



Events convened on Friday, 19 October 2012

Ecosystem Restoration on Cotton Fields - Bringing Environmental and Economic Interests Together

Presented by Deutsche Umwelthilfe (German Environmental Aid) with CottonConnect



Ayan Banerjee, (COAPCL), described initiatives that promote gender equality, food security, water conservation, and environmental cotton production to address community needs.

The side event addressed organic cotton production and focused on the CottonConnect initiative, which works with small-scale farmers to reduce chemical inputs and provide alternatives to genetically modified seeds.

Ulrich Stöcker, German Environmental Aid, introduced the event within the context of the business and biodiversity dialogue. He noted the importance of engaging corporate responsibility in broader efforts to reduce drivers of biodiversity loss in the agriculture sector. Stöcker also explained that the CottonConnect initiative works to improve environmental and social sustainability through the entire cotton supply chain, and there was interest to expand best practices to other cotton producing countries.

Anita Chester, CottonConnect, observed that cotton is the world's largest non-food crop, with 25 million tones produced each year, and that cultivation uses high levels of chemical inputs and water. She illustrated how CottonConnect: supports farmers in transitioning to organic production and integrated pest management; provides capacity-building; and facilitates interest-free loans for investment in water-saving technologies such as drip irrigation.

Chester also described how the initiative works with international clothing brands to source sustainable cotton. Jaskiran Warrick provided additional information on projects promoting composting technologies and biodiversity education and public awareness activities conducted with local schools.

Ayan Banerjee, Chetna Organic Agriculture Producer Company Ltd. (COAPCL), explained that COAPCL was a for-profit entity entirely owned by farmers, and worked to enhance farm income for small holders through market integration. He reported on how COAPCL addressed seed security by assisting farmers in conserving and producing seed for local cotton, millets and rice varieties. Banerjee described a range of initiatives, including: watershed conservation; intercropping; conserving on-farm and soil biodiversity; and entrepreneurship and marketing training.

Ulrich Stöcker, German Environmental Aid, moderated a question and answer session. Participants discussed: water footprinting in the cotton industry; the loss of local knowledge related to organic fertilizers; and the importance of upscaling such initiatives from field-based projects to the landscape level.

More information:

www.cottonconnect.org
www.chetnaorganic.org.in

Contacts:

Anita Chester
<anita.chester@cottonconnect.org>



Biodiversity Conservation for Poverty Alleviation in Asia Pacific: The APFED Showcase Experience

Presented by UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Manesh Lacoul, UNEP, introduced the Asia-Pacific Forum for Environment and Development (APFED) showcase programme, aimed at achieving sustainable development in Asia Pacific by enabling local stakeholders to promote innovation in policy development, technology application, social mobilization and partnership building. Carly Timm, UNEP, delivered opening remarks on behalf of Hiroyuki Nagahama, Minister for Environment, Japan, highlighting the need to identify successful cases on the ground and noting that every project has effects beyond borders. Yoshikazu Ikeda, IGES, explained that APFED phase II was launched in 2005 and 58 projects in 20 countries have been selected as showcase projects, demonstrating innovative and practical solutions to problems facing the region.

Madhu Rao, Wildlife Conservation Society, New York, US, discussed wildlife friendly agricultural products in Cambodia, highlighting the IBIS-Rice project. She discussed objectives aimed at: strengthening land use tenure; providing incentives; and developing political and institutional support. She explained that villagers develop conservation incentives in return for financial incentives.

Shyamala Mani, Centre for Environmental Education, India, highlighted SamVednaa: An Initiative towards Building Model Green Colleges in Gujarat State, India. She explained that the project is undertaken in three colleges, each with a specific theme on: waste management; waste-water treatment; and a biodiversity park.

Rabin Kadariya, National Trust for Nature Conservation, Nepal, provided an overview of the Mentha Cultivation project aimed at mitigating human wildlife conflicts in the Bardia region, Nepal. He observed that replacing traditional crops with unpalatable aromatic crops, such as mentha, chamomile, lemon grass and citronella, was an approach to minimizing human wildlife conflicts as well as a motivation for conservation.

Rufus Mahuru, Partners with Melanesians, Papua New Guinea, discussed the Ona Keto Community Reforestation and Sustainable Livelihoods Alternatives Project in his country. He highlighted activities including: replanting trees in grasslands; community mobilization and awareness; site identification; construction of village nurseries; tribal areas monitoring; and community rules-making workshops.

Naoki Adachi, Japan Business Initiative for Biodiversity, Japan, discussed how his association is exploring links between business and biodiversity noting that businesses depend on biodiversity and also impact biodiversity and highlighting efforts aimed at reducing impacts. Keiichi Yamazaki, Kedianren Committee for Nature Conservation, Japan, explained that the committee supports a wide range of projects relating to biodiversity through the provision of financial support to NGOs for nature projects. He noted that in 20 years US\$ 40 million had been channeled towards NGO activities in this area.



Shyamala Mani, Centre for Environmental Education, India, noted that the model green college project aims to link everyday life to biodiversity.



Rufus Mahuru, Partners with Melanesians, Papua New Guinea, noted lessons learned including listening to resources owners and reaching consensus at all levels of the community.

More information:
www.apfedshowcase.net

Contacts:
Manesh Lacoul <manesh.lacoul@unep.org>



Naoki Adachi, Japan Business Initiative for Biodiversity; Keiichi Yamazaki, Kedianren Committee for Nature Conservation, Japan; Sunil Pandey; TERI; Madhu Rao, Wildlife Conservation Society; Shyamala Mani, Centre for Environmental Education; Rabin Kadariya, National Trust for Nature Conservation; Rufus Mahuru, Partners with Melanesians, Papua New Guinea