



ANALYSIS OF LANDSCAPE SUBMISSIONS

Review of 56 submissions to the Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes (ISLA) provides insight about the potential for applying a multi-stakeholder landscape approach to increase the sustainability of agri-commodity sourcing regions. The large number of submissions suggests we are at a point of rapidly growing interest in integrated, beyond-supply-chain approaches. The landscapes described in the submissions varied widely in terms of extent, population size, land uses, commodity types, challenges, planned interventions, and sources of added value from the ISLA. This suggests that application of a landscape approach is seen as relevant to a great diversity of circumstances

January 2015



I. INTRODUCTION

In response to the April 2014 call for proposals from the Initiative for Sustainable Landscapes (ISLA) for additional pilot landscapes, 56 submissions were received by the Sustainable Trade Initiative (IDH). While only four additional landscapes could be included as ISLA pilots, based on evaluation against preset criteria,¹ the full set of submitted proposals represents an important body of information about multi-stakeholder landscape initiatives in which private sector partners are centrally engaged.

In particular, this set of submissions provides a useful indication of the types of agri-commodity landscapes where multi-stakeholder landscape approaches have been seen as relevant or have been attempted. Based on careful review of these submissions, this brief describes, among other things, patterns in geography and commodity type, challenges commonly associated with awareness and interest in a landscape approach, and categories of planned landscape interventions. All estimates and figures are based on 58 landscapes described in 56 submissions (one submission encompassed three separate landscapes on three different continents.)

II. GEOGRAPHY AND POPULATION

CONTINENTS

With relatively few landscapes proposed in South Asia or the Middle East, the majority of submissions proposed landscapes in Africa (21 landscapes), East Asia (17 landscapes), and Latin America (16 landscapes). The high number of submissions from Africa is noteworthy given that an international survey of landscape initiatives found that African initiatives had the lowest rates of private sector participation, followed by Asia.²

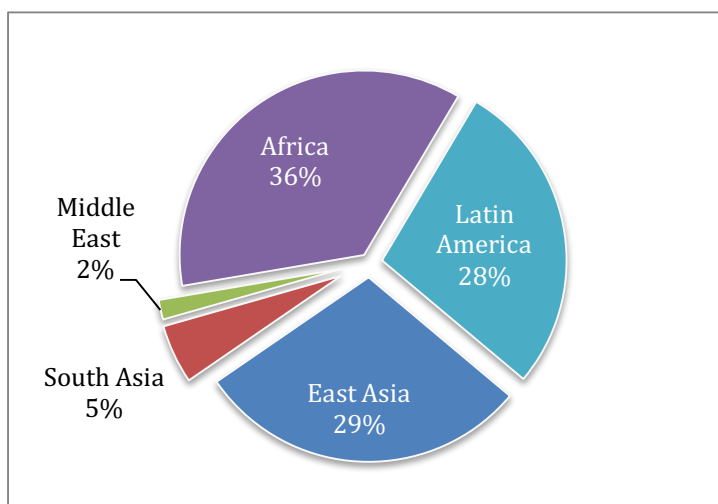


Figure 1. Geographic distribution of 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

1 Main criteria include: 1. Presence of relevant socio-economic and environmental landscape risks, and opportunities to achieve impact in those areas; 2. Presence of a (potential) multi-stakeholder process with local/national government, private sector, civil society, farmers and communities; 3. Relevance of the landscape for commodity supply chains, business interest in the landscape approach, and appetite for co-funding of landscape interventions; 4. Added value of ISLA: status and plans of existing initiatives and possible synergies.

2 Milder, J.C., A.K. Hart, P. Dobie, J. Minai, C. Zaleski. 2013a. "Integrated landscape initiatives for African agriculture, development, and conservation: A region-wide assessment." *World Development*, 54, 68-80.

LANDSCAPE AREA

Ranging from a low of 7 square kilometers up to 1.2 million square kilometers, the average estimated area of the proposed landscapes was 74,729 square kilometers for the 50 landscapes for which an estimate was provided.

