



Knowledge brief

Module on EbA and South-South Cooperation

The Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) Community of Practice (CoP) <http://ebacommunity.com/en/> is a group of experts and organizations that share experiences and knowledge on EbA. Around the globe, the EbA CoP faces similar challenges and seeks to learn how to overcome them by sharing experiences, best practices and lessons learned from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The **Module on EbA and South-South Cooperation** (21 September – 15 November 2015) marks the start of a new season and the re-launch of the EbA CoP in partnership with EbA South. The enlargement of the EbA CoP to include Asia and Africa embraces the global South as a whole and recognises the importance of South-South Cooperation in strengthening EbA efforts globally. This summary corresponds to knowledge shared over a 6-week discussion period and the webinar associated with this module.

UNEP REGATTA Programme, EbA South, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Practical Action Latin America gratefully acknowledge the contributions of EbA CoP members.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION ON EBA

South-South Cooperation (SSC) is based on common interests and challenges and can generate global solutions that are enriched by the exchange of regional experiences. The interregional collaboration promoted by the SSC approach holds great potential for advancing the knowledge base for EbA.

South-South cooperation, learning and development have huge significance and great potential for climate-compatible development across South-South regions, nations and livelihoods, but are still in their infancy in climate change adaptation.

*Manas Dwivedi
(EbA CoP member, India)*

Through the module, questions were raised about the challenges of promoting SSC in EbA – an approach that is widely acknowledged as being important, but one that has few case studies from which to learn. There is considerable scope to promote SSC in EbA in particular, as climate change in the South has induced the need of implementing a number of EbA initiatives and the development of an associated EbA evidence base. As a result of their involvement in a number of regional initiatives, China and India are well-positioned to play a leading role in promoting SSC in EbA, in some cases through leveraging already existing cooperation platforms.

Ultimately, to achieve effective inter-regional cooperation, interdisciplinary projects will need to take into account large geographical areas, unique climate characteristics, extreme events and cultural variation.

MECHANISMS TO PROMOTE SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION FOR EBA

I believe that the mechanisms for South-South cooperation in capacity development have two components – technical and political. Therefore, South-South cooperation for EbA should be targeted towards these two levels; there should be mechanisms with different, yet complementary, modalities that allow for a common ground and vision.

*José Salomón Martínez Alas
(EbA CoP member, El Salvador)*

Effective mechanisms for SSC might consider both a technical and political approach. Cooperation, for example, can range from systematic learning processes on selecting and successfully applying EbA interventions to inter-regional collaboration in policy-making and advocacy. While cooperation can adopt a range of approaches, a key mechanism for success is the sharing of experiences and information through experts' platforms.

Collaborative platforms provide an opportunity for strengthening the capacity to plan and implement EbA in the South, particularly with regards to: i) environmental policies; ii) techniques for the conservation and management of natural resources; and iii) methodologies for the planning and assessment of EbA interventions. Sharing lessons learned from implementing EbA in countries from different regions can encourage changes in business-as-usual approaches, raise awareness, provide training and reinforce regional knowledge generation. Therefore the importance of these platforms for knowledge sharing is considered to be the future. While inter-regional platforms will be central to effective SSC in EbA, currently there are a limited number of platforms and these differ in their technical and political approaches. An example of EbA-related South-South collaboration exists between the Research Centre for Arid Areas of the National Agrarian University in Peru and the Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa (PENHA) in Ethiopia, largely on the sharing of knowledge on agroforestry practices.

The discussion among the members of the CoP concluded with the expression of a common sentiment, namely that SSC can occur at different levels and an important prerequisite is an attitude of openness to promote dialogue with interregional peers. The sharing of different experiences will enrich intra-and interregional learning.

MAINSTREAMING EBA INTO POLICY AND PRACTICE ACROSS THE DEVELOPING WORLD

EbA actions first happen at a local level, but they should be connected to policies that support climate change adaptation, particularly with an ecosystem approach; if this connection has not occurred (e.g. through National Adaptation Plans or NAPs), it is difficult for the topic of EbA to be included in a process of South-South Cooperation.

