

Workshop Report

The Role of Agribusiness in Landscapes



Part of the African Landscape Dialogue Programme

*Horn of Africa Regional Environmental Centre (HoAREC)
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia*

7 March 2017



1. Summary

As part of the African Landscape Dialogue (6 – 9 March 2017), Solidaridad Network hosted a working session on the topic of “Agribusiness in Landscapes” on Tuesday morning March 7th.

Solidaridad invited representatives of Ethiopian based agribusiness companies to learn from their experience and discuss about different landscape level challenges they face in the area where their company is located.

The aim of this working session was to engage companies to think about their role and contribution in a landscape, with particular attention for impacts related to land and water use as well as local food security.

On the basis of these experiences of agribusiness entrepreneurs in Ethiopia, we aimed to generate and exchange knowledge on how to engage business and initiate public-private partnership in a landscape approach. Together we identified needs from a company perspective and explored what relevant sources of information and tools can help companies to better understand risks and opportunities in their landscape.

This discussion helped clarify what companies consider as their leverage and sphere of influence. What enables them to act? And what are the bottlenecks that hamper them to make improvements towards more sustainable practices?

In this report we reflect back on the discussion to draw lessons from the business perspective in a landscape approach. The findings from this workshop, combined with take aways from other sessions during the African Landscape Dialogue, lead to recommendations on next steps towards more active and targeted business engagement in landscape initiatives. These action points will be taken up by the working group “Business for Sustainable Landscapes”, part of the Landscape for People Food and Nature Initiative (LPFN).

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2. Background to African Landscape Dialogue

The African Landscape Dialogue brought together more than 140 leaders working across Africa and around the world for three days of collaboration to improve the practice of integrated landscape management. Leaders from community and farmer organizations, local governments, food and agri-businesses, NGOs and other stakeholders across Africa are working together through integrated landscape management to achieve multiple goals from their land and resources.

The programme was organized around core themes including: *Business, Finance, Multi-stakeholder collaboration, Enabling Policies and Capacity Building.*

The African Landscapes Dialogue gathered these diverse communities of practice in sustainable landscapes at the campus of HOAREC&N in Ethiopia to learn together through:

- Sharing lessons learned from research and experiences across landscapes and countries
- Sharing best practices from their own landscapes
- Exchanging tools and resources
- Facilitating cross-sectoral conversation

The conference was hosted by the Horn of Africa Regional Environment Center & Network (HOAREC&N) at their meeting place in the Gullele Botanic Garden in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Organizing partners include HOAREC&N, the African Model Forest Network, EcoAgriculture Partners, NEPAD/TerrAfrica, Solidaridad Network, the Water and Land Resources Center (WLRC) and the World Resources Institute.

Supporting partners include EcoAgriculture Partners, the Global Environment Facility, IUCN, the Netherlands Ministry for Economic Affairs, SwedBio, Solidaridad Network, and the World Resources Institute.

3. Research Programme: Follow the Food

From Solidaridad perspective there is a particular interest in the topic of business engagement for sustainable landscapes, since it relates directly to our work in global commodity programmes and sustainable landscape programmes across the globe. Furthermore, an ongoing research programme in which Solidaridad is involved looks specifically at the impact of private sector investment on local food security.¹ The food security research is focused on agribusiness investment cases in Kenya, Ethiopia and Ghana.

This four-year research grant is part of the Food and Business Global Challenges Programme which aims to generate evidence-based understanding of emerging issues within the global food system and their impact on regional and local food security. The role, direct impact and spin-off effects of (Dutch) agribusiness form the crucial components of the research. Solidaridad and partners developed the Follow the Food research proposal in order to find out how different agribusiness models in Ghana, Ethiopia and Kenya impact local and regional food systems and ultimately food security of farmer households. Follow the Food seeks to unravel this risk of displacement and other hidden linkages between investment, livelihoods, natural resource conservation & management, food markets and household food security.

Currently two Phd students are conducting their research for Follow the Food. James Wangu is investigating the inclusion of smallholder farmers in the fresh bean value chain in Eastern Kenya. In Ethiopia, Senait Getahun is investigating the public private partnership around malt barley production. Besides the academic research, active engagement with agribusiness is part of the research activities to better understand the way companies can impact (positively and negatively) the food security situation in their direct environment. This working session on Agribusiness in Landscapes was funded with the support of the Follow the Food Research Programme.

