

Who cares?

Biodiversity in Agriculture

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(De-) Constructing Biodiversity
Workshop, University of Göttingen,
23-24.09.2011

- Introduction to
 - BioDIVA & Wayanad
 - Intraface concept
- Methods
- Who cares for (agro)biodiversity through the lens of
 - Farmers
 - Local NGOs
 - Policy makers
- Conclusions



Wayanad district – the Land of Paddy

Source: www.kcfmn.com



Source: www.keralayoutlook.com/.../map/wayanad_map02.jpg

The Intraface concept

- Analytical concept to analyse gender issues in natural resource management
 - Concerned with the **negotiations** between women and men
 - Focuses on **material circumstances** like natural resources
 - Looks at the case of agrobiodiversity on the grounds of their **social interpretation** with an emphasis on the **dynamic aspects**

- The intraface approach
 - helps to **synthesise** different disciplinary approaches
 - secures their contribution to **understand** gendered negotiations
 - may allow for **comparison** across cases

Net-Map method

- Net-Map is an interview-based mapping tool based on the social network theory that seeks to
 - understand
 - visualize
 - discuss
 - analyse situations in which many different actors influence outcomes

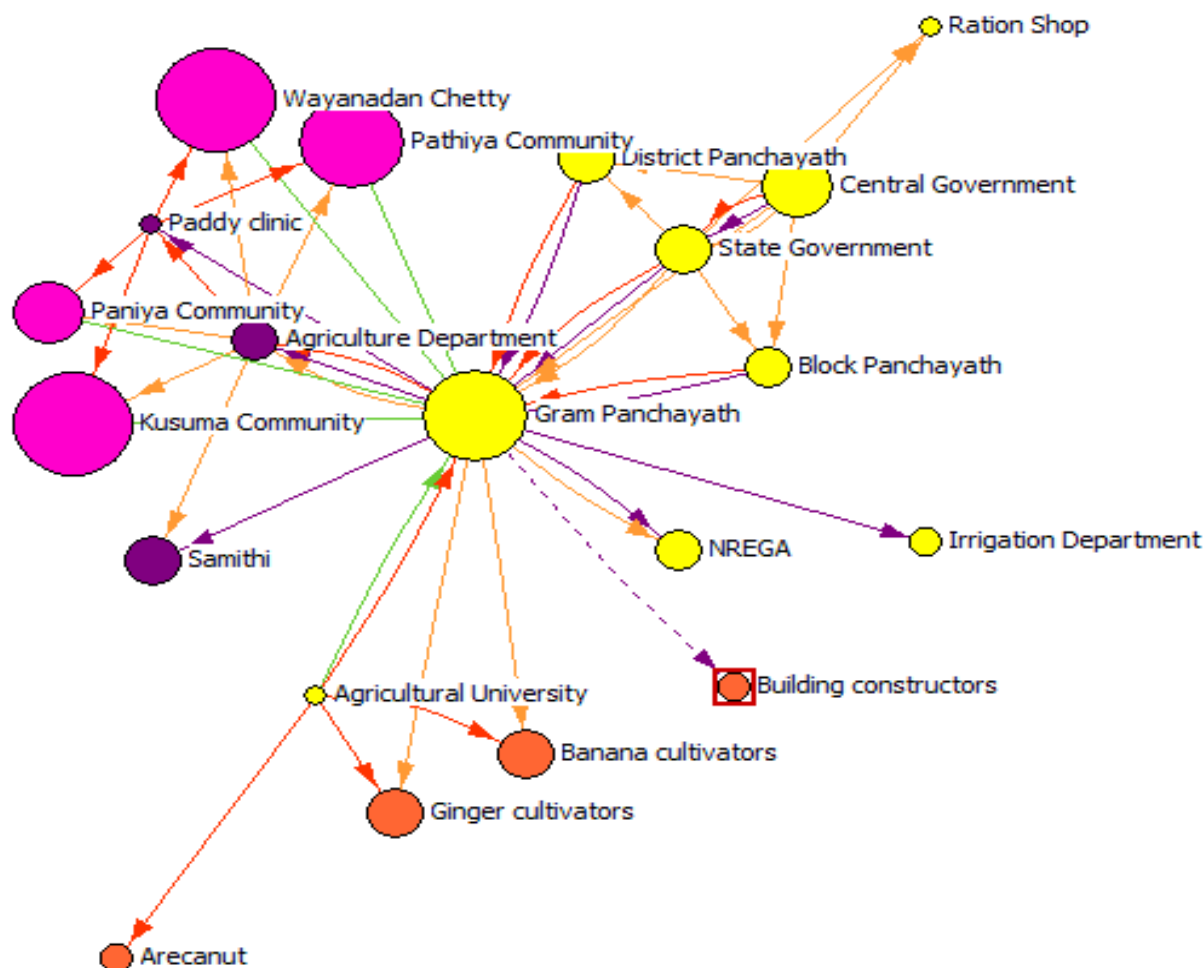
- More specifically, Net-Map helps players to determine
 - what actors are involved in an existing network
 - how they are linked with each other
 - how influential they are
 - what goals they have

