

This Newsletter is a publication of MARES, an initiative of Forest Trends



March 22, 2013

Dear Friends of MARES and the Marine Katoomba Group,

We would like to share our quarterly program updates with you. Thank you for taking the time to follow our progress.

If you have comments or would like to submit news stories, write to us at clanser@forest-trends.org.



PROGRAM UPDATES

Assessing Blue Carbon Potential

Carbon sequestration is one of the five major ecosystem services that constitute MARES foci (the other four being biodiversity, fish nursery, shoreline protection, and water quality). In the last couple of years, former MARES Manager Winnie Lau explored launching payment for ecosystem services (PES) initiatives in marine and coastal settings by beginning with services found in “coastal habitats”. To that end, she completed a concept paper, “Beyond carbon: Conceptualizing payments for ecosystem services in blue forests on carbon and other marine and coastal ecosystem services” published in a May of 2012 in a special issue of *Oceans and Coastal Management*. This publication discusses the conceptual framework for getting blue carbon into the carbon markets or developing voluntary offsets, as well as challenges inherent in developing coastal and marine PES. The OCM paper can be found [here](#).

To test the practical application of the blue carbon potential, we are actively exploring payments for ecosystem services in blue forests through a carbon finance feasibility assessment and associated ecosystem services assessment in Abu Dhabi. Our work is part of a blue carbon demonstration project, facilitated by The Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI), spawned from the Eye on Earth Summit hosted by Abu Dhabi in 2011. We are working with GRID-Arendal, UNEP’s Marine

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Ecosystem Unit, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and a team of coastal carbon scientists to establish a base foundation for potential mitigation projects in the United Arab Emirates. Affiliated with the Eye on Oceans & Blue Carbon Global Initiative this project aims to provide global leadership in understanding and incentivizing linkages between coastal management and climate change around the world. The press release on the project can be found [here](#).



Collaborating with Forest Trends Global Water Initiative

MARES has begun to collaborate with Forest Trends' Global Water Initiative to work towards our shared vision of ecosystem-based management - bridging what has been a traditional land-ocean divide in approaches to sustaining the natural infrastructure of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and marine ecosystems.

MARES and the Global Water Initiative approach conservation from the distinct perspectives arising from the particular contexts and challenges in marine versus freshwater environments, but nevertheless share a common vision of the importance of protecting ecosystem services. The Global Water Initiative is aligned with MARES' mission – which is to protect crucial marine ecosystem services by harnessing markets and private sector investment to complement conventional coastal and marine management. Similarly, Forest Trends' Global Water Initiative, through our Investing in Watershed Services (IWS) work, builds on Forest Trends' experience and successes in facilitating the development of forests, carbon, and biodiversity markets. We seek to ensure that the natural infrastructure of healthy watersheds is recognized as critical to addressing the global water crisis and providing sufficient water – now and in the future – for people and nature. The program takes a holistic, integrated approach to conservation – viewing the whole watershed as extending from 'ridges to reefs' or 'snowcaps to whitecaps'. Harnessing markets and incentives to complement conventional water management, the Global Water Initiative seeks to scale natural infrastructure solutions for water.



MARES and the Global Water Initiative are jointly supporting and developing a demonstration project in Mexico to advance the state of knowledge and develop practical tools around the scientific, financial, and policy elements necessary for achieving



success in optimizing watershed management. This project has a particular focus on a better integration in the management of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine environments; and facilitating transformative dialogue and disseminating effective models of IWS within a global community of practitioners, decision-makers, and thought leaders.

In addition to demonstration projects the Global Water Initiative is hosting an international Katoomba conference that will take place in China this May. The conference, Katoomba XVIII: Forests, Water, and People, will gather leading experts, practitioners, policymakers, and investors from China and abroad to advance nature-based solutions to the water crisis for an urbanizing world.

Furthering our collaboration with the Global Water Initiative, we are planning to jointly host a Water (Salt- and Fresh-) Katoomba conference this fall in Peru. This conference will be an opportunity to explore integrated ecosystem services approaches that recognize the linkages across land and seascapes, and the inter-relationships between watershed services and marine ecosystem services. Stay tuned for further detail on this integrated, science-based, policy-oriented meeting, with further information in the next MARES newsletter and on the Forest Trends website.

More information on the initiative can be found at:

Global Water Initiative website: <http://www.forest-trends.org/program.php?id=295>

Watershed Connect Community Portal:
<http://www.watershedconnect.org/>

Katoomba China Event page: <http://www.forest-trends.org/event.php?id>

Ecosystem Marketplace Launches Latin American Sister Site

On March 4th, 2013, www.ValorandoNaturaleza.org, sister site to the EcosystemMarketplace.com, came online. This new information platform is designed exclusively to generate and bring together quality information about valuation of, and investment in ecosystem services in Latin America. Read about



Valorando Naturaleza's vision and goals in the complete launch announcement online clicking [here](#).

Utilizing a broad network of collaborators working with environmental incentives and journalists in the region, Valorando Naturaleza provides:

- Original news coverage and in depth analysis;
- Daily news aggregation;
- Profiles and opinion pieces by leaders in the region;
- Listings of events, job openings, fellowships, courses and other opportunities;
- A Library of relevant tools and reports.

We hope you visit ValorandoNaturaleza.org often, and inform us of your news by sending us press releases, updates and stories. Use our platform to share your publications, events and opportunities with a broad and extensive audience in the region. Write us at contacto@valorandonaturaleza.org.

We thank the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) for their support in the launch of this effort to broaden the knowledge and communication between stakeholders using this invaluable tool to finance mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Carina Bracer Project Manager, ValorandoNaturaleza.org

Until next time,

The MARES Team

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