

INITIATIVE DIALOGUE SUMMARY REPORT

Land Use Dialogue (LUD)

New Haven, CT, USA , March 6, 2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Land Use Dialogue (LUD) initiative is designed to support landscape approaches to environmental problems. The initiative builds from The Forests Dialogue's 18 years of experience organizing dialogues around the world and network of practitioners engaged in dialogue. Yet as the LUD aims to support landscape-level re-occurring dialogues, TFD has adapted the traditional dialogue model and at times taken on new roles and forms of engagement. As the initiative moves past a pilot stage to scale up the LUD model, there is need to reflect on lessons learned and future directions for the initiative. Dialogue objectives included:

- To explore the practical implementation of a landscape approach and what role dialogue plays in that;
- To reflect on TFD's Land Use Dialogue model to supporting a landscape approach;
- To set future direction for the LUD initiative with particular emphasis on the TFD-ELTI collaboration to create training and support materials for LUDs in key landscapes.

The day-long dialogue, held in New Haven, CT USA, brought together 44 participants from around the world representing indigenous peoples organizations, civil society, companies, and academia. Participants included TFD Steering Committee, LUD partners, including representatives from IUCN, Apremavi, and Yale-Environmental Learning and Training Initiative, LUD Research Fellows, and Yale Forestry and Environmental Studies Faculty and Staff.

KEY THEMES FROM DIALOGUE

1. **The LUD is the social process that supports other landscape initiatives and formal planning processes.** It allows people to speak through these issues in ways that may not have space in the formal process. The LUDs can help establish systems of dialogue and exchange that become a culture.

2. **We need to be clear about what a landscape dialogue can do and what it cannot.** Dialogue is a tool that is useful in specific circumstances. It is not going to work where there are direct, destabilizing occurrences such as migration from climate change impacts or extreme conflicts. Further, in many cases decisions are made far from where the issues are, so a place-based dialogue will not solve resulting issues.
3. **There is motivation to work towards scaling-up the LUDs.** One potential method is to partner with Yale-Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative to support capacity building around dialogue and implementing landscape approaches. Holding this dialogue to solidify the LUD model and finalizing the LUD Implementer's Guide are steps in this direction. We need to engage and invite financial actors to support this stage.
4. **We need to strongly consider what are the potential negative impacts of a land use dialogue process.** Considering marginalized peoples in dialogue goes further than how to include their voices in the process. Potential negative impacts and recommendations for how to avoid them that were identified in dialogue are included below. **Recommendations include culturally relevant engagement, adopting different paces and timelines, providing social safeguards.** This requires further consideration.
5. **How does our language lead to unintended framings?** Land-Use has a specific framing and connotation. The name "Land Use Dialogue" may imply economic, utilitarian solutions or become associated with land use planning legal processes. Landscape approaches often try to arrive at "trade-offs" but not everything can and should be traded, such as human rights.

DIALOGUE SUMMARY

Session I: Sharing understanding of landscape approaches and dialogue

In answering the question **what is the value of a landscape approach to environmental problems**, participants noted ecological, social, political and economic reasons why a landscape approach may be valuable. These include: to plan for biological dispersal; to ensure land-sparing strategies actually link productivity intensification with conservation; to allow for sharing of perspectives towards addressing different challenges and identifying why landscapes are degraded; to provide economies of scale. Participants noted that **landscape approaches may not follow a jurisdictional approach** when issue crosses jurisdictional and sectoral boundaries yet, this does not mean that a landscape approach does not work in coordination with a jurisdictional approach to implement. Participants noted that a **landscape approach may be suited to contexts** in which there are environmental externalities or governance failures.

In exploring **the role for dialogue within a landscape approach**, participants identified the causes; to identify shared issues and establish relationships and partnerships; to clarify roles and responsibilities; to build confidence of marginalized voices; to provide communication channels, and to provide a social process to augment formal processes.

Participants discussed that dialogue can be a tool and method to implement a landscape approach when it is honest, relevant and provides safeguards.

Session II. Incorporating learnings from LUD pilots and LUD Fellow's research

Session II highlighted the flexibility of using the Land Use Dialogue process as a tool to support the specific needs and contexts of landscape approaches happening on the ground. **Lessons were shared from LUD pilots in Brazil and Tanzania** including the importance of getting the right people at the table who can find solutions to problems and carry on the process, of identifying serious issues and priorities emerging in "bottom-up" processes, and creating mechanisms for information sharing. A lasting question is how to support follow up and continued dialogue. The **LUD in Wassa-Amenfi, Ghana** was highlighted for the application of learnings from these earlier pilots to support the development of background research, conduct landscape visioning and feed into processes of government and private sector.

