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PEN workshop in Barcelona, January 2008

Since its inception, PEN has held four workshops. The first three, all part of the first phase, were about getting the project started, planning fieldwork, and developing methods of data collection. While fieldwork is still going on in a few studies, most have been completed and partners are in the process of data entry or cleaning.

The time was therefore ripe to launch the second phase of the project: global data analysis and synthesis. The 4th PEN workshop was held in Barcelona, from 8-12 January 2008, and brought together some 45 partners and resource persons to review field experiences, present some preliminary results, and look ahead. What follows is a brief summary of the workshop, with links to the individual presentations.

Day 1:

Arild Angelsen, the PEN coordinator, kicked things off with a presentation on [PEN: Status & future](#). Arild noted that, as a family, PEN had four stories: that forests are important to the poor; that the links between forests and poverty have not been well articulated in policy papers; that there is a huge gap in quantitative studies on environmental income; and finally, that the best empirical work is being done by lonely PhD students. PEN aims to bring PhD students and other researchers together to fill this information gap, and to have an impact on policies that affect the

poor and forests, he said.

The next session was on obtaining high quality data, and featured two presentations. CIFOR scientist **Terry Sunderland**, in his presentation [How \(not\) to do it in the field](#), shared his experiences on a comparative project in West Africa, emphasizing the challenges of data management. The second presentation, [Data quality step by step](#), by PEN's research fellow (statistician) **Ronnie Babigumira**, discussed steps that PEN had taken to ensure the quality of the data. An output from the discussion that followed these two presentations will be notes on data checking and quality control to be included in the PEN Guidelines.

The afternoon had seven presentations on field experiences and preliminary results by PEN partners: Latin America was very well represented, starting with a "nutty" presentation from Amy (Brazil), a "reserved" presentation from Miriam (Belize), and out of the Christmas tree came a presentation from Pablo (Guatemala). Ravi presented Mozambique villagers' response to PES incentives, Ririn investigated why Indonesians cut down rainforest, Khaled tried to detangle the peculiarities of VCFs in the mouza reserves in Bangladesh, and Ha is trying to keep grounded on some floating islands in Vietnam.

- **Amy Duchelle:** Brazil and Bolivia.
[Natural resource conflicts in the Western Amazon: Implications for community management of NTFPs](#)
- **Miriam Wyman:** Belize.
[Integrating social and land-use/land-cover data to assess the success of community-based conservation goals for riparian forest conservation](#)
- **Pablo Prado:** Guatemala.
[Conservation by cultivation: Linkages between an endangered endemic fir \(*Abies guatemalensis* Rehder\) and peasant economies in the western highlands of Guatemala](#)
- **Ravi Hedge:** Mozambique.
[Payments for Environmental Services and Household Behaviour: The case of carbon in Mozambique's Agro-forests](#)
- **Ririn Purnamasari:** Indonesia.
[Deforestation in Indonesia: A Household Level Analysis of the Role of Forest Income Dependence and Poverty](#)
- **Khaled Zaman:** Bangladesh.
[Conservation and Livelihood Strategies of the Village Common Forest \(Mouza Reserves\) Communities in Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh](#)
- **Hoang Thi Ngoc Ha:** Vietnam.

[Role Of Forest & National Park On Poverty Alleviation At Cat Ba Island](#)

Day 2:

Jens Friis Lund from Copenhagen University – the university with the largest number of PEN partners (6!) - kicked off the fieldwork review with a presentation on [PEN surveys: how to do it in practice](#). This was followed by focus group discussions themed around Jen's presentation. A proposed output from this session is a series of methodological papers/reports, and possibly a textbook on fieldwork, building on the PEN guidelines and experience.

One of the topics to be explored by PEN research is how different methods affect the results.

Marty Luckert and Pam Jagger's [Aggregated vs. disaggregated responses](#) compared two approaches: the PEN survey and a more RRA-type of survey. A related presentation was made by Santosh Rayamajhi who, working in Nepal, tested the effects of different recall periods (one vs. three months). In both cases there were large differences between the methods, suggesting that methods matter.

With the discussion on data collection and quality concluded, it was time to think about how to make sense of the data being collected. To get this discussion going were two presentations. The first presentation, [The livelihoods approach](#), was by **Frank Ellis** from the University of East Anglia, UK. Frank, who is among the founders of the livelihoods approach, showed how forest connections could be made to the framework, and shared some ideas on data analysis. The second presentation was by **Mario Giampietro** from Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), the author of Multi-Scale Integrated Analysis of Agroecosystems: [A multi-scale integrated analysis of rural development](#). Mario demonstrated the importance of multiscale and interdisciplinary approaches, and how these could be useful for PEN. Both presentations were followed by lively discussions.

