

Contributing to IPBES implementation through partnerships and science-policy interfacing towards a sustainable and resilient Asia-Pacific



Best-practice examples from recent activities implemented or supported by the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research

Lin Zhen¹, Ngo Tho Hung², Linda Anne Stevenson³*, Xiaojun Deng³

1. Institute of Geographic Science and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China. 2. Asian Institute of Technology Center in Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam. 3. Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research, Kobe, Japan. * Corresponding author. Email: lastevenson@apn-gcr.org

INTRODUCTION

SCIENCE-POLICY DIALOGUES ON THE IPBES ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL ASSESSMENT

Driven by a mission to support a cohesive and interactive community of global change researchers, policymakers, practitioners and civil society across the Asia-Pacific region through innovative and transdisciplinary approaches that draw upon the extensive network of science-policy practitioners, the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN), an intergovernmental network of 22 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, strives to contribute to the generation of new knowledge to address evolving global change and sustainability challenges by supporting collaborative research, capacity development and science-policy interfacing under six interlinked thematic areas: climate, biodiversity and ecosystems; air, land, coasts and oceans; food, water and energy; risk and resilience; and human dimensions.

As an organization that shares common objectives with IPBES since its inception, APN has prioritized supporting regional and international cooperation that contributes to implementing global agendas and accumulating scientific knowledge, including for IPCC and IPBES. This poster highlights the recent activities implemented or funded by APN that aim to enhance the dissemination of IPBES outputs, support decision-making through policy impact assessment, and create an enabling environment for ecosystem-based adaptation in Southeast Asia.

As part of an initiative on “Capacity Building for the Implementation of the IPBES Asia-Pacific Regional Assessment – JBF-IPBES(C3)” supported by the Japan Biodiversity Fund under the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), APN and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) implemented two science-policy dialogues in February and April 2019 for the subregions of South and West Asia, as well as Oceania, with the support of the Ministry of Forests and Environment, Nepal, and the Department of Environment and Energy, Australia, respectively.

The purpose of the subregional dialogues was to facilitate understanding of the findings of the IPBES Regional Assessment Report on

Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Asia and the Pacific, published in 2018, including policy options to mitigate the deterioration of biodiversity and ecosystems in the region.

The dialogue adopted a “challenges-solutions” structure that provided meaningful interactions that could help narrow gaps across knowledge, policy and practice. Seven key messages from the summary for policymakers of the Regional Assessment were shared through a pre-dialogue online survey to determine their applicability and relevance in countries in the region. Information gathered through the survey were used to shape the agenda of the dialogues, which focussed on case studies or challenges relevant at national and subregional levels.

Based on the input from participants in both dialogues, two policy briefs were developed to provide recommendations on enhancing the dissemination of the IPBES assessment report, and to address biodiversity challenges and solutions in Asia-Pacific countries.



▲ Science-Policy Dialogue for South Asia and West Asia Subregion on the IPBES Asia-Pacific Regional Assessment, 27-28 February 2019, Kathmandu, Nepal.



▲ Science-Policy Dialogue in Oceania on the IPBES Asia-Pacific Regional Assessment, 4-5 April 2019, Canberra, Australia.



▲ Reports and policy briefs developed from the two subregional science-policy dialogues, available on www.apn-gcr.org

FEATURED RESEARCH PROJECT

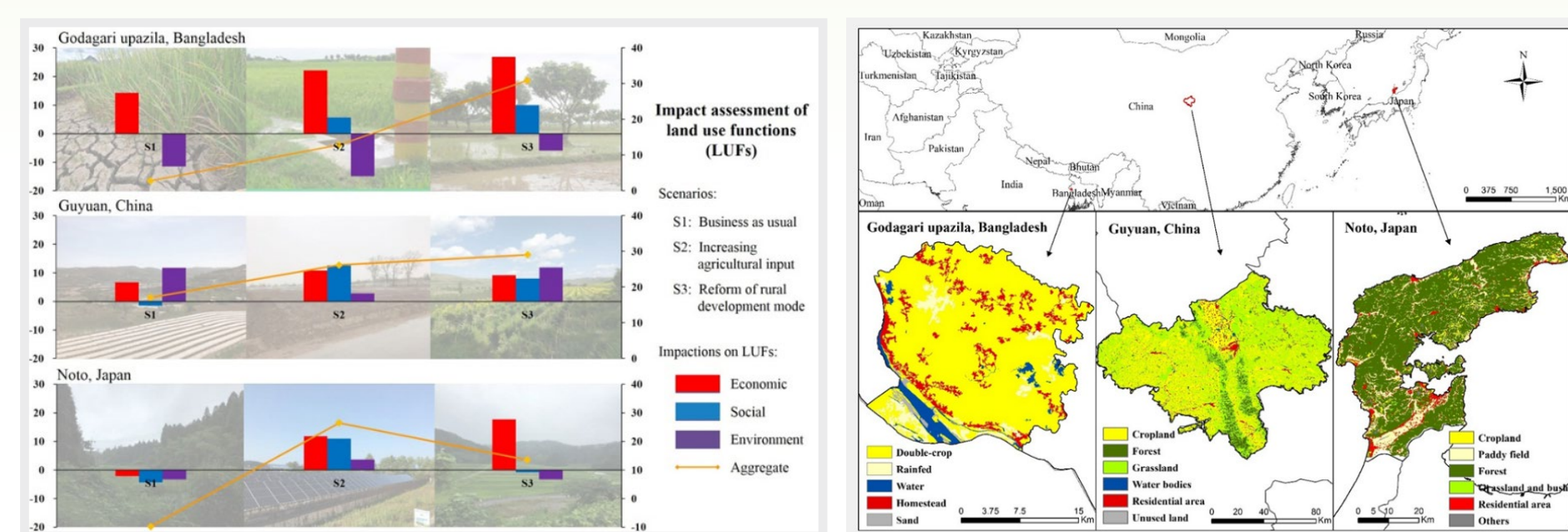
Assessing land use functions for sustainable land management in Asian countries