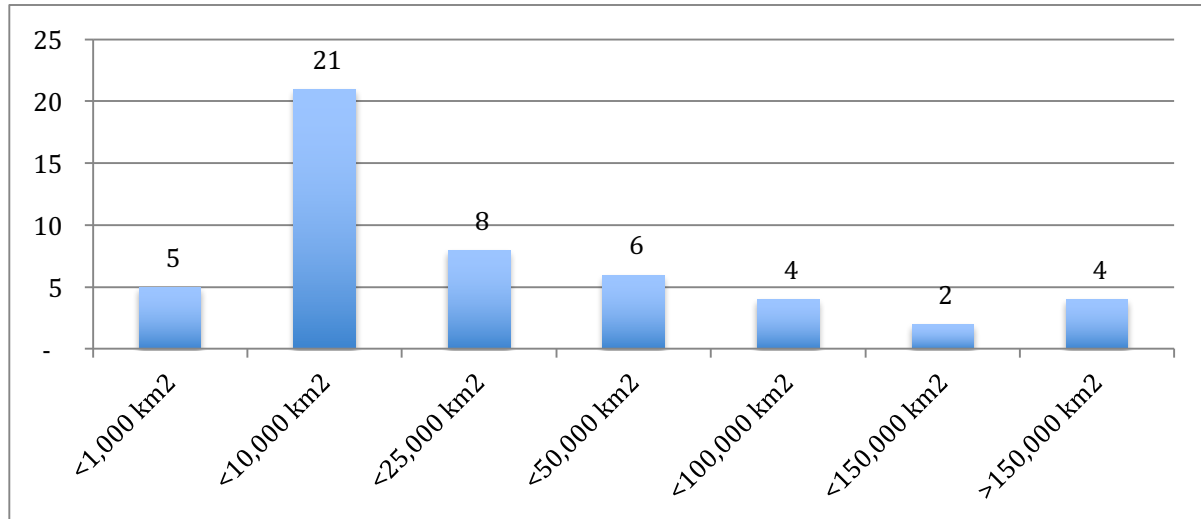


Figure 2. Landscape area in square kilometers of 50 landscapes proposed to ISLA (8 proposals did not provide an estimate of landscape area). Values above columns indicate number of landscapes within each size range.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE LANDSCAPE

Ranging from a low of 7,565 up to 100 million people, the average estimated number of landscape residents was 6.9 million for the 36 landscapes for which an estimate was provided.

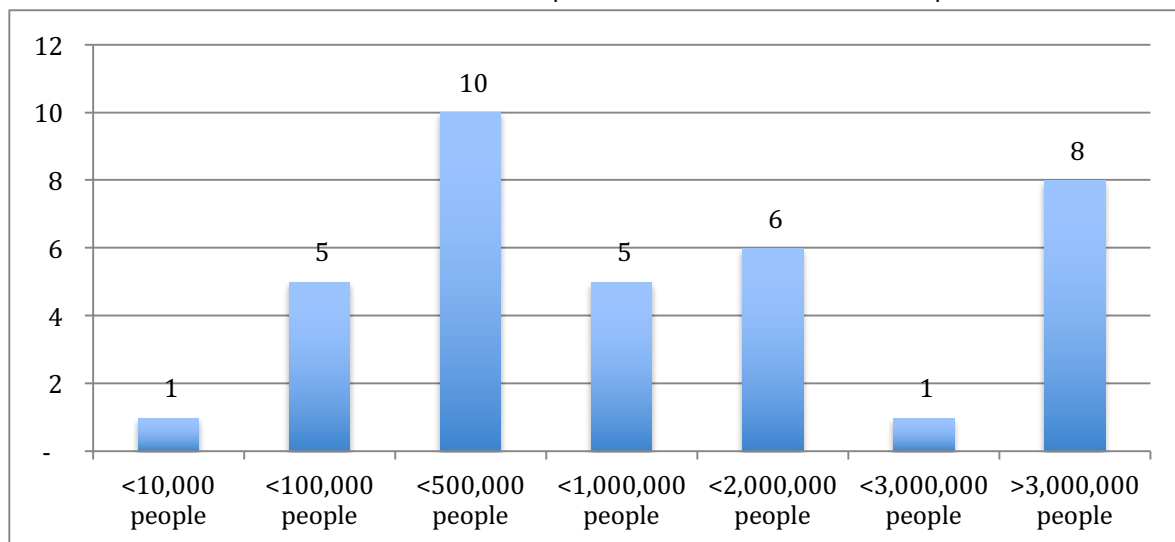


Figure 3. Estimated population size of 36 landscapes proposed to ISLA (22 proposals did not provide a population estimate). Values above columns indicate number of landscapes within each range.