¹ The Follow the Food research consortium consists of the following partners: International Development Studies (IDS) at Utrecht University in The Netherlands, St. Mary's University in Ethiopia and Fair and Sustainable Advisory Services (FSAS) in Ethiopia, Solidaridad West Africa in Ghana, Solidaridad Europe in The Netherlands and Solidaridad East and Central Africa in Kenya.

4. Participants and company information

Organizers/facilitators

Katie Minderhoud, Knowledge management and learning advisor at Solidaridad Europe, Netherlands
 Ellen Mangnus, Coordinator “Follow the Food” Research Programme, Utrecht University, Netherlands

Partners/guests

Annet Witteveen, Fair & Sustainable Advisory Services in Ethiopia and coordinator of Agriprofocus
 Jan Willem Nibbering, Food Security specialist from Netherlands Embassy in Ethiopia
 Stijn van Geel, Country manager at Solidaridad Ethiopia
 Leggesse Seyoum, Programme manager Coffee at Solidaridad Ethiopia
 James Wangu, Phd Student “Follow the Food” Research Programme
 Senait Getahun, Phd Student “Follow the Food” Research Programme

Company representatives

Company	Representatives	Description of business	Location
NINT Agri Plc	Jyothi Reddy Amanuel Mulugeta	Maize seed, pulses and rice production	Boneya Boshe woreda, East Wollega in Oromia region. 277 km west of Addis Ababa, on the road to Nekempte, 12 km from Annoo and 20 km from Bako town
ASA Ethiopia	Alwin Quispel and Biniyam Mengesha	ASA is a fish farm focusing on Tilapia production	Amhara, about 40km from Bahir Dar near a town called Merawi
Alfa Fodder and Dairy Farm PLC	Tabitha Flier and Yennessew Tamaru	Alfalfa fodder production and dairy	Debre Zeit (45 km south of Addis Abbaba)
BLMM integrated agricultural Development Plc	Takele Teshome	Vegetable production	Tiyo Woreda, Arsi Zone (province), Oromia Region about 160 km South of Addis Ababa
Florensis Ethiopia Plc	Ronald Vijverberg	Exporter of cuttings for ornamental plants (floriculture)	Oromia
Olam	Jeremy Dufour	Environmental & Social Manager, Plantations & Farming, South & East Africa Cluster	NA

Background information on companies

The following questions were asked to each company representative to better understand their businesses, the location and related challenges and opportunities.

1. Where is your company located?

(woreda, region, province) / # hectares / # employees

2. How is your company linked to other actors in the supply chain?

(sourcing from # local producers / providing services to # local producers)

3. Is water/ irrigation a challenge in the area? Does your operation have sufficient access to water / use of water? *(Irrigation facility in place - private/shared/open)*

4. Are there local communities in the vicinity and how are relations between company and communities?

5. Are land use arrangements in the area stable or changing? Are there conflicting interests that you are aware of?

NINT Agri Plc

1. Where is your company located? (woreda, region, province)

hectares / # employees

Location

NINT Agri Plc is located in Boneya Boshe woreda, East Wollega in Oromia region. 277 km west of Addis Ababa, on the road to Nekempte, 12 km from Annoo and 20 km from Bako town. We have 1500 hectares and 30 full time and 50-60 part time/seasonal employees

2. How is your company linked to other actors in the supply chain?

(sourcing from # local producers / providing services to # local producers)

Our main focus is maize seed, pulses and rice production. Maize seed: We produced maize seed on a small scale this past year, and are expanding with collaboration with Ethiopian Seed Enterprise which distributes seed to farmers. We have a seed processing unit that will be completed this year.

Pulses: This year with pulses our goal is to provide chick pea or green gram seed to local farmers to produce pulses as a second crop. Currently farmers in the area only produce one crop i.e., maize and leave the land fallow. Pulses have multiple uses - they grow on residual moisture, fix nitrogen in the soil reducing fertilizer use for the next crop; they also trap carbon and in the long term is a climate smart agriculture as this practice prevents carbon from escaping into the atmosphere to cause global warming.