Day 3:

Day three continued with the theme of analysis. The main task for the day was to get inputs into the thematic and global analysis. **Arild Angelsen**, PEN coordinator, gave a brief [Outline of thematic and global analysis](#) and the main research questions to be answered by PEN. This was followed by a presentation [Learning from NTFP project](#) by **Brian Belcher**, a former CIFOR scientist now at the Royal Roads University in Canada. Brian shared lessons learnt from the global comparison of NTFPs project. Among the important lessons for PEN include the importance of meeting regularly to produce joint outputs, and generating different types of outputs for different

audiences.

Kate Brown from the University of East Anglia, UK, asked: [How can PEN inform global debates on environmental change and human well-being?](#) She demonstrated how PEN – by using a unique dataset – can shed light on the challenges of stopping deforestation. The Stern Report has presented reduced deforestation as a quick fix, she said, but if it's so easy, why hasn't it been done already?

This session also included a presentation [The economics of smiling](#), by **Viki Reyes Garcia**. Smiling research is a serious research topic: those that smile frequently get 10% higher salary. Garcia also pointed out that smiling is used as an indicator of psychological well-being. Given that respondents' frequency of smiling and laughing is included in the PEN questionnaire, we anticipate some interesting results. Moreover, the discussion from participants experiences – eg. "respondents who don't smile hide something" - cemented the importance of this topic.

With the stage set, the participants broke into 5 groups to do some brain-storming on the thematic and global analysis and again, some very useful input was generated from these discussions. A key output from these presentations and discussions will be a number of concept notes for the various themes.

The afternoon had three presentations on tenure and livelihoods. **William Sunderlin**, also a former CIFOR scientist now at the Right and Resources Institute in Washington D.C, asked [What is the Role of Tenure in the Poverty-Forest Link?](#)

Pam Jagger, PEN partner from Indiana University, USA, looked at [Forest Sector Governance Reforms](#). She gave a thorough theoretical review of decentralization, although one of her main points is that there is no uniform theory on decentralization.

Finally, **Jerry Shively** of Purdue University, USA, presented [Issues and methods in livelihoods analysis](#) in which he reviewed a number of methods that could be used by both individual studies and the global analysis.

Summarizing the discussions of the workshop, **Arild** presented some of the [Plans for PEN in 2008](#). A major task is the establishment of the global data set, to synthesize the field and data collection experience, and to initiate the thematic and global analysis and synthesis.

Recall that one PEN story is that the best empirical work is often done by lonely PhD students. This work, in the case of PEN, is largely based on raw data collected from very remote places and has

been borne out of great sacrifice on the part of the partners. That said, it is easy to forget how dangerous some of these places can be. Participants were reminded of these dangers by the fitting tribute, from Arild Angelsen and Amy Duchelle, to Vanessa Sequeira who lost her life during fieldwork in September 2006. Amy, a close friend of Vanessa, talked about the great work Vanessa had started to improve the lives of the communities she worked with. Amy ended her talk with a call on PEN to pay tribute to Vanessa by continuing these efforts.

Days 4-5:

With the plenary sessions completed, participants got hands on experience with PEN data analysis by way of a two day crash course in statistical analysis, presented by **Ronnie Babigumira**. [The lecture notes are available here](#). According to PEN partner Shah Raees Khan, programming is a dry and boring subject, but the applicability of the course made it interesting.

Days 0-6:

The workshop was also a great social event. In addition to the academic component of their field studies, partners shared stories from field work. There were the challenges, such as Angelica driving across borders at night to interview a household, where the household head re-assured her that she was safe as it had been a week since drug lords had paid them a visit; Amy's boat rides in the middle of no where and Thabbie's encounters with rude households. However, there were also the "nice" stories, such as enumerators marrying respondents, communities thanking Pam for teaching them how to take stock of their time use, etc. These experiences were shared across the board and for the partners, were a reminder that they were not alone.

The workshop venue was close to the city centre of Barcelona, and many participants enjoyed the long afternoons (or rather evenings, as dinner is not served before 9 pm), exploring whatever culinary delights that Barcelona had to offer. These included a visit to the famed Origen's 99.9% restaurant, which serves 99.9% Catalan cuisine.

The workshop also launched [the PEN song](#). More verses are to be added as the project goes on and on. In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to learn the tune from this site: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNTxr2NJHa0>

The road from Barcelona will be long. After all, making sense of data has never been the easiest part of the research process. But we are confident that Barcelona provided the inspiration and the foundation for the collective action needed to achieve this.

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