Sub-Global Assessment Network

SGA NETWORK

A report on Ecosystem Assessment Mentoring Scheme:

By
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5th Sub global Assessment meeting

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CIFOR CGIAR

Center for International Forestry Research

IRANIAN ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Department of the Environment I.R.IRAN

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Mentee

- **Ardavan Zarandian**
- Country : Iran

- Affiliation: Department of the Environment
 (Environmental economy bureau)

- Education : Environmental Planning (PhD student)

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Mentor

- **Himlal Baral**
- Country: Indonesia

- Affiliation : Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)

- Scientist
(...Published paper in different prestigious journals)

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Mentoring Scheme has benefited my research through:

- **Providing an opportunity to work closely with an experienced guide.** I was keen to work on ES assessment but, I couldn't find a qualified mentor in my country, as ES is a rather new branch of science in Iran. Now, I am constantly in touch with my mentor with common interests.

- **Financial facilitating for a research traveling.** In recent years due to unfavorable economic conditions , research travels has been limited in my country. Mentoring scheme solved the problem.

- **Increasing motivation to continue ES research.** Although ES assessment has already been my favorite, but I was working in a non-continues way before the mentoring scheme. I motivated to work continuously, with more concentration and seriousness, since I developed more communication through SGA network.

My research :

Assessing ecosystem services for informed spatial planning in forested landscapes in Sarvelat & Javaherdasht in Northern Iran
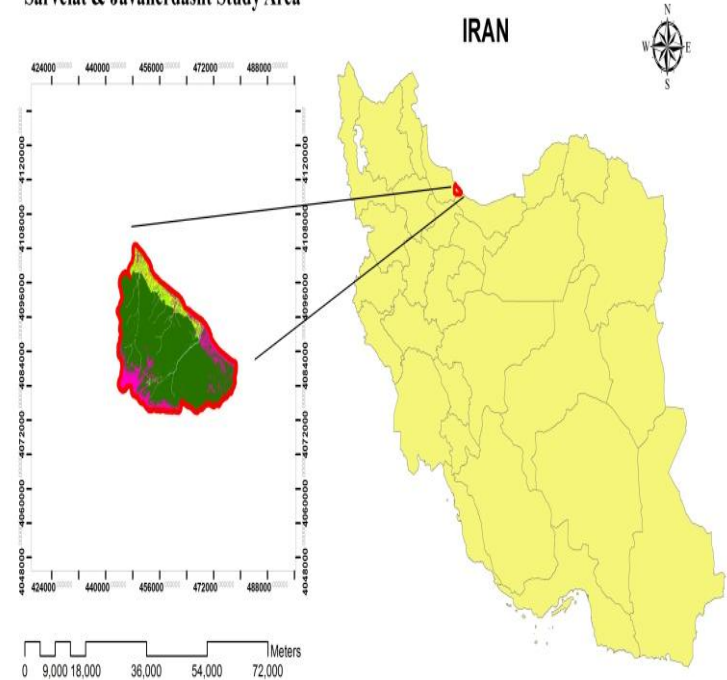

Geografical location of the stuydy area among SGA network projects.

No assessment have been carried out here.

Sarvelat & Javaherdasht Study Area

IRAN

Why the pilot area is important?

The Caspian - Hyrcanian forests in the northern part of Iran

Hyrcanian forest is unique in the world. why?

Globally & Regionally:

- contains remnants (refugia) of the broad leaf forests that once covered most of the North Temperate Zone, 25 - 50 million years ago, in the early Cenozoic Era.

- These forest disappeared during the Pleistocene ("Ice Ages") When the Europe covered by ice but were alive only here because of the proximity to the Caspian sea.

- at the end of frozen, plant species of Hyrcanian forests immigrated to Europe and these forests is mother of European forests.

Nationally:

- Iran is a wide arid and semi arid country with so limited forest covers.

Iran: Forest Cover

- Total Land Area: 1.648.000 (Km^2)
- Total Forest Area 110.750 (Km^2)
- Percent Forest Cover: 6.77%

Deforestation Rate

- the area of forested lands, has been decreased from 4.3 to 1.9 million hectares during three recent decades.
- it indicates an average annual degradation equal with 80,000 Ha(800 km^2), so the average annual rate of deforestation is calculated as 1.86% for a thirty year time period.

Iran: Forest types

•Tropical (% forest area)0%

•Subtropical (% forest area)98%

•Temperate (% forest area)2%

•Boreal/polar (% forest area)0%

More than 40% of the Ice Age survivor, has been lost only in 30 years.!!!!!!!!