Project reference number: CRRP2016-04MY-Zhen
Project leader: Prof. Lin Zhen, Institute of Geographic Science and Natural Resources Research, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.
Email: zhenl@igsrr.ac.cn



Introduction

A combination of natural conditions and human activities have had significant effects on land use in Asia, and brought challenges for decision-making on sustainable land management. This project developed a Land use function (LUF) framework for assessing policy impact on performance of multi-functions attached to land use, and economic, environmental and societal impacts of land use changes on sustainability. The project implemented a place-based comparative study in China, Bangladesh and Japan by selecting remote rural areas and linking to scenarios for quantitative assessment of policy impact on LUFs. It targets IPBES's aim of exploring plausible future paths of human society and the consequences by underpinning ecological, socio-economic functions of land use and future scenarios highlighting biodiversity conservation, and contributes to the work of IPBES through a solutions-oriented study.



▲ Impact assessment of land use functions in typical remote agricultural areas of Bangladesh, China and Japan.

▲ Land use of the three study areas.

Key achievements

Capacity building and training on sustainable land use was accomplished through 6 stakeholders workshops, 333 households surveys and 24 key informant interviews. The project developed an LUF analytical framework, published seven papers from peer-reviewed journals and a policy brief from UNU-IAS. Collaboration network has been established among the research countries, GLP, WFP, UNEP and IPBES.

Key recommendations

- ▶ Employ an LUF approach to enable policymakers to assess impacts on the performance of multiple functions associated with land-use change;
- ▶ Conduct participatory assessment of LUFs, enabling the involvement of stakeholders at multiple levels, including policymakers, researchers, and landowners, and allowing local contexts to be reflected in the quantitative assessment of land management; and
- ▶ In regional land-use policy, explore plausible futures considering the three dimensions of LUFs—economic, environmental and societal.

FEATURED CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

ENGAGE: Ecosystem-based adaptation approach for sustainable management and governance of coastal ecosystems

Project reference number: CBA2016-09SY-Ngo
Project leader: Dr. Ngo Tho Hung, Asian Institute of Technology Center in Vietnam, Hanoi, Vietnam
Email: ngothohung@gmail.com



Introduction

Capacity development is identified as means of implementation both for IPBES objectives as well as the post-2015 sustainable development goals. For successful implementation of scientific concepts and outcomes, it is pertinent to strengthen the capacity of all levels of stakeholders for monitoring and assessing risks to socio-ecological systems, to manage and restore ecosystems and to increase awareness of the ecological services, economic importance and cultural significance of coastal ecosystems. The key objective of this project was to initiate a regional-level capacity development programme in support of the sustainable management and governance of coastal ecosystems. The twin-framework approach is an innovative way to involve a wide range of stakeholders for exchange and discussions, and for early-career professionals to network.



Methodology

Conducting a training-cum-workshop (TcW) capacity development activity with an aim to create an enabling environment for the sustainable management of coastal ecosystems in Southeast Asia.

Focussing on the theoretical understanding and practical approaches to address and understand the characteristics, ecology, functions of coastal ecosystems, and ecosystem-based adaptation as a management tool.

Targeting researchers, development workers and governmental officials working in the coastal regions of Southeast Asia.

Contributing to scientific knowledge development, regional capacity building and science-policy interactions, and activities relevant to APN's goals.

Improving communications, publications and dissemination of regional data, information and knowledge.

Outcomes

- ▶ Participants enhanced their capacity in teaching and research on ecosystem services and climate change and/or starting new initiatives on integrated coastal zone management or ecosystem-based adaptation.
- ▶ The experience inspired participants to start their own capacity building activity linking coastal issues and climate change issues.
- ▶ Representatives from government agencies considered the ENGAGE programme in the context of policy discourse.
- ▶ The regional focus of the ENGAGE programme was captured by participants and the media as an important initiative that strengthened scientific cooperation among regional partners and stakeholders.
- ▶ The ENGAGE programme created a community of practice for ecosystem-based adaptation by researchers, local authorities and community groups.