



Summary of Lessons Learned from Landscape Governance Implementation

In October, 2019, NCRC and Touton (partners under the Partnership for Productivity, Protection and Resilience (3PRCL)) participated in a Partnership for Forests (P4F) workshop in Abidjan to share lessons on the implementation of landscape governance. NCRC drew these lessons through the experience of building landscape governance structures in the Juabeso-Bia HIA, similar work in the Kakum landscape, and decades of experience supporting the development and implementation of CREMAs.

Lessons on Landscape Governance Implementation

- **Landscape governance is not complicated:** Organizations or companies who want to implement or support landscape governance should not be intimidated by the concept. It is not complicated; it just requires commitment and time. With the appropriate approach (described herein), communities, their leaders, the private sector, NGOs and government stakeholders can understand the model and take it forward together.
- **Just get started:** Do not wait for the perfect concept or conditions. It is best to initiate the work and know that others (local people and landscape stakeholders) will follow in good time. Good work will speak for itself and others will want to join.
- **There is room for all stakeholders:** Implementing and supporting landscape governance is not a single entity's responsibility. There is space (and the need) for multiple stakeholders to support the work and play roles in implementation. In doing this, there is also scope for learning, and learning by new stakeholders should be recognized as key part of the process.
- **Landscape governance should not be rushed:** Supporting the development of the various governance structures, from CREMA to Sub-HIA to HIA requires time and a sustained effort. The dynamics and sensitivities of people, communities and traditional authorities are real. A moderately paced, step-wise approach will build a strong foundation on which to grow. Rushing (often driven by project deadlines) often lead to mistakes, miscommunications and weak structures. Moving too quickly can result in decisions or issues that can undermine the process later on. Landscape governance building is not a race. The best teacher is time and experience.
- **HIA / Landscape financial sustainability is essential:** If a landscape and the governance structure do not have financial sustainability, then the system will not function on the ground. This is the most overlooked and misunderstood element of landscape governance. It is recommend to develop the resource based to generate sustainable revenue which can be invested in a Trust Fund to support governance activities in perpetuity.
- **Adopt a phased approach to landscape governance:** It is neither necessary nor realistic to achieve a whole HIA landscape in a single effort. A phased approach offers many advantages.
- **Multiple Goals/Objectives are required for success:** Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) is the foundational goal across all types of landscape

initiatives but it is important that a landscape-level program have multiple goals/objectives. *Sustainable production, improved farmer livelihoods, ecosystem health and biodiversity conservation*, and *landscape governance* are broad goal/theme areas that are key to landscape-level programme success.

- **Landscape boundaries need to be clear but ambitious:** The landscape boundaries need to be large enough to have ecosystem impact but they also need to be functional and respected by the local level stakeholders. In Ghana, it has been determined the best approach is to build the target landscape on clustering traditional council boundaries with each traditional area governed by sub-HIA institutions. This is because land is held by traditional structures and not by government. Yet there is need to seek overlapping framing of the landscape according to administrative boundaries so that it supports government led actions and policy responses with clear structures of responsibility. This is particularly relevant in the case of matching government interventions along the lines of the Cocoa Board districts and the political districts assembly boundaries.
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Lessons on Institutional Collaboration & Coordination

- **Build consensus amongst landscape stakeholders:** Building consensus of the need for systematic changes (implementing landscape governance is one of these changes) is critical. There needs to be collective agreement that the business-as-usual trajectory is not going to work for a sustainable future.
- **Scale matters:** Consensus on the importance of a landscape-scale approach matters. Working from the farm-level up to the landscape level using a nested approach is the best and only way to bring positive climate change impacts and to comprehensively address issues that radiate beyond the farm level.
- **Substance matters:** Landscape interventions and activities should have a solid foundation and not reflect the “flavor of the month” idea. Build the systems based upon substance—scientific research and other well tested methods.
- **If you want to go fast, go alone, but if you want to go far, go together:** It takes all different stakeholders working together to achieve landscape goals. Individual approaches lead to excessive overlap and inefficiency, and are unlikely to last the test of time.
- **The Consortium is a good model for effective pre-competitive partnerships:** To have success on the ground we need partnerships where the organizations, agencies and companies have different skill sets, and all play their roles together. The Consortium model under the GCFRP creates a platform for collaboration, information sharing and pre-competitive engagements.
- **Leadership of the Consortium can affect the results:** Consortia are best led by *neutral* bodies with a good track record. The private sector approach, skill set, and priorities are often not well-placed to lead such an entity. But the private sector is an essential partner in a Consortium.
- **Private sector benefits from partnerships:** Private sector partners benefit immensely from the knowledge and resources that they leverage from other partners.