Due to:

- Land use/cover changes
- Wood smuggling
- Forest inappropriate management
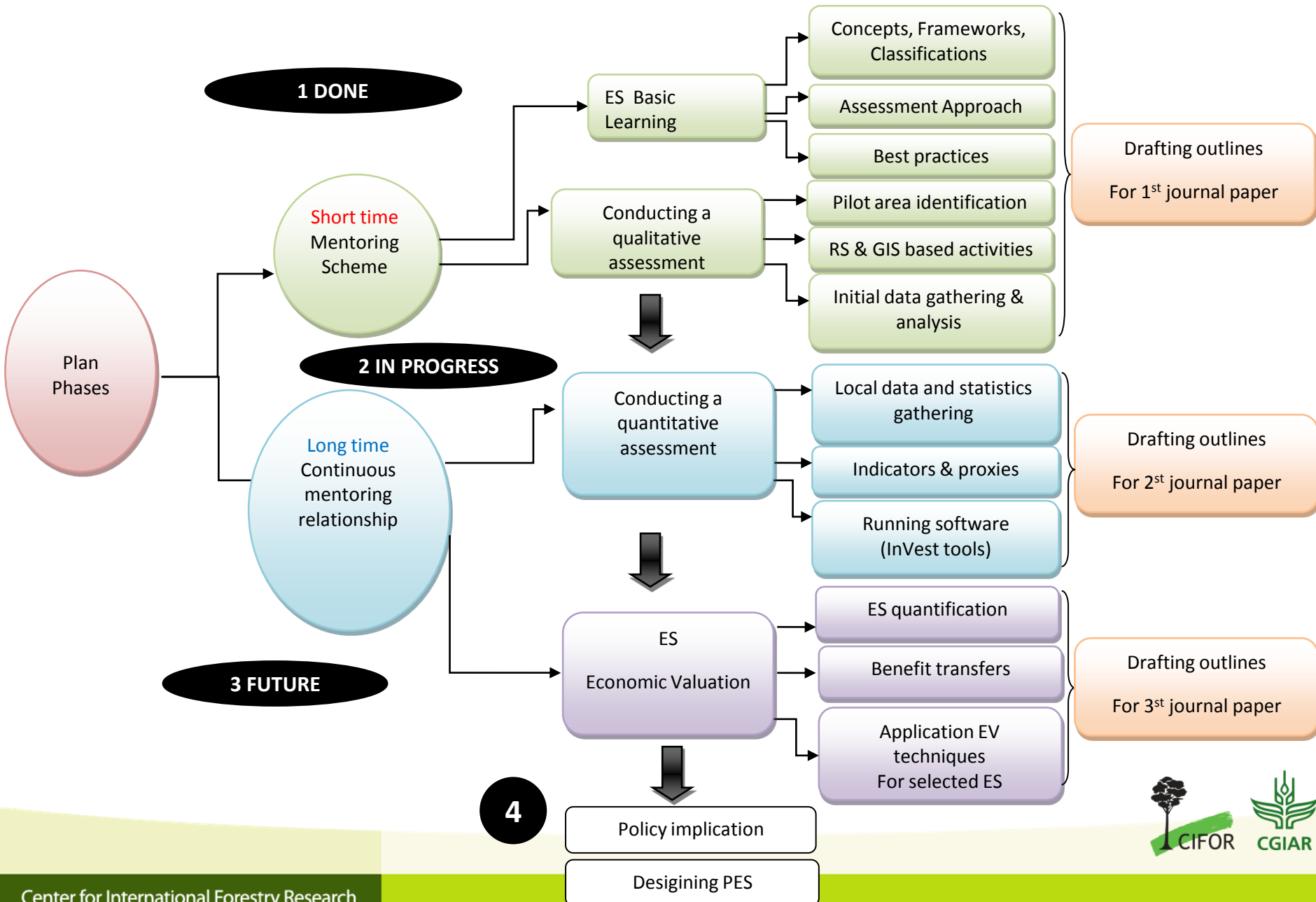
Main lessons I learned

During working time with my mentor I learned:

- For a robust ES assessment, where should I start? How to go on and where to end? (An step by step ES assessment process).

- Which ES approach is appropriate for which conditions? (data availability, costs, time, …)

- How can I define different scenarios to compare current situation with plausible future?

- How can I start with a qualitative assessment and move forward towards ES quantification and economic valuation?

Based on the lessons learned I designed a multi-stage plan for ES assessment in my study area.

Our multi-stages common plan

Activities taken until now

- During June & August: (In Iran)

- Initial discussion to mentor on general issues (study area, data availability ….) through emails and Skype.
- Receiving and studying published papers of the mentor and others for literature review.
- Production of land cover/ land use map by mentee using satellite imagery and Arc GIS software.
- Designing expert judgment questionnaires with mentor's guidance.
- Getting opinions of more than 30 specialists about ES interconnections with land cover/uses in pilot area
- Sorting, editing of the gathered initial data .

Activities taken until now

- During learning travel: (22 Sep- 7 Oct) (In Bogor, Indonesia)
- First week
- Exchange initial data.
- Analysis of completed questionnaires.
- Defining a procedure to conducting a ES qualitative assessment using initial gathered data.
- Second week
- Production ES spatial distribution maps based on experts opinions
- Drafting outlines for 1st journal paper

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Activities taken until now

- Oct after return to Iran:
- Writing the common paper:

Title:

Ecosystem goods and services in Sarvelat and Javaherdasht forests in Northern Iran – status and trend

So far so good

The paper is ready to be submitted.

Acknowledgement

- As this mentoring scheme was funded by **UNEP/WCMC** and was coordinated by **CIFOR** I wish to greatly appreciate these aids.

- I also thank members of Iranian association for environmental assessment who were contributed in the process of ES qualitative assessment based on expert judgment.

- Finally I want to specially thank Dr. H. Baral (mentor) and Dr. M. Ling who helped me and facilitated my mentoring scheme in all its stages .