III. LAND COVER AND AGRICULTURE

LAND COVER / LAND USE

Most proposals cited several different land cover/land use types. Only 5 proposals mentioned only one type and on average, across the 58 landscapes, proposals mentioned 4 different types. The great majority of proposed landscapes include forested area, followed closely by plantations, farmlands, parks, and areas with some form of reserve status. Mountains/highlands, coasts/deltas, wetlands/peatlands, and lowlands were each mentioned for more than one-third of the proposed landscapes, while grasslands were mentioned for relatively few.

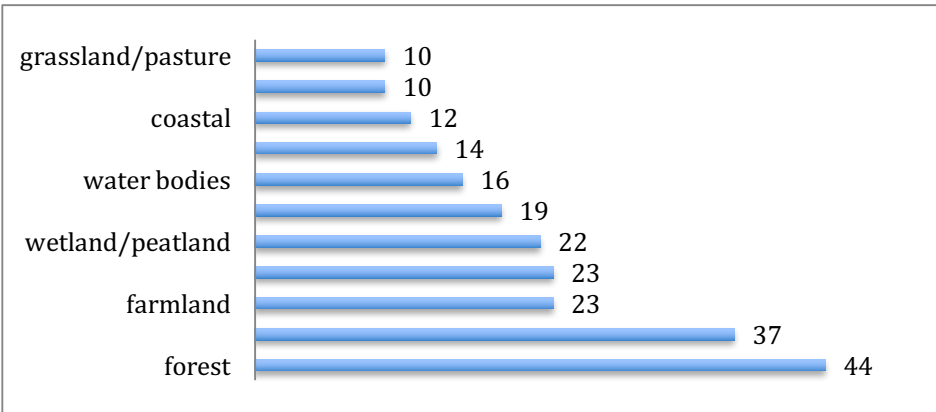


Figure 4. Number of times different land cover/land use types were mentioned for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

AGRI-COMMODITIES

Most submissions described production of multiple agricultural commodities in the proposed landscapes. Only 9 proposals mentioned just one agricultural commodity and on average, across the 58 landscapes, proposals mentioned 3 to 4 different commodity types. While oil palm was the most commonly mentioned agri-commodity, more than half of the proposals mentioned coffee, tea, or cocoa followed closely by timber, rubber, or nuts. Less than 15% of the proposals mentioned cotton, sugar cane, soy, flowers, or tobacco.

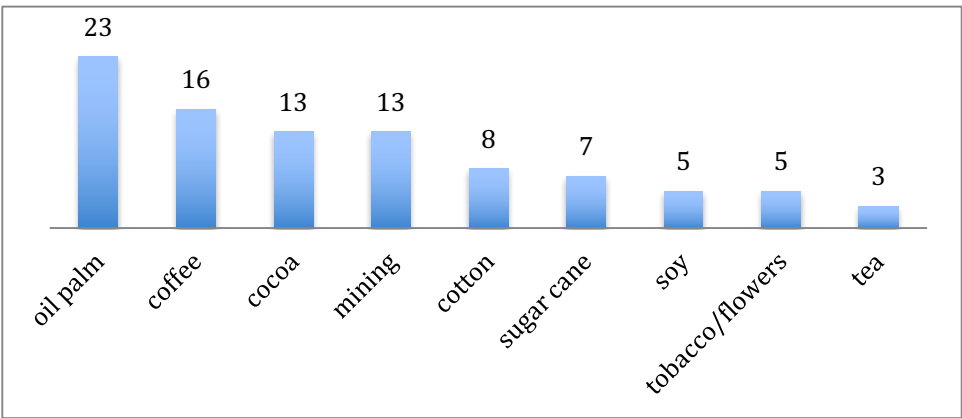


Figure 5. Number of times different agricultural commodities were mentioned for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

IV. CHALLENGES

LANDSCAPE CHALLENGES

Most proposals cited multiple challenges facing the proposed landscapes. All proposals mentioned no fewer than 3 challenges and on average, across the 58 landscapes, proposals mentioned 7 different challenges. Biodiversity risks, poverty/equity, land tenure, deforestation, water, irrigation, or drought were cited for three-quarters of the landscapes. About a third of landscapes appear to have challenges with low yield, illegal land use, weak governance, pollution, concessions, or spatial planning, while challenges with effective use of certifications/standards were indicated for relatively few.