Lessons on Commodity Approaches & Pre-Competitive Strategies for Private Sector

- **Commodity focus facilitates buy-in and supply chain in-setting:** Focusing the landscape on a globally traded commodity such as cocoa provides a better entry point for all stakeholders in the supply chain. A commodity focus creates a direct opportunity for geographical sourcing, which in turn creates incentives (e.g. increased yields, premium pricing) and benefits (ER benefit sharing, improved access to resources and trainings, access to financial

credit) for local stakeholders. This also creates opportunities for buyers to implement their sustainable sourcing commitments through in-setting.

- **Sub-divide the landscape for own territory and story:** Make spaces within the landscape (Sub-HIAs or CREMAs) where individual companies and partner NGOs can be “champions”. Let everyone work together but have distinct locations that they can “own”.
- **Sub-HIA approaches strengthen access to farmers and beans:** A focus on Sub-HIA or CREMAs can give companies strengthen access to farmers and beans. This is because the HIA governance bodies work to promote loyalty, solve problems, and foster engagement and participation.
- **Work together on cross-cutting issues:** Landscape issues like livelihoods, living wages, deforestation, child labor affect all corporate bodies and therefore should be address together in a landscape.
- **The whole is greater than the sum of the parts:** Joint efforts enhance transparency, accountability, and cross-sector learning.

Lessons on Engaging Communities & Leaders

- **Future sustainability depends on local buy-in and commitment:** The future sustainability of landscape governance rests with the local people. Therefore, allowing communities to engage with and come to co-own and co-drive the process is key.
- **Genuine stakeholder consultations are critical:** local community consultation and engagement in the major design aspects, including in the drafting of implementation plans, safeguards, and benefit sharing is critical. Private sector engagement and consultation in design at sub-landscape level where companies are active is important to successful implementation. NGOs and civil society, rather than private sector, need to be at the center of stakeholder engagement and consultation processes to help facilitate a productive and respectful dialogue and to ensure that recommendations are actually taken onboard and addressed.
- **Handing out money to communities and governance bodies is highly problematic:** Giving money to communities too early in the HIA development or landscape governance development process can derail progress. It sends a very stark and counter-productive message and keeping up with the money-expectations in the future is difficult.
- **Financial management training and guidance is very valuable:**
- **Allow leaders to make mistakes:** The best lessons and learning can come from making mistakes. Over-managing governance at the local level robs people and organizations of taking responsibility, learning lessons, and then finding solutions.

Lessons on Financial Sustainability for Landscape Governance

- **Mixed source funding:** Use an approach that brings a mixed source of funding to support the work. This means combining research money, grant money, private sector investment, and government funds towards the common effort.
- **Apply mixed funding in a logical progression:** This means starting with grants and private sector investment to support governance building, roll-out of CSC, and establishment of Consortium. Diversity to *new* products in the landscape—NTFP and botanicals—that support socio-economic and ecological sustainability. Then place a portion of the revenue from these new products into Trust Funds for the HIA’s operational sustainability. Complement this with carbon money and in-kind benefits (benefit sharing money from World Bank Carbon Fund). Private sector partners should share in the support of the Consortium and governance continuation. Targeted grants can be used for specific purposes.

- **Benefit sharing requires on-going attention:** benefit sharing remains one of the most critical elements to ensure local people, agricultural smallholders, forest dependent populations, forest-users, traditional authorities, and/or rural landowners will benefit from landscape initiatives. These programs are structured to bring benefits to the local people by earmarking incentives and performance-based benefits for farmers, communities, forest dependent peoples, traditional rulers, rural landowners, etc., and putting in place structures to significantly limit elite and government capture. This needs to be monitored to ensure it happens in that manner.
- **Government engagement and support is key:** Ensuring national, district and agency level governments as the implementing agencies or key partners with private sector, NGOs is important. In particular, it opens the door to working with the governments to help them to meet their goals in a manner that is compatible with that of the landscape goals. The negative influence of politics is a major risk. Changes in national and district level government officials can have significant impacts delaying or otherwise adversely affect the program.

Lessons on Achieving Landscape Impacts for Forests & People

- **Long-term commitment:** To achieve real and lasting impacts requires a long-term commitment, not a project-cycle commitment. This is because landscape sustainability requires a sustained effort.
- **Mistakes are okay:** But learn from mistakes and make changes.
- **Monitoring and evaluation are important:** We can't manage what we do not measure. Monitoring can help to identify risks and address them early on, see and understand trends, know the landscape and its people better.