(Schiffer 2008)

Influence network of local politicians

Relations of

- Command
- Funding
- Advice
- Information



Participatory methods

- Stakeholder workshop with female and male farmers
- Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion with small-scale farming adivasi communities
- Seasonal calendars, village maps and tools derived from ethnobotany



What do farmers care for?

- Interest in Agrobiodiversity
 - Very little responsibility for seed distribution due to public distribution system
 - “They (schemes) provide new seeds varieties, subsidies etc...”
- Interest in Biodiversity
 - Deforestation as major reason for increased vulnerability
 - “Everything changed because they cleared all the forests and cultivated the crops.”

Farmers' Agenda

- Agrobiodiversity
 - Quality of traditional varieties are ranked higher than modern ones
 - 'The most important crop is paddy. But now it is slowly declining...'
- Biodiversity
 - Desire to sustain the diversity of the ecosystem as a whole (flora and fauna)
 - B: 'With the advent of banana cultivation, drought has increased in Wayanad'.

What do NGOs care for?

- Interest in Agrobiodiversity
 - Conservation of old paddy varieties (ex situ)
 - Description of landraces
 - Paddy fields perceived as ecosystem services and landscape function
 - Reservoir for future breeding activities in the face of climate change

NGOs' Agenda

- Agrobiodiversity
 - Conservation via co-operation with tribal cultivators
 - Awareness raising
- Biodiversity
 - Taxonomy
 - Documentation of tribal knowledge

What do local politicians care for?

- Interests in Agrobiodiversity
 - Not per se - rather in Rural Development
 - Both conversion (support of banana business, conversion for construction)
 - And conservation (subsidies for re-conversion)
 - General: Modernisation of agriculture (access to modern varieties and inputs)
 - Listening to articulate voting farmers

Agenda of local politicians

- Agrobiodiversity
 - Subsidies by making Rural Employment Scheme available for work on paddy fields
 - Not an issue of strong interest yet

- Biodiversity
 - Green image for booming tourism industry
 - Expected to be there naturally without efforts

Conclusions

Who cares for (agro)biodiversity and why?

- Farmers: pragmatic approach – ‘paddy as a means to consume culture’ – linked to identity formation
- NGOs: essentialist – top-down conservationists
- Policy makers: partially interested in biodiversity, driven by political interests, depending on governing coalitions

Conclusions

How is biodiversity being used?

- Farmers: sustaining paddy is crucial for livelihood and agriculture; however, diversity of paddy itself is not as important
- NGOs: conservation as the 'right of existence'
- Policy makers: no use as (agro)biodiversity framework has not been developed yet

A photograph of a rural courtyard. In the foreground, a large blue tarp is spread on the ground, covered with a thick layer of golden-brown grain, likely rice, being dried in the sun. A person wearing a white sari is bent over the tarp, sorting or turning the grain. In the background, there is a small building with a corrugated metal roof and a thatched wall. Various household items, including a large woven basket and a yellow bucket, are visible near the building. A small brown chicken is standing on the ground to the right of the person. The scene is set in a lush, green environment with trees and foliage in the background.