Rice: We are trying varieties of rice and eventually planning a rice mill since there is none in this area. Our goal is to work with farmers cooperatives in the rice growing Chewaka area and provide farmers with seed, machinery and expertise to increase the area, yield and quality of rice and offer a buy back guarantee if they are interested.

Agroforestry: The land allotted to our company mostly had bushes which were cleared along with a few trees. This year we are making an effort to start a nursery to plant 40,000 indigenous and fruit trees.

I see the role of our company as bringing about a change in the trend of commercial, capital and chemical intensive agriculture. My ambition is for our farm to become a model farm where we practice agriculture in an environmentally sustainable and socially responsible way. To introduce climate smart agriculture practices - crop rotation, using cover crops, rain water harvesting systems which will improve the production and help make the country self sufficient in food production.

3. Is water/ irrigation a challenge in the area? Does your operation have sufficient access to water / use of water? (Irrigation facility in place - private/shared/open)

Water is not a challenge in this area. There is sufficient rain and surface water resources - Gibbe river runs on the northern border; we do have a center pivot system and rain gun irrigation system which is private. Long term we are looking into getting support to build rain water harvesting systems in the village to collect rainwater for drinking and for irrigation.

4. Are there local communities in the vicinity and how are relations between company and communities?

The land allotted to NINT is a heavily water logged area which was not being used by the community. So unlike some other agribusiness that made the news because the government took the land from the communities, this company so far has had relatively good relations with the communities. We have donated an ambulance, donate our tractors, dozers to the community for building the school or laying the road. Also started working in a small way on projects like pencils and pads (sanitary pads for girls); also looking into funding for water wheels that will help reduce the burden of carrying water for women.

I had reached out to the local TVET college to offer the farm as a field learning for agricultural students in the hopes of building and learning from linkages between students, farmers and agribusinesses.

5. Are land use arrangements in the area stable or changing? Are there conflicting interests that you are aware of?

Land use arrangements in the area seem stable, although there are conflicts in the rest of the country around land.

ASA Aquaculture Ethiopia

1. Where is your company located? (*woreda, region, province*)

Amhara regional State, West Gojjam Zone, Mecha Woreda, Kudmi Kebele

hectares

2.21 ha

employees

at the farm currently 10 permanent and 10-20 non-permanent

at the office 3 permanent

2. How is your company linked to other actors in the supply chain?

(sourcing from # local producers / providing services to # local producers)?

We provide fish to the local market (supermarkets, (fish) restaurants, etc) and fingerlings to farmers

We source fish feed and packaging from a local supplier

3. Is water/ irrigation a challenge in the area? Does your operation have sufficient access to water / use of water? (*Irrigation facility in place - private/shared/open*)

We produce in an irrigation reservoir, which is used for irrigation by farmers. The nutrients from the fish enrich the water quality, so we create an integrated system. At our farm site, we have a borehole which supplies us with water. For the moment, this is sufficient.

4. Are there local communities in the vicinity and how are relations between company and communities?

Yes. The relations are quite good. There are a school and a church next to our farm which we provide with electricity and water. Furthermore, last year we have trained 40 smallholder farmers on fish production.

5. Are land use arrangements in the area stable or changing? Are there conflicting interests that you are aware of?

Not for us, but recently in the area a lot of demolishing of (flower and vegetable) farms took place by angry people.

Alfa Fodder and Dairy Farm Plc

1. Where is your company located?

Woreda: Ada'a
Region: Oromia
Province: Bishoftu
hectares: 2.7
employees: 41

2. How is your company linked to other actors in the supply chain?

(sourcing from # local producers / providing services to # local producers)

Sourcing from local producers: ingredients for fodder: 7 local suppliers

Other sourcing (machine spare parts/ medicines): 5-10 local suppliers

Alfa Farm provides services to:

- 10 local farmers (fodder)
- 1 dairy processing plant + 10 hotels (raw milk)
- 1 insemination center (breeding bulls)
- 20-40 local farmers (breeding bulls)
- 5 customers for pig meat

3. Is water/ irrigation a challenge in the area? Does your operation have sufficient access to water / use of water? *(Irrigation facility in place - private/shared/open)*

Yes, water is a challenge. On our compound we have two water wells and no water problems. For producing corn silage, we have cooperation agreements with local farmers. We have challenges with water supply and electricity in the dry season which makes it challenging to produce good harvest in the dry season. Some lands have wells, but no pumps and irrigation systems, other lands have no water wells at all.

