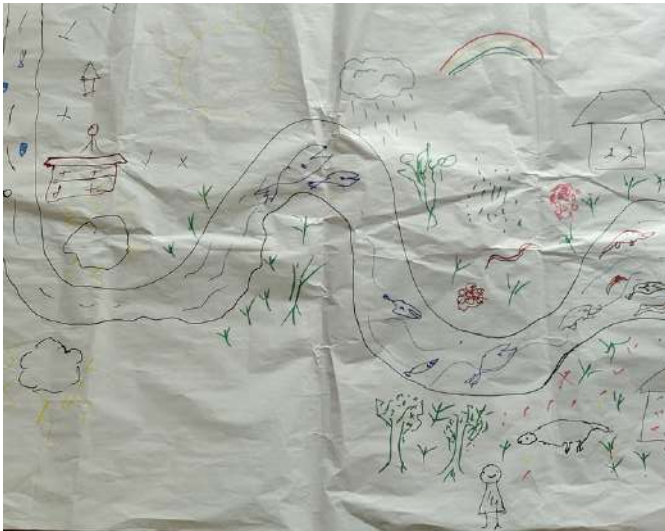
The final day of the workshop was intended to highlight the importance of documentation and ways in which the entire process could be documented by the participants. It began with few participants sharing stories that they have within the communities and intergenerational stories. These stories are often ways of orally transferring knowledge from one generation to another and several of them also include elements of governance, management and conservation. Stories are often linked to the culture, histories and knowledge systems that inform the existence of biodiversity in the region. Shruti mentioned that storytelling could be a form of documentation that women would often use to pass information generationally and could be an important tool of advocacy. Women often are keepers of traditional knowledge and several practices including the use of medicinal herbs are passed on from a mother to her daughters.

The first session this day linked the previous day's session on work plans and timelines. Called *The River of Life*, this activity asked participants to imagine their entire journey/process in the form of a river and based on the landscape and context of each of the restoration sites, and they could add elements into their river of life journeys where when the river joins the ocean it represents the larger goal/vision of this project. Valerie from CAUCE mentioned that she added the mosquitoes representing some challenges within the wetland restoration process which hopefully could be addressed like a mosquito repellent could, and they can continue their journeys to strengthen the work that Cuidadores women are undertaking. Rose from Cameroon began the journey with a small section of the river where the community is addressing the impacts of climate change especially on livelihoods, deforestation and privatization of land by building hotels.

However she adds fishes, trees and clouds towards the end of her journey indicating that the aim of this restoration project hopes to restore the biodiversity and enhance livelihood security of the people in Londji. In Myanmar, Sunita and Casper shared that they added a dam that indicates challenges like the ongoing conflict, violence and climate change impact which could impact the flow of the river.

However, several strategies like identification of biocultural plants for restoration, documenting knowledge systems and strengthening self-determination processes will help negotiate rights for women in the region and free access to and respect for indigenous knowledge.





River of Life diagrams clockwise from top left: REFACOF (Cameroon), KESAN (Myanmar), CAUCE (Argentina), Coopesolidar / Chomes (Costa Rica)



River of Life diagram: PACEP (Kenya)

A process documentation file was then shared with the participants which aims to document the restoration process through storytelling and narration building. There were several questions at every stage and she encourages each restoration site to contribute to the process to add more knowledge for the documentation of their own processes.

The second session was a self reflection exercise where participants were presented with five elements: social, cultural, economic, ecological and political. Shruti asked each of the participants to put post-its where they think their work seems the most relevant and addresses some aspect of the elements. The impact could be intersectional, and participants were encouraged to also reflect on the elements that they had not intended to work on and/or have not been able to address due to the various challenges. After the initial sharing from the various participants, Shruti introduced *The Alternative Transformation Framework* which was a self-assessment tool devised through consultative process with various stakeholders through the Vikalp Sangam (Alternatives Confluence) which brought people together to delve on alternatives towards radical ecological democracy.

Participants felt that both the River of Life and Alternative Transformation Framework are important tools to be taken back to the communities as they are very visual tools and could be easily undertaken. The framework could also be a guiding tool to identify a few indicators for their monitoring and evaluation processes within the restoration initiative.

