



#ESPConf7 / Press Release: September 12th 2014

Building a path between traditional and scientific knowledge

San José, Costa Rica. A group of representatives of local communities and scientists gathered at the 7th Annual Ecosystem Services Partnership (ESP) Conference, held in San José, Costa Rica, to share experiences and perspectives related to common projects that were developed around the issue of ecosystem services and resource management, and supported by the European Union. These projects are CiVi.net, Cobra, COMET-LA, COMBIOSERVE and EcoAdapt, all funded by the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7).

This meeting of knowledge highlighted the importance of recognizing local wisdom in the management and conservation of natural resources and the importance of taking into account the needs and capacities of communities.

The necessity to create policies that support communities in their efforts for their socio-environmental development was another of the topics and learning of these projects. For example, a challenge identified from CiVi.net project and its Costa Rican counterpart Fundación Neotrópica, is *"the need that communities in Costa Rica can have access to the mangroves and their resources and that their efforts strengthen their management and conservation"* said Nirleidy Artavia, representative of the Association of Fishermen and Piangueros Asopez in the Osa region, Costa Rica. Communities should be involved in decision-making on their resources.





Photo: Nirleidy Artavia, Jency Cerdas and Karen Cascante from ASOPEZ in one of the mangrove nurseries in Costa Rica.

"The territory is the living space where communities recreate their culture" explained Manuel Riascos from CC-AMDA, Colombia, in the discussion on the right to manage natural resources and land tenure. Another point highlighted was the need to create spaces and opportunities for rescuing and strengthening cultural identity, respecting the values and principles of communities.

Research based on participatory methodologies and knowledge sharing is the platform for the communities empowerment in their management and negotiation capacity to achieve the objectives mentioned above.

"A thought that has arisen from scientists during the projects and the conference is the emergence of a new ethic and way to make science that should go hand in hand with the community and have the commitment to create a new system of knowledge integrating new learning ", mentioned Bibiana Bilbao, from Simón Bolívar University, Venezuela.

References:

- European Union FP7 - A fund to support research and innovation - <http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/>

About the FP7 Projects:

CiVi.net <http://www.civinet.eu/espanol>

The CiVi.net project aims to analyze, transfer and disseminate successful and sustainable community based solutions with regard to ecosystem service management in Latin America. Countries involved Costa Rica, Brazil, Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, Austria.

Cobra <http://projectcobra.org/>

Behind Project COBRA lies a very simple idea. This idea suggests that human development policies and projects need to serve primarily the people they intend to strengthen. Project COBRA aims to showcase indigenous solutions for the management of natural resources that could in turn inspire development policies and projects. Countries involved Guyana, Brazil, Surinam, United Kingdom, Italy, Netherlands.





EcoAdapt <https://sites.google.com/site/ecoadaptproject/>

EcoAdapt is an action-research initiative working with three Latin American provinces to influence water management processes that contribute to local development and reduce vulnerability of human populations to climate change through capacity building, knowledge sharing, conflict prevention and mitigation, and promoting joint work with local and national stakeholders. Countries involved Costa Rica, Ecuador, Bolivia, Argentina, Chile, Austria, United Kingdom, France, Spain.

COMBIOSERVE <http://www.combioserve.org/es>

COMBIOSERVE is a consortium of ten institutions working together to assess the effectiveness of community-based management strategies for biocultural diversity. Using a multi-disciplinary and participatory research strategy, the consortium seeks to identify the conditions and principles for successful community-based conservation initiatives in selected locations in Brazil, Bolivia and Mexico. Countries involved Austria, United Kingdom, Brazil, Bolivia, Spain, Netherlands, Bolivia, México.

COMET-LA <http://www.comet-la.eu/index.php/es/>

The aim of the project is to identify sustainable community-based governance for the management of natural resources that could be used in different social-ecological systems in a context of climate change and increasing competition in the use of these ones. Countries involved México, Colombia, Argentina, Spain, Norway, United Kingdom, Portugal.

Additional Information:

Tony Villalobos tvillalobos@neotropica.org 6108-8514

Karla Córdoba kcordoba@neotropica.org 8892-5566

#ESPConf7 Official website: www.espconference.org

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