4. Are there local communities in the vicinity and how are relations between company and communities?

Alfa Farm is located in Debre Zeit, so we have many neighbours and relations with the local community. We are happy to say relations are good. For instance, we provide water from our spare pump to neighbouring farmers which allows 30 families to earn a living by using 100 hectares of land in the dry season. Our knowledge and machines help to grow crops on lands that normally would remain idle during dry and also rain season (3-4 cooperations, totalling 30+6+15+18= about 70 hectares of land). What is challenging is that, because we do not own land, investing in the land is not possible as long-term security is lacking.

5. Are land use arrangements in the area stable or changing? Are there conflicting interests that you are aware of?

Land use arrangements are stable - more precisely formulated: they are very difficult to change. It is extremely difficult to find land for expansion, whilst we do have the knowledge, machines, experience and necessary finances. We are not aware of conflicts here - in the opposite, Alfa regularly welcomes local farmers who are willing to cooperate and share land, but are then entrapped in the legal difficulties in arranging such matters.

BLMM Integrated Agricultural Development Plc

1. Where is your company located? (*woreda, region, province*)

The company is located in Tiyo Woreda, Arsi Zone (province), Oromia Region about 160 km South of Addis Ababa, 20 km from the tarmac road and about 1 km from the all weather gravel road

hectares: 22 hectares (irrigable)

employees: 10 staff with daily labour as required by different operation

2. How is your company linked to other actors in the supply chain?

(*sourcing from # local producers / providing services to # local producers*)?

The local producers get seasonal employment opportunity, benefit from demonstration of new technologies, they can also sell their product when BLMM contracts truck. Retailers also buy our products and sell it in the nearest market. The kebele administration/cooperative sell fertilizer for the farm when they are supplied by the respective government body

The farm is also linked with organized groups for contractual work in transplanting, onion cutting at harvest. The local input suppliers provide agricultural inputs such as herbicide, insecticide, fungicide and improved seeds. The farm also established linkage with supermarkets, hotels and the Addis Ababa whole selling vegetable market.

3. Is water/ irrigation a challenge in the area? Does your operation have sufficient access to water / use of water? (*Irrigation facility in place - private/shared/open*)

No it is not a challenge. There are perennial rivers, but requires pumping or reservoir to channel the water gravitationally. The water table is also shallow and one can drill water in at 15 to 20 meters. There is also spring that comes from about 2 km. The farm can join the water users association to obtain equitable supply of water for irrigation. The farm brought potable water supply from about 500 meters and the workers and the livestock have clean water.

4. Are there local communities in the vicinity and how are relations between company and communities?

There is a small town called Arata at about 1 Km distance. Chefe Missoma Kebele (Farmers' association) is where the farm is situated. They work for weeding and cultivation, harvesting. We also share ploughing oxen during the peak period

5. Are land use arrangements in the area stable or changing? Are there conflicting interests that you are aware of?

I secured the land on 25 years lease agreement with the zonal Investment office and I have the map of the farm under my name. I also have the investment license and trade registration certificate Hence as long as I do not leave the land fallow and cultivate it as per the investment agreement nobody will have a claim over the land for the duration of the lease (25 years).

Company locations



5. Notes from meeting

The working session started with a brief introduction from each company representative on their company, where they are based and major challenges that they face in this particular environment. Then the group split up in smaller groups, to discuss in more detail each company specific situation. Three rounds of discussion (10 minutes each) were focused around three leading questions:

1. What are landscape level challenges from company perspective?
2. What is the responsibility and leverage for the company to take action on identified landscape issues?
3. What are company-needs to understand and effectively respond to landscape level challenges?

After these rounds of discussions main findings and conclusions were reported back to the larger group. These notes reflect both the discussion in smaller groups as well as the summaries reported back to plenary.

1. What are landscape level challenges from company perspective?

Jyothi Reddy from NINT Agri plc reflected on landscape level challenges such as deforestation, agricultural practices and water management. Reddy stressed the need for promoting sustainable practices at different phases of agribusiness development. For example, 1) actively prevent deforestation when preparing the land for production, 2) introduce sustainable practices for land management such as controlling weeds with cover crops and reduce use of chemical fertilizers, 3) improve water management and drainage beyond farm boundaries.

