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“Competition for Resources in a Changing World:
New Drive for Rural Development”

Negotiation Support Tools: Linking Science and Policy

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Abstract

Presently, agriculture is facing new challenges in dealing with its mandate to maintain food security in a sustainable way and being able to adapt to changes of environmental conditions. The complex nature of agro-ecosystems with its broad range of sustainability issues related to policy interventions and technological innovations requires a dynamic and efficient approach to assess the various options to manage the landscape. Envisioning tools, such as simulation models in combination with scenario analysis, have been promoted and used to assess such complex interactions. Compared to traditional experimentation, use of adequate simulation models is cost effective and more efficient, at the same time enables exploration of fast dynamic changes and challenges. Models however, need to be adapted for their purpose in terms of scope, precision, data requirements and end user.

“Trees in multi-Use Landscapes in Southeast Asia (TUL-SEA): A negotiation support toolbox for Integrated Natural Resource Management’ is a project that aims to promote and equip local resource managers with cost-effective, replicable tools and approaches to appraise the likely impacts of new technologies and changes in market access on multi-use landscapes. The outcome of such an appraisal is important to support evidence-based negotiations of contentious issues (water conflicts, land use intensification, etc). The project, funded by BMZ/GTZ, runs in six countries of Southeast Asia: China, Indonesia, Laos, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam. Within this project, a study is being carried out to appraise the use of simulation models by local resource managers and policy makers. The study particularly paid attention to their perceptions of simulation models, its results and its recommendations in terms of its salience, credibility and legitimacy. Results of a survey carried out in three countries and a methodological approach to quantify local resource managers’ and policy makers’ acceptance of simulation models will be discussed, and recommendations developed how to improve and increase acceptability and use of such negotiation support tools.

Keywords: Model acceptance, negotiation support tools, scenario analysis, simulation model