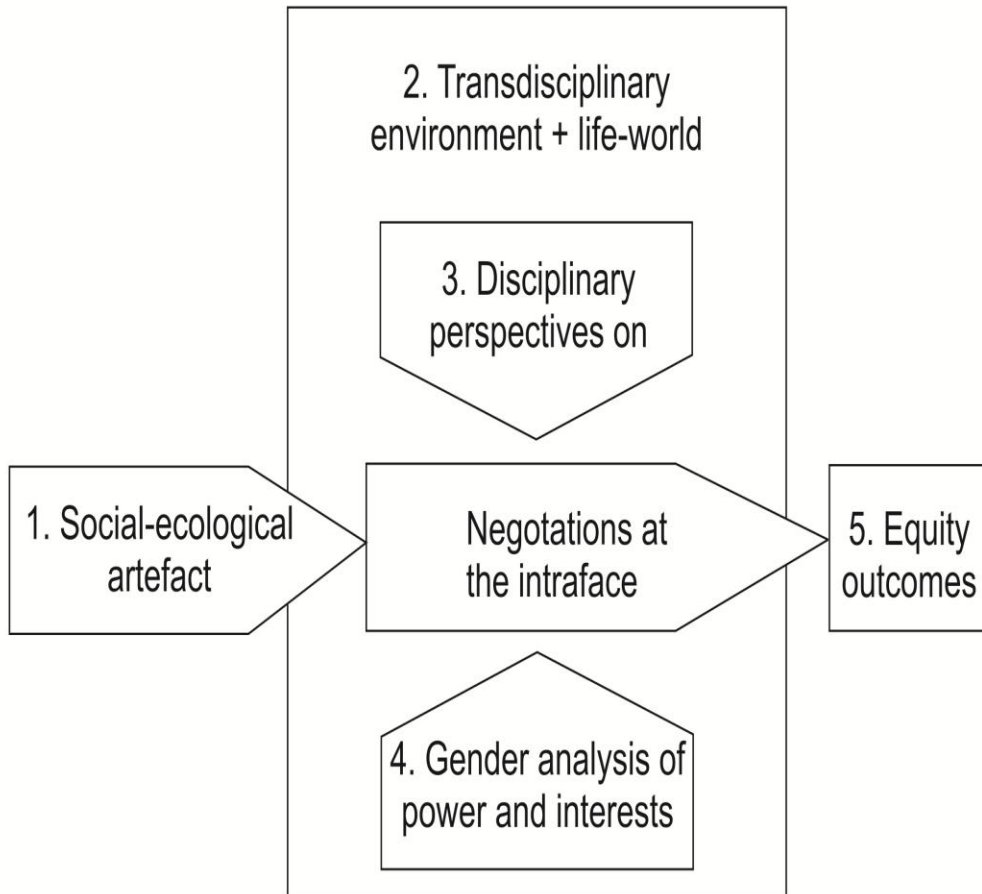
THANK YOU for listening!
Any questions or
comments?

BioDIVA – the research project



- **Aim:** Generating transformative knowledge towards the sustainable and gender-equitable use of agrobiodiversity of paddy cultivation systems in Wayanad, Kerala, India
- **Team:** Indian-German research tandems in Ecology-Rural sociology/Gender studies – Economics; Land use modelling – Institutional economics
- **Research Approach:** interdisciplinary & transdisciplinary through integration of practitioners from relevant fields

Negotiations at the intraface



1. Social-ecological artefact: What is negotiated at the intraface?
2. Transdisciplinarity: What are the conditions under which negotiations at the intraface take place?
3. Disciplinarity: What is a disciplinary perspective on negotiations at the intraface?
4. Gender: What is a gender perspective on negotiations at the intraface?
5. What are the equity outcomes of negotiations at the intraface?