Infrastructure challenges are the lack of roads, NINT built their own roads at relatively high costs. Also there is no access to electricity, since the government has postponed connecting NINT to the grid. Reddy regrets not having invested in solar energy from the start, since dependency is high on government providing access to electricity. Irrigation is hardly possible without electricity.

Lack of access (road and bridge) and flood prevention that heavily affect the small holders should have been the responsibility of the government with some support from the companies and communities as small companies cannot afford allocating budget for such constructions

Land use arrangements are also not flexible. NINT Agri plc made land available to neighboring villages to grow nutritious grass for cattle and avoid cattle moving through cultivated land and compacting the soil. Increasing the quality of animal fodder and using the manure to fertilize the soil has benefits for health of cattle as well as health of soil. However this type of participatory land use planning was not allowed by government authority. The company had to bring the land into production themselves or it would be taken back by government. The lease agreement signed by NINT even suggests to plant trees. But, the land will be taken if not reasonably cultivated/used for the purpose. The challenge is if the company wants to include other interventions than specified in the license, they want you to process another license

2. What is the responsibility and leverage for the company to take action on identified landscape issues?

Innovations and testing solutions

NINT Agri plc is based in a low lying area where the land floods often. At the same time they have to deal with runoff from the mountains. Natural drainage is in place by means of channels running through the land. Deepening these channels and investing in irrigation can actually help to bring land into production outside of the rainy season.

Introduction of pulses as a rotational crop has been a successful move, since pulses are very suitable to grow in dry season with residue water. Also pulses fix nitrogen in the soil, which is a beneficial quality in rotation with maize. There is also the idea to introduce rice variety for the flooded area. Several Indian rice varieties have been tested but did not work. Now NINT Agri plc started working with a rice research institute to check for suitable varieties.

Reddy is convinced that if all farms worked on promotion of crop rotation, crop diversification and knew about the potential of pulses for soil health and food security, it would hugely improve quality of agricultural practices and produce.

Partnerships

There is a plan to work in partnership with Wageningen University, to dig holes in community land as collection points for rainwater. A component of this rainwater harvesting and irrigation project is to introduce hoserail irrigation.

The long term goal is to develop NINT Agri plc as a model farm, a centre point for relations between students, research centre, farmers, communities and company to provide opportunities for interaction. There is an agricultural college in Bako and NINT Agri plc had the idea to use the farm as a field school for the college and provide a bus to bring the students to the farm. The challenges in the landscape require learning on the spot. 20 teachers from the college came and were very enthusiastic. 6 projects were collaboratively thought about on for example soil quality, comparing irrigation strategies, agroforestry and tef modernization. However, the college asked for lunch and a bus service for the students and this was too much for the company to provide so the partnership never materialized. One student thrived as a result of an apprenticeship at the farm. He learned a lot about the agricultural practices on the farm and the student became a teacher to his teachers when

they visited the farm.

For NINT Agri Plc knowledge partners are the local Agricultural Research Centre in Bako and the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi Arid Tropics (ICRISAT). A successful pilot was completed where one acre of pigeon pea for drought prone areas was tested and produced seed for over 30 farmers.

For BLMM PLC partnership has already been initiated with Kulumsa research Center and GIZ agricultural Training and green innovation center which should be strengthened further and requires resources.

3. What are company-needs to understand and effectively respond to landscape level challenges?

Human capacity

NINT Agri plc stated the following needs. It is critical to train people on sustainable agricultural practices. Building human capacity in this field is necessary to fulfill tasks on farm such as the role of farm manager. Apprenticeships, training people through work experience placements, are an important source of capacity and also help people gain the practical skills needed. Facilitating experience sharing of best practices between countries will also help cross fertilizing best practices.

Government engagement

Government engagement and support is necessary for disaster risk reduction, irrigation schemes and implementation of rainwater harvesting. Currently the government is not facilitating these improvements on farm or in the wider landscape.

Modernization of agricultural practices

There is a need for crop diversification, to grow more than only maize and Tef. Knowledge and best practices are necessary to know what successful varieties to use and the timing of planting and harvesting. As an example, Reddy mentioned the traditional Tef production in Ethiopia which is not efficient. Ethiopia is importing food, while the country actually has the potential to produce enough. There is a role for the Agricultural Transformation Agency to spur modernization of Tef production through promotion of for example a seed row planter or thresher which can increase yield by 2 or 3 times. Traditional practices of Tef production are not efficient in planting, harvesting and storing, leading to huge harvest losses during piling and threshing.