LUD partners, LUD research fellows, and TFD Steering Committee offered key considerations for the upcoming LUDs underway or being developed in **Ghana, Tanzania, DRC, Uganda, and Myanmar**. Some questions emerging include how to reach local people through local processes or traditional authorities and how to develop new leadership structures to ensure co-chair input into design and outcomes. Key recommendations include:

- Understand stakeholders' priorities and concerns and share expectations before engaging in dialogue. Including integrating lessons learned from previously held consultations, dialogues or processes that have taken place in the landscape.
- Use the LUD as a tool to strengthen existing multi-stakeholder processes and a social process to engage with an expanded group of stakeholders on key issues identified by existing multi-stakeholder processes.
- Ensure the dialogue is not a single event, but rather an ongoing, iterative, process that stakeholders commit to periodically.
- Have communities' views and potential benefits at the center of the discussion. In particular make sure to include those of women and youth. Consider how marginalized groups, such as youth, women, widows and refugees influence land use decisions and are dependent on landscape resources.
- Set realistic and achievable outcomes that meet all stakeholders' concerns and interests as inclusively as possible.

- Reflectively consider how recommendations from participants can be actionable and implementable on the ground and in coordination with varying levels of government. Provide concrete and practical examples of actions that could be taken.
- Monitoring, accountability and evaluation of the results is essential.

Session III. Exploring emerging questions and key priorities

How can the LUDs feed into other landscape processes, such as land use planning, efforts to avoid deforestation, and commodity supply chains? The dialogues can act as a **social governance checkpoint**. This means that the LUDs can support the social process that works in parallel to other formal processes and offers a platform to speak through issues that are not otherwise addressed. It can also **help drive solutions to key issues** when the right actors are at the table.

What can we do to support comparison between LUD contexts and provide landscape approach learnings? Comparison can include the following: **use existing frameworks**, such as those put out by IUCN; **develop metrics** to measure success of dialogue, identify where outcomes are achieved, and document lessons learned; conduct a **meta-analysis** of baseline information of LUD context. Some of this is already being done in the current monitoring and evaluation and LUD fellow's research. Yet, we should keep in mind that there is a **risk of overanalyzing the LUDs**.

What is LUD Phase 2? How to continue dialogues in the landscape and follow up on priorities that emerge? Once a dialogue platform is in place it requires people to get **resources for implementation and follow up**. There is a need for dialogues to continue because engagement and building trust can take time, landscapes and actors are always changing, and plans emerging from the dialogue need further collaboration during implementation. One method is for **partnerships and initiatives** to emerge from the dialogue platform such as between private sector, civil society and government. But how does this continue to ensure that marginalized group's voices are heard? One of the goals of the LUD should be to **establish safeguards** so that when the process continues and is picked up by other actors these priorities are upheld.

How do we ensure that the rights of indigenous people and marginalized communities are upheld? Good practices to observe include: **to understand how people are currently excluded through power and stakeholder mapping and baseline research**; to develop pre-dialogue activities to create an environment in which these groups can contribute; to **apply FPIC principles**; to organize the dialogue with these people including for them to host; to use culturally appropriate engagement; and to provide protection against reprisal. Ways to support full engagement of indigenous people and marginalized communities were also put forward including **to use language**

and a dialogue timeline and pace that is sensitive and allows opportunities to develop consensus. One message was the concept of respect and benefit in sharing information. They urged us to realize that for many indigenous peoples, “it’s not just data, its precious indigenous knowledge.”

What kind of capacity building around landscape approaches + dialogues is needed?

The process of organizing dialogues can be slow because it involves planning and relationship building. We should explore ways that **capacity development can help accelerate the process and allow for many dialogues happen simultaneously.** This may include capacity for facilitation and running dialogues as well as information about forestry and land use. It is important to first understand needs and strengths of the specific context and ensure that all stakeholder groups are reflected and able to participate.

How can negative impacts of LUDs be avoided? How can the LUDs ensure that the process doesn’t perpetuate power imbalances or contribute to the marginalization of less powerful actors? Potential dialogue risks and negative impacts that were discussed include: overpromising so that inflated expectations may leave groups worse off; inciting greater control from a sector or interest; leaving area without solutions or actionable plans; legitimizing unhelpful, more powerful structures; creating a tool to identify those who push against power structures.

One key concept emerging in these discussions is supporting **culturally appropriate engagement.** This includes considering that some groups may be operating on **different timelines** for decision making amongst themselves and have **their own dialogue norms.** Some further recommendations include: prior to the dialogue, raise awareness about the process- both amongst participants and externally, conduct stakeholder mapping, meet in small groups to discuss what will happen in dialogue, and make participants feel they are a part of the process. During the dialogue, establish clear boundaries of what the dialogue will focus on to avoid negotiation or furthering of personal interests and include actors that can act as neutral moderators or facilitators. After the dialogue allow for participant feedback.

A final reflection from the day was how do we go from dialogue to action? We thought about avoiding harm a lot. We haven’t been clear about how to do good. **How do we reconcile in a safe way from dialoguing to action?**

The LUD Initiative Dialogue summary was prepared by Liz Felker, LUD Program Coordinator

LUD Initiative Summary Report

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