



LANDSCAPES, LIVELIHOODS, LIFESTYLES

PURPOSE OF ACTIVITY

The purpose of this activity is to, in a structured way, rapidly explore the identity of a social-ecological system. The activity will generate discussion and insights about three important system domains; the biophysical (Landscape), the economic (Livelihood), and the social and cultural aspects (Lifestyle), and how they interact to create a unique identity of the system. This activity is useful in the early stages of consultation with stakeholders. It is a 'safe' activity, participants do not need any particular expertise and the information collected is fairly general. It is a good way to start building relationships between stakeholders and awareness about the system. The outputs will contribute to the development of the conceptual system model developed later in Phase 2 and the models of system dynamics developed in Phase 3. See also related activity sheet and discussion guide.

RESOURCES NEEDED

Skills: The process requires moderate facilitation skills

Time: 1-2 hours

Materials: White board or poster paper, sticky notes

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 1

Work with a group of stakeholders from the system that are familiar with the landscape, the different land uses, economic activities and industries, and also the social and cultural dynamics of the system.

If you have limited time, split the stakeholders into 3 groups, one working on Landscapes, one on Livelihoods, and the third on Lifestyles. If you have more time, the whole group can work on the three topics sequentially. Explain the purpose, key concepts and outputs from the activity. Then ask the participants to spend time discussing and recording what they think are the most important elements under each of the domains. The aim here is to be broadly descriptive, not getting stuck into much detail.

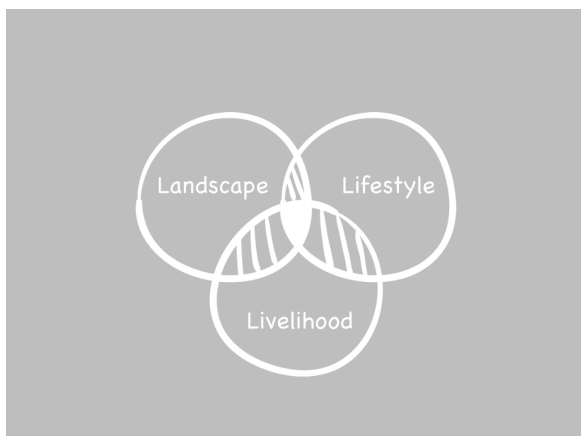
Landscapes – this refers to the physical landscape. What are the main elements or features of the landscape? For example, stakeholders may list an important river system, the wetlands and floodplains associated with the river system. Consider where and how ecosystem services and benefits are generated in the system, including indirect services, such as flood protection or the buffering from storm surges.

Livelihoods – this domain focuses on how people in the system generate the resources they need to survive and support their families' well being. It may include food and resource gathering, agriculture and farming, fishing etc, but it may also include the importance of mining or local industries in providing employment and income. It will most likely also include sources outside the system.

Lifestyles – this domain is focused on how people are socially organized and interact across the landscape. It describes the social structure, if people live in small villages or large urban centers, the broad social structures such as if people live in recognized groupings and how those groups relate to one and other. You may also want to explore important cultural dynamics.

STEP 2

Having spent time documenting the main elements of each of the three domains bring the information together in a diagram form such as in the figure below.



STEP 3

Now look at the connections and overlaps between the domains. How much interdependence is there? Are peoples livelihoods tightly linked to the physical landscape? How does the physical landscape influence how people are socially organized across the landscape (e.g. most of the population may be living on the fertile plains, few people live in the rocky upland areas)

STEP 4

Finally look at the intersection of all three domains. Ask the stakeholders from within the system to come up with a brief description that characterizes all three domains into one statement. For example, you might say the *'The Limlock region is a vast seasonally inundated floodplain system supporting small scattered grazing and farming communities, with a unique cultural connection to the system based on spiritual beliefs about our role in maintaining the health of the floodplain through sustainable grazing practices'*. This description provides a sense of the identity of the system. You can then ask for the stakeholders perception about how the identity of the system has or is changing. What is causing the change? When will the system no long have the same identity?

STEP 5

The identity statement and discussion about changing identity will be useful in thinking about aspirations and future management goals. The detailed descriptions under each domain can be used to inform discussions in other steps of the Wayfinder process, so make sure the information is recorded for use in later steps.

TIPS

Don't get bogged down in lots of detail, this is a 'broad brush' process to start the conversation about the components of a system, about some of the values and the perceived identity of the system and how it is changing. More detail discussions about these issues will follow in the work cards to come.