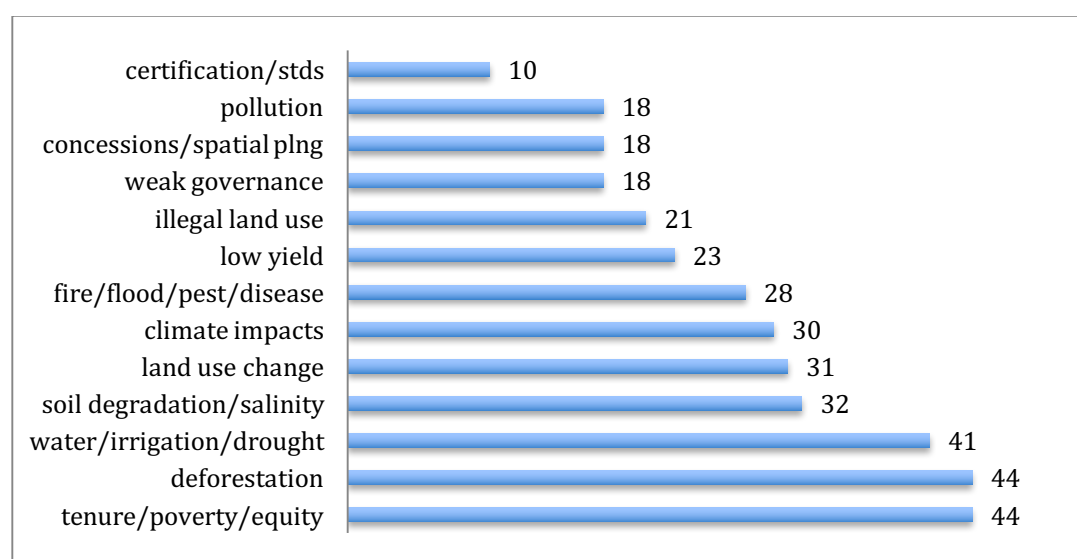


Figure 6. Number of times different landscape challenges were mentioned for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

REGIONAL CHALLENGES

While most proposals did not specify more general or regional challenges, 15 proposals referred to the complexity of multi-ethnic populations, 11 proposals noted human migration challenges, 5 proposals cited poor linkages across levels or units of government, and 4 proposals cited transboundary issues.

V. INTERVENTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

PLANNED INTERVENTIONS

All but 5 of the submissions proposed more than one category of planned intervention with some form of sustainable agricultural practices or technologies being the most common, followed closely by value

chain interventions and improved resource or land use planning. Compensation schemes and certification were mentioned for fewer than half of the submissions, while one-fifth described plans for improved water management and one-fifth mentioned ecosystem restoration.

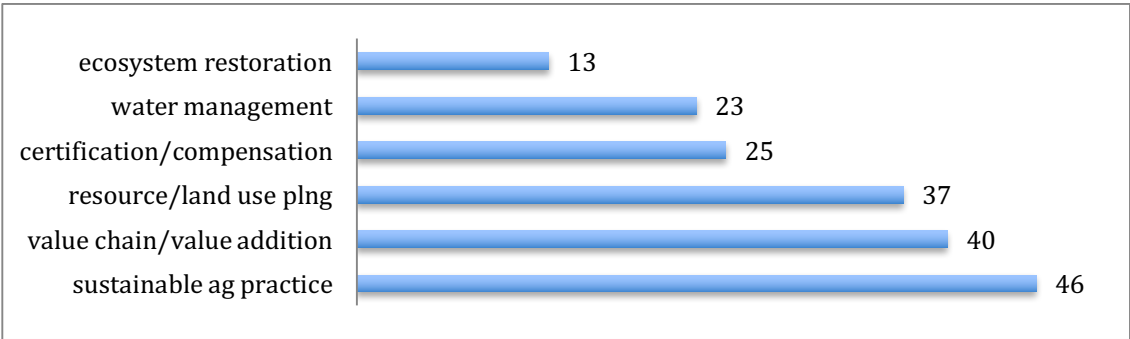


Figure 7. Number of proposals that describe different types of planned interventions for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

PARTNERSHIPS

For nearly all of the landscape submissions, partnerships were designed to involve businesses or financial institutions, government, and civil society groups. Just over half of the submissions mentioned engaging the research sector or local communities.



