The biggest single opportunity we have is dialogue

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Abstract

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Abstract

At Resilience 2014, The Resilience and Development Programme (SwedBio) at Stockholm Resilience Centre invites to a dialogue regarding the role and nature of "Multi-actor Dialogues".

A necessity in times of global change is awareness of uncertainty and surprise. This includes the will to experiment, innovate and learn within and between different knowledge systems and cultures. To help build a shared vision for the development of our society and an understanding of the diverse ways of getting there, we need an improved dialogue culture across cultures and different interests. SwedBio has during many years been supporting programmes in the field of biodiversity, ecosystem services and resilience in developing countries. The programme has over time developed into a knowledge interface, e.g. contributing to dialogues. In the facilitated dialogues there is an assumption that many people have pieces of the answer and that together they can craft a suite of solutions. It's an approach where active listening is encouraged with the intention to understand each other's viewpoints, find meaning and agreement. Three distinctive features could differentiate a dialogue from a discussion, when all three are present a conversation is transformed into a dialogue:

- Equality and the absence of coercive influences
- Listening with empathy
- Bringing assumptions into the open (1)

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Above described setting for dialogues has formed a hypothesis for some quite extensive processes for multi-actor dialogues. More information about the dialogues can be found at www.stockholmresilience.org/21/policy–practice/dialogues.html

The aim has been to reach results in specific processes by contributing to enhanced dialogue and exchange of experiences and worldviews between actors and knowledge systems. Invited actors have been indigenous peoples and local communities, practitioners, civil society, scientist, business, Governments, UN and other policy makers. The seminars have been co-organised by SRC/SwedBio and other organisations. Some examples include:

1. **The Quito Dialogues**: The Quito dialogues on Scaling up Biodiversity Financing are multi-actor dialogues on topics such as green incentives (taxes, fees), Payment for Ecosystem Services, and the importance of institutional framework and safeguards. Convened by the Governments of Ecuador, Norway, India, Japan, Republic of Korea, Sweden, Uganda, the European Commission and the CBD Secretariat – and organised by SRC/Swedbio with IUCN-Sur. Most important, according to the participants at Quito I, was that the dialogue did not just bring content to the discussion, but also created a better atmosphere and built trust between participants, and thereby paved the way for up-coming negotiations on biodiversity financing.

2. **The Guna Yala Dialogue**: SRC/SwedBio has in collaboration with the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity and others also initiated a process of knowledge dialogues for advancing synergies and cross-fertilization among local, indigenous and scientific knowledge systems to the benefit of ecosystem governance. The knowledge dialogue is feeding into local to global processes, such as the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services.

3. **The Medellín Dialogue**: To support the proposed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at Rio +20, SRC/Swedbio organised a multi-actor dialogue on how social-ecological resilience might be integrated into the SDGs and the Post-2015 Agenda. The dialogue was organised jointly by SRC/Swedbio and the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Research on Biological Resources, with the full support of the Governments of Colombia and Sweden, and in consultation with the CBD Secretariat. The dialogue results have been disseminated – to the UN Open Working Group on SDGs, to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network and other relevant fora.


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**Programme Wednesday the 7th of May**

**17.10 Introduction**

Maria Schultz and Ellika Hermansson Török, Stockholm Resilience Centre

**17.15 Examples from Dialogues**

The Quito dialogues on Scaling up Biodiversity Financing; the Guna Yala dialogue on connecting across diverse knowledge systems; the Medellín dialogue on integrating social-ecological resilience into the SDGs.

Maria Schultz and Ellika Hermansson Török, Stockholm Resilience Centre

Onel Masardule, Fundación para la Promoción del Conocimiento Indígena
17.30 Round table dialogue on the role and nature of multi-actor dialogues

Questions:
- Reflections on the methodology and context of presented dialogues?
- Own experiences?
- Recommendations?
- Conclusions from this session?

17.50 Presentation by the round tables and plenary discussion

Short presentations by the round tables (4 minutes each), and then a short discussion in plenary.

18.10 End of session

**Keywords:** multiactor dialogues, resilience