Reporting back after discussion groups

1. touches on landscape level challenges experienced by companies
2. touches on responsibility of the company and scope of action
3. touches on needs from company perspective: what do they need to deal with challenges?

Florensis

1. There are many landscape issues and surrounding communities feel that it is the company responsibility to act, for example in dealing with floods. However, leadership from the government is necessary to tackle these issues.
2. Florensis has a budget for corporate social responsibility (CSR) to carry out projects based on community needs. To prioritize what needs to happen first, Florensis works with a community needs analysis to identify priority actions. Communication with communities is critical for the company and requires good understanding of the local situation and cultural practices. The government is not taking enough responsibility. This is also limiting the company to act and take responsibility for improvements. To deal with this reality the company has started partnerships with the University and with NGOs to initiate activities to avoid the perception of a private initiative.
3. A priority need is leadership from the government. Companies are often held responsible because the perception is that companies have money, but not all problems are solved with money. Florensis is seeking to collaborate with the university and other landscape stakeholders to avoid initiatives to be seen as a private sector effort.

ASA Aquaculture

1. ASA is not taking water from Lake Tana, but using rainfall in Bahir Dar through rainwater harvesting. Pollution is not an issue, but it might be in the future. In any case ASA is located upstream which is an advantage. Energy is an issue, due to lack of connectivity to the grid. ASA is looking into solar panels for a solution. Access to finance is a key issue. Funding did not come through from development bank in Ethiopia, now ASA got a more expensive loan from the Dutch. Social challenges in the landscape are food insecurity and nutrition. There is a need to educate people about the nutritional value of fish.
2. Aquaculture is a new sector in Ethiopia and this means that supporting policy is not in place. Government does not understand the reality on the ground. Policies are not linked to practices on the ground. Policies are not supportive to grow this business. The idea is to practically engage policymakers to show how aquaculture is done.
3. ASA has the ambition to bridge the skills gap and train farmers to grow fish in a sustainable way. It is important to look into the potential of working with outgrowers, who can produce small quantities, and provide them with a market outlet through ASA. These outgrowers have to be managed, monitored and supported to produce quality fish.

NINT Agri plc

1. The farm is situated in a waterlogged area. The farm is hardly connected to roads or the grid. Rainwater harvesting and dealing with the flooded area is key and relates to the wider landscape and infrastructure investment, working together with villages surrounding the farm on land and water management.

2. Many initiatives and innovations have been tried in working with research institutes and government agencies. NINT aims to introduce sustainable agricultural practices.

3. Needs are particular related to government leadership and support in land use and water management planning as well as technical knowledge on seed varieties and best practices introducing new crops.

Alfa farms

1. Access to water and land is an issue. Government is not creating an enabling environment for development of water pumps. 60% of fodder for cattle comes from smallholder farmers, but needs for communities come first, before fodder. Main challenges are related to the political economy in Ethiopia.

2. Key partner for Alfa farms to cooperate with are International Livestock Research Institute, the Ministry of Agriculture, Agricultural research institutes and local cooperatives. Alfa farms provides semen from bulls to improve cattle variety, which gives the company some leverage in working with government research and extension institutes.

3. Needs for Alfa farms relate mostly to cooperation of the government in allowing for expansion of the farm, extending the lease period or entitling ownership to allow for actual long term investment.

Reflections after reported feedback

Finance and investment in infrastructure

There is an imbalance in conditions set for national investors and international investors. For national investors it is very difficult to access finance, due to the demand for collateral. In addition, lack of functioning infrastructure results in high start up costs and difficulties in daily operations. Government is in most cases failing to provide basic infrastructure to companies such as electricity, water, telecom, road, bridge and internet for their daily operations yet expects companies to deal with public good problems as well.

Roles and responsibilities

There is a real need for clear demarcation of roles and responsibilities between company and government. At present when the company does not fulfill conditions, the lease is withdrawn or their license is taken. While at the same time when the government does not deliver on promises, there are no direct consequences. There is definitely need for a multi-sector approach: where government provides for an enabling environment, private sector can provide for jobs and civil society works on building awareness and mindset for sustainable practices. Companies also experience a big disconnect between national government and local government in terms of awareness and involvement in working with companies. For the “good” companies this is a challenge for collaboration, for the “not so good ones” it is an opportunity to take advantage of and carry on with sub standard practices.