*Carlos Galindo
(EbA CoP member, Costa Rica)*

Within the framework of South-South relationships, the design of policies and plans provides an opportunity for sharing best practices and strengthening key skills for mainstreaming EbA into policy development. SSC initiatives require good communication and facilitation skills of policy makers and practitioners for sharing experiences effectively. In addition, strong advocacy skills for planning at national, regional and local levels will benefit SSC initiatives.

To strengthen the role of EbA in the international adaptation agenda and within South-South dialogue, a policy framework, such as a National Adaptation Plan, might need to be established. Such a policy framework might specify elements such as knowledge and lesson-sharing which would facilitate collaboration between countries across multiple regions.

EbA CoP Webinars (14 September and 29 October 2015)

During this Module, two webinars on EbA and South-South Cooperation took place, facilitated by Juan Torres, Practical Action Expert and EbA CoP moderator. The experts Jian Liu from UNEP-IEMP and Fabiola Parra, from Research Centre on Arid Zones (CIZA), shared their experiences on the topic.

Jian Liu presented on the UNEP International Ecosystem Management Partnership (IEMP), which is the first South-South collaboration initiative with the support of the Chinese Academy of Science and Chinese Ecosystem Research Network. Dr. Liu highlighted the core principles and objectives of the initiative:

- China is taking leadership in SSC, supporting other developing countries in combating climate change through knowledge sharing and technology transfer
- The EbA South Project has been recognized as a pioneering example and one of the most successful outcomes of this cooperation.
- To catalyze global South collaboration and mobilize science to support policy setting for sustainable ecosystem approach to adaptation in developing countries
- Focal area of priority in SSC in climate change is capacity building for readiness and the key role of platforms in scaling up such kind of collaboration.

Fabiola Parra presented her experience on collaboration between institutions in Peru and Ethiopia on agroforestry systems in seasonally dry forest:

- Sharing best practices based on indigenous knowledge across borders and continents to manage traditional plants, such as Prosopis.
- Exchange of knowledge about benefits of plants, which have been introduced in different regions, is crucial to support local communities in adapting to changes.
- SSC between Latin America and Africa on exploring benefits of traditional plants opens new opportunities.

Experiences shared by participants in the EbA CoP

Collaboration in South America on Payments for Ecosystem Services: there isn't one recipe ***Marcia Suarez Shugar, Bolivia***



The experience of Celica (Ecuador) with Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) or reciprocal water agreements (ARA) and water agreements (APA) was shared with other countries in South America. Likewise, experiences in the Andean-Amazonian areas of Colombia, Bolivia and Peru – under the same theme, where differences of context and situations of the country give a different shade to their experiences and enriches the lessons learned. I believe that the challenges in sharing and exchange of experiences are basically the differences in the development of EbA planning and implementation. The

experiences of a country cannot be applied as a recipe, since each place compared to the other, however culturally or geographically alike, possess different characteristics, as a result of the interaction of other variables with the environment, these variables could be political, socioeconomic, cultural and environmental.

China and Nepal: Learning from each other about EbA in mountain ecosystems

Diwen Tan, China



There are many initiatives on EbA implemented in the Southern countries, such as the project "EbA in Mountain Ecosystems" in Nepal, which is executed by the Department of Forests in partnership with UNDP, IUCN and UNEP. Nevertheless, there is less experience in the framework of SSC, often because of limited access to information. China has cooperated with Nepal on mountain ecosystem management for years, through trainings and surveys between institutions (e.g. Institute of Mountain Hazard and Environment, CAS and Nepal Tribhuvan University). Recently Chinese experts did the post-earthquake survey in Nepal and shared the experience of sustainable recovery and ecosystem management for better adaptation/coping with hazards.

India plays a leading role in promoting and supporting South-South Cooperation

Manas Dwivedi, India



India is already involved in cooperation with many developing countries through bilateral and multilateral agreements, institutions and programs, including: Network/Platform for International Science and Technology Cooperation launched by the Indian Science and Technology Exchange Centre and partners, and India's South-South Cooperation Program on Climate Change. These initiatives can be used as platforms for promoting cooperation on climate change adaptation and allow India to play a leading role in promoting and supporting SSC, learning and development.

UNEP REGATTA Programme, EbA South, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and Practical Action Latin America thank all EbA CoP participants who contributed to this learning process. We invite you to participate in future EbA CoP modules by enrolling through the following link: ebacommunity.com/en/



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