Engaging with the private sector for ensuring sustainability of socio-ecological landscapes in the Northern Western Ghats of India - opportunities and challenges

Applied Environmental Research Foundation (AERF)
www.aerfindia.org

IPSI Regional Workshop, Kota Kinabalu, April 2017
The Western Ghats
– a global biodiversity hotspot

• 78% amphibians, 62% reptiles, 38% plants, 12% mammals endemic to the W. Ghats
North vs. South

Between 0.6% to 5% of area currently being protected

Source: CEPF, French Institute
Satoyama and Landscapes in North Western Ghats

IPSI Regional Workshop, Kota Kinabalu, April 2017
## Status of forest cover in Sahyadri-Konkan Corridor (Maharashtra)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Name of the District</th>
<th>Geographical area (sq km)</th>
<th>Total forest cover (sq km)</th>
<th>Percentage of forest cover w.r.t Geographical area (Private land holding)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Raigad</td>
<td>7152</td>
<td>2864</td>
<td>40.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ratnagiri</td>
<td>8208</td>
<td>4199</td>
<td>51.16 (98%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sindhudurg</td>
<td>5207</td>
<td>2573</td>
<td>49.41 (90%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Thane</td>
<td>9558</td>
<td>2912</td>
<td>30.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are about 1500 sacred groves in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg district. (As per the record from Revenue department)

Source- Department of Forest, Ministry of Environment, Govt of Maharashtra (2010)

IPSI Regional Workshop, Kota Kinabalu, April 2017
Dealing with the threats to biodiversity head-on
ES valuations and need for investment

- 8% of the global greenhouse gas emissions come from tropical deforestation.
- Pollination currently valued at USD 112 billion/annually, natural coastal defenses, abundance and quality of water valued at USD 30 billion are all linked to biodiversity.
- An estimated 300 billion US dollars is needed annually to preserve healthy ecosystems.
- It is no longer a case of conserving charismatic and endangered species (e.g., Tiger).
- Rather it is an issue of global policy that the benefits provided by biodiversity are valued and accounted for within traditional business risk frameworks.
Rationale

• Private sector companies – e.g. power, mining and ports create maximum impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services- important drivers behind biodiversity loss

• Significant presence of corporations sensitive to environmental risks in the Northern Western Ghats (NWG) - Sandoz, Unilever, Siemens, Akzo Nobel, Asahi Glass, Holcim

• A stakeholder group with financial muscle and political influence

• Opportunities for cross-sectoral learning
Credit Suisse- Swiss investment bank

- Operations in 50 countries and employs ca.50,000 people.
- Manage 1200 billion USD worth of assets.
- Recognition of loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services degradation as major sustainability risk at global level.
- Launched first conservation investment product globally – Nature conservation notes worth 10 Million USD to support biodiversity conservation through development of value chain and certified supply chains.
- Use Sustainable Palm Oil Transparency Toolkit (SPOTT) as framework for assessing sustainability risks for investment in Palm oil sector.
AERF’s collaboration with *Credit Suisse*

- Engagement started in 2012 for developing program for CS employees in the environment sector.
- First volunteer engagement event conducted in November 2013 with clear focus on capacity building in biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- 4 Volunteer engagement events conducted till date with participation of more than 120 CS staff members.
- AERF’s efforts resulted in incorporation of forest and biodiversity conservation as focus area for support in CS philanthropy program.
- In April 2016, CS supported a 3 year collaborative project to avoid deforestation and support incentive based conservation in Northern Western Ghats.
- The project will save minimum 500 acres of forest on community land in this area.
Pukka Herbs - herbal tea maker

- Europe’s leading herbal tea and nutrition supplement company.
- Exports tea and other products to over 50 different countries.
- Committed to sustainability through supply chain transparency and integration of strict and inclusive sustainability standard – FAIRWILD – in supply chain.
AERF’s collaboration with *Pukka Herbs*

- In the year 2011, first visit to the field to understand potential for establishing sustainable supply chain in Northern Western Ghats.
- In 2012, feasibility and situation analysis of FAIRWILD certification was completed.
- In year 2012, Pukka Herbs supported conservation of 100 acres of community forest in the Northern Western Ghats.
- In year 2013-14, sites were finalized and FAIRWILD certification scheme was implemented for 2 supply chains.
- In year 2015, first lot of 4 tonnes of certified material supplied to Pukka Herbs.
- Pukka Herb made a commitment of buying higher volumes of certified material over the next 10 years.
- FAIRWILD certification of resource areas guarantees conservation, sustainable use and significant increase in income for communities at the same time.
Daikin Industries, Japan - air conditioning equipment manufacturer

- World’s leading air-conditioning equipment manufacturer.
- Invested 4.5 million dollars to save critical forests across 6 different countries in the world.
- Run a very effective – *Forests for Air* - campaign that is linked to their product - clean air and forest conservation.
AERF’s engagement

• Development of concept note (March 2014) that was aligned with Daikin’s campaign- avoiding deforestation.

• Identification of product that is aligned with the campaign- improved cook stove.

• Involving local communities for saving biodiversity rich forests from Western Ghats.

• **1500 acres of forest** will be saved for the next 5-10 years and 500 families will reduce their impact on forests through use of improved cook stoves (July 2016-2019).
Strategies and approaches

- Leading by example/ learning by doing- establishment of private company to show that sustainable biodiversity use is scalable and economically attractive
- Development of value chains and products for delivering key messages linked to biodiversity conservation- e.g FAIRWILD certification
- Promotion of creative campaign/brand- My Forest and tailor made program in capacity building for scaling up effective engagement - Corporate conservation program.
- Visits to forests and interactions with local communities as mandatory part of employee engagement- HSBC, CS, CapeGemini
Key Learnings....

• Investment in building right perception is critical for creating long term impacts for conservation
• Successful engagement with corporates needs professional attitude, patience and follow up over longer periods
• Maintaining fair visibility and networking is crucial for generating leads
• Identification and working with companies having clear sustainability standards is critical for success
• Heavy ignorance and absurd expectations on behalf of corporations are commonplace and often frustrating
• Activist attitude and biased approach can seriously impact relations over long term with the private sector
• Honesty and focus however pays for itself handsomely and should be never compromised.
Thank You!

www.aerfindia.org

www.myforest.co.in