The final session on Ways Ahead and Building Strategies for the future participants shared a few recommendations to carry forward the collective work built through their workshop:

- Building a collective communication strategy that would be supplemented from voices from the restoration sites and amplify the documentation being carried out in the restoration initiatives
- Continuing cross-cultural exchanges between restoration sites through the email list and WhatsApp group
- Strengthening national and regional advocacy work through NBSAPs review and advocating with national and local focal points including through exploring opportunities of fundraising for capacity building and supporting the restoration process
- Developing capacities by encouraging to join training programmes organized by UNCBD Women's Caucus which would familiarize members with CBD processes
- Updating work plans and regular reporting of the situation of the restoration initiatives as per the timelines shared and vetted.



Women4Biodiversity also organized a hybrid event with the pilot restoration site partners as panelists as part of the International Day for Biological Diversity. Titled *From Agreement to Action: Ways forward for gender equality and women's rights in building back biodiversity*, the event was also attended in-person by several civil society organizations working on biodiversity governance in Thailand and Asia-Pacific. The event was followed by a reception dinner.



Hybrid event for International Day for Biodiversity



DAY 5: 19 MAY

Immersive Experience: Trip to Huay E-Khang, Northern Thailand

In collaboration with IMPECT, Women4Biodiversity organized a field visit to Huay E-Khang Village, a Karen village in Northern Thailand. The visit was organized for the participants and the community to meet, exchange, and share experiences and strategies to understand the processes of conservation and restoration, linking it to livelihood initiatives that the Karen community were undertaking.

The meeting, led by Noraeri, the village head, Thewa, who was the former member of the local Tambon administration, and Phi, who was a youth representative, provided a brief history of the village. The village is around 350 years old and there are several practices that the Karen community, especially the women, follow that link their culture and belief system to the biodiversity around them and are also forms of knowledge transmission from one generation to another. Some of the documentation of these knowledge and belief systems could be found here and was shared with the participants. The participants also shared briefly about the work that they do in their respective countries with communities.



Some photographs from the field visit

The group was then shown the map of the territory which was printed and kept in their office. The National Government has declared parts of their forest as protected forests, also including part of their shifting cultivation land. The map demarcated their entire territory into various segments including community forests, conservation forests, shifting agricultural areas, sacred forests, settlements etc. The process of developing this GIS map was participatory and consultative, and is being used as a tool for negotiation with local government. While the map has not been recognized by the national government, the local governments have been



Participants walking through the community forest

receptive to their assertions over their territory, and have been working with them towards joint forest management. The participants were then treated with delicious local food prepared by the community, after which they dyed cloth with natural dyes sourced from the forest including mango bark, turmeric, etc. The group then proceeded to a short hike in the forest, where they shared some of the knowledge about the indigenous plants that they use for food and medicine. Rosa from Kenya was able to identify some of these plants, which are also being used as medicine by women in Kamatira Forest in Kenya.

According to Karen leaders, the three years of Covid demonstrated their capacity to retain their way of life through biodiversity and that they could transfer knowledge to new generations about their own indigenous knowledge and culture. Nowadays, fewer young people work outside of the village; instead, they return home and earn an income from value-added village products like coffee, handicrafts, honey, etc.

Participants were able to understand and find similarities with some of the Karen Community practices within their own work with the community, including in the mapping processes. The value-added initiatives were also an inspiration to many to integrate livelihood aspects within their processes in the future.



Group photo in front of the community forest



OVERALL IMPACT AND OUTCOMES

This technical training workshop was envisioned for restoration sites to be able to share and develop capacities for their restoration initiatives. Some of the intended outcomes were:

- Training on various aspects of documentation and monitoring of their restoration initiatives
- Building more spaces for cross-cultural learning and free exchanges between restoration sites
- Strengthening and building awareness of the larger objectives of the overall project
- Sharing collective strategies for local, regional and global level advocacy through deepening their understanding of CBD processes, as well learning various engagement strategies from one another
- Creating awareness around the history of CBD processes including NBSAPs, Gender Plan of Action and the recently adopted Kunming- Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Sharing methodologies for further self reflexive-processes to strengthen their initiatives.



Team photo on the last day of the workshop

ANNEX

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