

Preface

The landscape approach has increasingly been promoted as a new perspective on addressing global challenges at a local level. In the face of increasing and competing claims to the land and the exhaustion of natural resources, planners, scientists and policymakers have come to realize the limitations of sectoral approaches. Integrated, landscape-level considerations have begun to supersede those restricted to specific components such as water, forestry, agricultural or development policies and programmes. Numerous international initiatives and organizations embrace the landscape approach in pursuit of productive landscapes that provide a wide range of products and ecosystem services and fulfill the social, economic and environmental requirements of present and future generations at the local, national and global level. Ambitious plans that apply the landscape approach include the restoration of 150 million hectares of degraded lands by 2020 (the Bonn Challenge).

Given this interest, and the potential impacts of such initiatives, it is important to learn from the many practical experiences in applying integrated landscape management throughout the world. We need to better understand what these experiences achieve for sustainable and fair development. We must develop adaptive approaches to achieve change in complex, multi-stakeholder settings. Productive, “triple-win” landscapes are good for food, people and ecosystems – but are there really no trade-offs between these goals? What does it mean for family farmers or small-scale foresters? Where do forests and trees fit in?

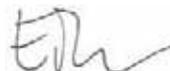
Such a context makes this issue of *ETFRN News* a timely one. It brings together 29 papers by practitioners from all over the world who highlight the successes and challenges of applying landscape approaches. They provide food for thought and, we hope, a source of inspiration for those with an interest in productive landscapes.

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