

Business for Sustainable Landscapes

Key messages from the convening at Bellagio

Global leaders articulate next steps for landscape approaches.

Global leaders from the agribusiness and food industry, governmental agencies, and civil society came together May 31-June 2, 2016 at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center in Italy to explore landscape approaches. Leaders of very diverse organizations shared their experience of initiatives to jointly manage natural resources, increase opportunities for smallholders, and integrate rural development with protection of freshwater and biodiversity. Despite the differing motivations and goals for collaboration, participants agreed on the importance of landscape partnerships and the need for better messaging to businesses, engagement of governments, more effective public and private finance mechanisms, and improved learning and tools.

Collaboration can reconcile multiple interests.

Collaborative landscape approaches align stakeholders in a particular place to resolve complex issues like water scarcity, biodiversity decline, deforestation, or farmer adaptation to climate change – when these challenges cannot be successfully resolved by actors working alone or through farm or supply chain interventions. They reflect a growing recognition that long-term business success is tied to healthy communities and ecosystems.

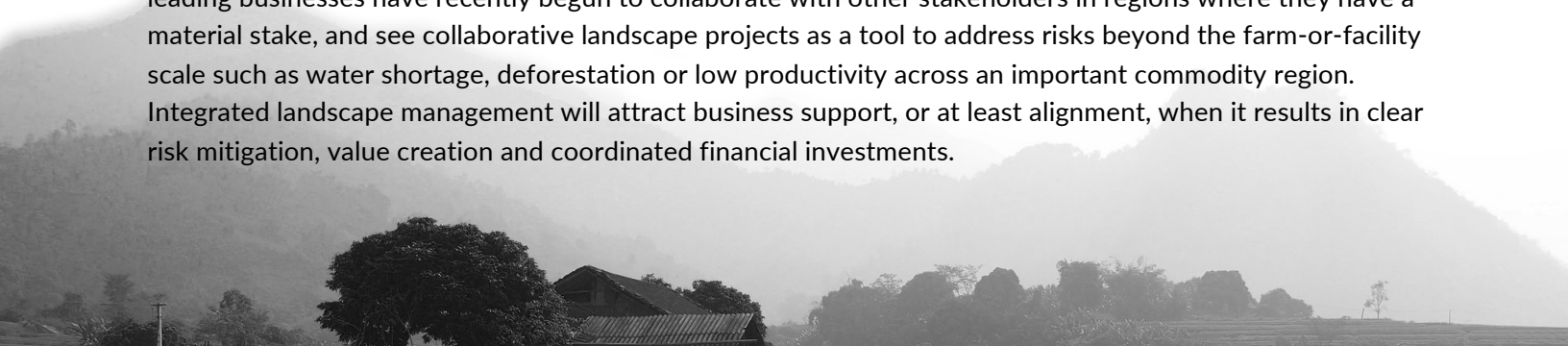
When are landscape approaches a habitat for business?

Landscape partnerships typically are a more natural habitat of those who have a direct and long-term stake in a sustainable landscape, such as farming communities, NGOs and governments with formal or informal responsibilities for resource stewardship. Businesses with the greatest stake are those with fixed assets in the area, or those that must secure a critical supply of ingredients that cannot be sourced elsewhere. Businesses may also appreciate the opportunity for sharing costs and joint resource mobilization, cost savings, or market differentiation. They may be accountable for company sustainability commitments, perceive benefits for local market development or seek to strengthen local relationships. Businesses that merely buy commodities inhabit a national or global habitat rather than a local one, and commodity buyers do not always have a long-term commitment to specific suppliers or places.

Partnerships work when each partner has a material stake in success. Collaborative governance and management at a landscape scale is complex and can involve high transaction costs, and tangible results take relatively long to materialize. Thus before initiating or joining, businesses must carefully assess their appropriate role, whether as leaders, active partners, investors, or simply aligning their business activities with initiatives of other stakeholders in the landscape.

The path forward for business requires value creation.