Figure 8. Number of proposals that refer to inclusion of different sectors in landscape partnerships for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

VI. ADDED VALUE

ISLA VALUE ADDITION

Most proposals cited multiple sources of value addition that could be accrued through participation with the ISLA. Only 2 proposals mentioned only one potential value and on average, across the 58 landscapes, proposals mentioned 4 different categories of potential value. About a third of submissions mentioned better knowledge and technical assistance, poverty reduction, or access to financing and markets. Use of metrics, focus on results, engaging/challenging the private sector, and

development of a business case were indicated for relatively few. ISLA support for strengthening multi-sector-and-stakeholder processes in landscapes was the most common potential value-add.

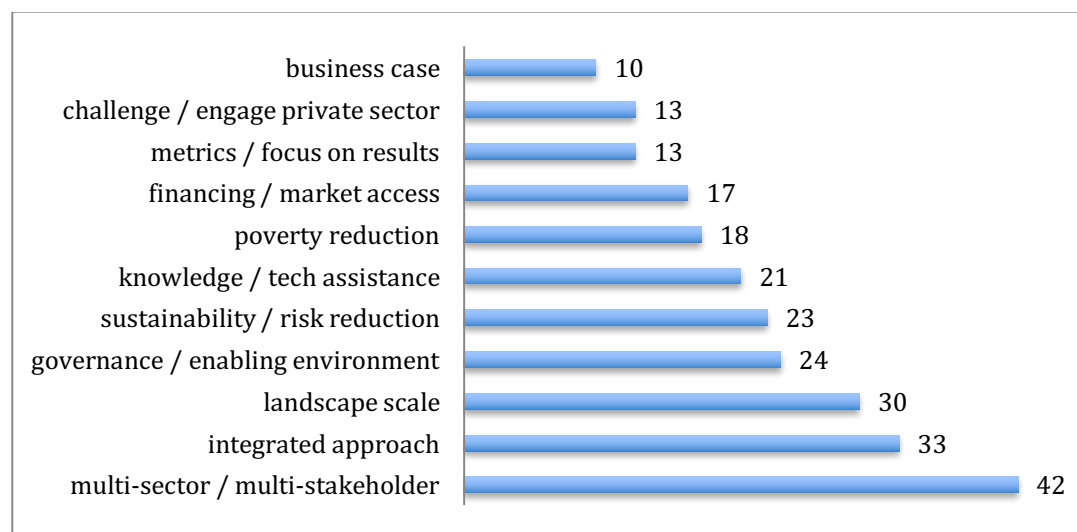


Figure 9. Number of proposals that refer to different potential sources of value addition from participation with ISLA for the 58 landscapes proposed to ISLA.

VII. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

When IDH issued a call for potential ISLA pilot landscapes, it was not easy to estimate the number of submissions to expect. It may be a sign of growing global momentum toward awareness, interest, and experimentation with multi-sector landscape approaches that 58 different landscapes were proposed. Further inquiries after the submission deadline suggest that the ISLA has been launched at a time in which public and private actors increasingly recognize the relevance of sustainability initiatives that operate beyond farm, commodity, and sector boundaries.

The very wide range in the estimated area and population size of the proposed landscapes may signal that spatial definition of a landscape rests more heavily on its specific biophysical and socio-cultural dimensions – and the perceptions of stakeholders – than on any ‘cookie cutter’ approach to establishing landscape boundaries.

The fact that such a wide diversity of land uses, agricultural commodity types, and landscape challenges were all seen by the submitting entities as appropriate to be addressed using a landscape approach may speak to the broad relevance of a multi-stakeholder process and emphasis on shared risks and benefits that is central to integrated landscape management. Similarly, this ‘big tent’ perception about the landscape approach is further suggested by the many different planned interventions and sources of added value mentioned for the 58 proposed landscapes.