High expectations of company's position to act

Some companies are interested to work with communities in their landscapes to help solve some of the challenges. However, as there are usually myriads of problems and assumptions that companies can afford to deal with everything, companies prefer to do a community needs assessment to prioritize the challenges to work on. The paradox is that communities or government have high expectations of companies to solve landscape challenges before they establish well and generate

profit, while at the same time initiatives from private sector are perceived with suspicion and lack of buy in from landscape stakeholders to make it a success.

Limited scope for company to act

Some companies may have innovative ideas that can enhance good landscape management especially for smallholders around them but they feel restricted by the government from exploring that (i.e. due to fixed license and long bureaucracy to switch or adopt a new practice). Additionally companies who are starting something new in the context of a given country, for example in the aquaculture sector in Ethiopia, experience that existing government policy is not accommodating. At times companies face challenges in hiring local communities to work with them as there is a big skills gap among local communities for the kind of work the companies do. In that case companies are forced to bring in skilled people from other localities which may create tension with locals.

6. Recommendations for Business for Sustainable Landscapes Action Agenda at the African Landscape Dialogue: Next steps for the Business Working Group of Landscape for People Food and Nature

The discussion and findings of this workshop on the role of agribusiness in landscapes feeds into a bigger agenda which aims to improve business engagement in landscape initiatives. Therefore on the last day of the African Landscape Dialogue, there was an opportunity to present recommendations on what are important next steps to tackle the business engagement agenda. The following four recommendations were drafted:

1. Clarify “business engagement” agenda

First of all, it would help if we further clarify what we mean with “business for sustainable landscapes”, to avoid confusion around why, when, where and how to engage companies in a landscape approach. In different landscape contexts, different type of companies will play different roles. We do not mean to bring companies into landscapes that are not related to their business and we do not mean to attract them for funding only. The focus should be on how collaboration can help tackle landscape issues, or particular stakeholder issues (for example private sector improving engagement with government by means of working together with other stakeholders in the landscape).

2. Create evidence on diversity of “business” in landscapes

Map and showcase the different type of businesses and come up with a functional categorization including: farmers as a business, small and medium sized enterprises (sme’s), service sector, domestic business (particular in key national commodity sectors), international supply chain actors and multinationals. Each of these business enterprises differ in their relation and dependency towards the landscape. This will influence the necessary mode of engagement and understanding of the diverse motivations and roles these companies can play. Building this evidence with stories and examples, to show how varied and powerful businesses are in different shapes and sizes will increase knowledge and understanding on business contribution to sustainable landscapes.

3. Take stock of business learning networks on landscapes and how to connect

Of all the participants at the African Landscape Dialogue, there were very few companies present. Despite the separate session with 5 company representatives, they were not able to stay for the full programme. We have to think clever about how to tailor knowledge exchange and how to connect with relevant business partners, for example through the networks of landscape practitioners in their respective landscapes. While there are ongoing learning initiatives on the landscape approach, it is not clear to what extent local companies are involved. At the same time, businesses have their own learning networks in place. We need to connect these learning communities on landscapes and business networks talking about landscapes. Examples of such networks were mentioned, such as: Global Agribusiness Alliance (<http://globalagribusinessalliance.com/>) and New Generation plantation (<http://newgenerationplantations.org/en>). Because on a positive note, there is momentum among – some – companies to work in a landscape approach. Companies are often willing to engage, while we sometimes assume they are not seeing the value. In fact, if the landscape challenges relate to their business, they will see the value.

4. Innovative companies willing and capable of leading landscape approaches should share their knowledge to other companies, governments and NGOs

Major challenges which have been raised by the companies who participated in the discussions are related to engaging with government (knowledge/understanding) and government not delivering on

promises. When it comes to land and water management, investment in infrastructure, collaborative planning, creating an enabling environment and clarity on land use planning; companies risk losing their license to operate, face operational risks or reputational risks, while the government does not feel the consequence if they do not deliver on their promises. It is difficult for companies to hold government accountable. Also, there is a disconnect between national government and local government in terms of awareness and involvement in working with companies. This results in additional challenges for companies seeking collaboration with government, because there is lack of coordination and communication between government institutions. There is a need to build on the positive examples to show what companies can bring to landscape efforts, and how it also helps themselves to deal better with government and solve critical issues which pose risk to their business. This links directly to the funding challenge, for example for infrastructure investment, and the limitations companies face to develop and maintain their business. Access to finance is a critical bottleneck for companies.