More than 500 large multi-stakeholder landscape partnerships have been documented around the world, although their impacts are not often quantified. Only a fifth of them involve private companies. Yet many leading businesses have recently begun to collaborate with other stakeholders in regions where they have a material stake, and see collaborative landscape projects as a tool to address risks beyond the farm-or-facility scale such as water shortage, deforestation or low productivity across an important commodity region. Integrated landscape management will attract business support, or at least alignment, when it results in clear risk mitigation, value creation and coordinated financial investments.



A number of hurdles exist.

Even where there is a strong imperative for landscape partnerships, a number of hurdles exist. Partners may lack adequate skills to facilitate landscape partnerships, or lack knowledge and tools to design interventions. Conveners may not have the local legitimacy to bring relevant stakeholders together. National and local policy frameworks are frequently disconnected from the imperatives of business and civil society, and do not support complex collaboration across sectors. Financial resources are available only for narrowly defined investments, uncoordinated across the landscape, and there is a mismatch of time frame and scale between government and the private sector. Current landscape metrics and monitoring systems are focused on narrowly defined dimensions of sustainability (e.g. deforestation), and do not deliver value to the range of stakeholders for long-term management and behavior change. Participants in the Bellagio workshop shared cases, articulated hurdles, discussed ways to overcome those hurdles, identified existing sources of support for landscape partnerships and corresponding gaps, and outlined an Action Agenda and next steps.

Next steps: towards a global Action Agenda

- **Develop and communicate a case for businesses to invest** in landscape approaches. A working group will draft a white paper, presentations and other communications to clarify the reasons for business to consider participating (or not participating) in landscape partnerships. Materials will be prepared to help civil society, donors and government understand the constraints on business participation and strategies that optimize engagement with business.
- **Increase access to sustainable finance** in integrated landscape management. Participants proposed collaboration to develop centers of excellence to advise and facilitate landscape project finance. Objectives include blending public and private funding sources and applying a results-based financial framework.
- **Mobilize governments to incorporate landscape management into development and investment strategies.** The group proposed public-private-civil society dialogues about sustainable development that embeds landscape strategies in national and sub-national plans for inclusive growth, economic transformation and rural employment, including in agro-industrial corridors. Existing landscape partnerships will engage with local and sector policymakers to design more coherent, supportive policies and coordination frameworks. A plan was articulated in more detail for policy action in Africa.
- **Improve tools, methods and skills** for convening, facilitating, mapping, designing, implementing and monitoring landscape initiatives. Participants intend to accelerate knowledge-sharing, support businesses in assessing landscape partnerships, and improve landscape outcome metrics.

The Bellagio workshop was co-organized by EcoAgriculture Partners, SAI Platform, Sustainable Food Lab and IUCN's SUSTAIN program, with financial support from Conservation International, GIZ, the Netherlands Ministry of Economic Affairs, and the Rockefeller Foundation. For more information, visit the website <http://peoplefoodandnature.org/challenge/business-for-sustainable-landscapes/> or contact Lee Gross (lgross@ecoagriculture.org). June 10, 2016.

Gareth Ackerman, Pick n Pay Stores Limited, South Africa
Susan Boit, Kenya Water Towers Agency, Kenya
Gerard Bos, IUCN, Switzerland
Chris Brett, Olam International, United Kingdom
John Buchanan, Conservation International, USA
Lynette Chen, NEPAD Business Foundation, South Africa
Chimère Diaw, African Model Forest Network, Cameroon
Peter Gardiner, Mondi, United Kingdom
Bernard Giraud, Livelihoods Ventures, France
C.D. Glin, Rockefeller Foundation, Kenya
Lee Gross, EcoAgriculture Partners, USA
Hal Hamilton, Sustainable Food Lab, USA

Leida Mercado, Tropical Agricultural Research and Higher Education Center (CATIE), Costa Rica
Winfred Mwaniki, IDH Sustainable Trade Initiative, Kenya
Milagre Nuvunga, MICAIA Foundation, Mozambique
Eric Patrick, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Italy
Duncan Pollard, Nestlé, Switzerland
Sara J. Scherr, EcoAgriculture Partners, USA
João Shimada, Earth Innovation Institute, Brazil
Anna Swaithe, SABMiller, United Kingdom
Jan Kees Vis, Unilever, The Netherlands
Peter-Eric Ywema, SAI Platform, Belgium