Annex I - Outline working session: “Agribusiness in Landscapes”

10.00 Arrival guests with coffee and tea + informal introduction and networking

10.45 Start working session

- Introduction Follow the Food / Solidaridad and introduction participants
- Explain purpose and approach of session
- Introduce Company Landscape Quicksan & Earth Security group model

11.00 Split in discussion groups per company

1. ASA Ethiopia Aquaculture
2. Alfa fodder and dairy farm
3. BLMM Integrated agriculture (vegetables)
4. NINT Agri Plc
5. Florensis Ethiopia Plc

1st round - 15 minutes:

Discuss landscape level challenges from company perspective

Method: Use Company Profiles and Earth Security Model,

Discussion group max 10 people + company representatives

Select 5 key pressing landscape issues which impact company performance AND/OR which are result of company impact.

Take notes for reporting back

2nd round - 15 minutes:

Discuss the responsibility and leverage for the company to take action on identified landscape issues

Continue in same discussion group

Does the company have a responsibility to act?

What leverage or influence does the company have to act?

(for example depending on size, relations with government or community, access to knowledge, access to market).

Take notes for reporting back

3rd round - 15 minutes:

Identify company needs to understand and effectively respond to landscape level challenges

In terms of:

Information needs

(Think of research, data or tools to understand scope of the challenge and how it links to company)

Actor analysis & partnerships

(Who are the actors in the landscape with whom the company needs to engage to address the identified challenges?)

Take notes for reporting back

11.45 Report back to whole group:

State key pressing landscape issues, leverage to act and what company needs to do
5 minutes for each discussion group

12.00 Questions and discussion

Wrap up

Annex II Earth Security Group Risk Model for Agribusiness

Guidance for discussion on landscape level risks from company perspective

Environmental	Social	Governance	Energy
<p>Climate Infrastructure Risk The vulnerability of infrastructure to adverse climate impacts.</p> <p>Land Deforestation The loss of forest cover.</p> <p>Land Degradation The costs of a reduction or loss of land ecosystem services.</p> <p>Water Insecurity The availability of water throughout the year and the relative performance of water provision.</p> <p>Water Pollution The degree of water pollution from households, industry and agriculture.</p> <p>Water Virtual Imports The amount of water that is imported by being embedded in commodities and products.</p> <p>Weather Extremes The level of exposure to extreme weather events, measured in human and economic losses.</p>	<p>Food Import Dependence The dependence on food imports.</p> <p>Food Insecurity The level of food insecurity, reflecting continuing or structural poverty and low income.</p> <p>Gender Inequality Gaps in reproductive health, empowerment and labour market participation due to gender inequality.</p> <p>Land Tenure Insecurity The lack of security that a person's land rights will be recognized and protected.</p> <p>Poverty The country's proportion of the population living in poverty.</p> <p>Skills Gap The country's level of knowledge-based skills and talent competitiveness.</p> <p>Unemployment The country's levels of total unemployment and youth unemployment.</p> <p>Urban Population Pressure The country's urban population growth rate.</p>	<p>Fiscal Sustainability The sustainability of the public sector, including economic growth, government debt, and the probability of sovereign debt default.</p> <p>Government Effectiveness The quality and independence of the public service and the effectiveness of policy implementation.</p> <p>Inflation The increase in consumer prices and decline in the purchasing value of money.</p> <p>Political Accountability The level of transparency, accountability of and participation in government decisions, including the degree of press freedom.</p> <p>Rule of Law The quality of contract enforcement, property rights, the police, the courts, and the likelihood of crime and violence.</p>	<p>Carbon Intensity Carbon emissions from electricity generation and industry.</p> <p>Electricity Access The proportion of the population without access to electricity.</p> <p>Electricity Blackouts The number of power outages.</p> <p>Energy Import Dependence The country's external dependence for primary energy.</p>