

Biodiversity and community health: Strengthening linkages

Public Seminar

10am – 11am, Monday, 18 November 2013

Venue: UNU-IIGH Building, UKM Medical Centre,
Jalan Yaacob Latiff, Bandar Tun Razak, Cheras,
56000 Kuala Lumpur

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Abstract

The utility of biodiversity to secure health is well acknowledged. What is often not sufficiently addressed is the need to link access to good health at affordable cost for people living in remote or economically disadvantaged situations, using available resources, knowledge, skills and capacities from within their contexts. These skills and capacities relate to knowledge of health practitioners at the community level, (both formally and non-formally trained) and biological and abiotic resources.

Although the benefits of including the non-formal sector to achieve various health and development related targets are tangible and significant, there is a need for more comprehensive approaches to integrating them into public health care and conservation policies. This is because the benefits can be contextually relevant – in terms of health, conservation and livelihood security at the level of local communities (people who share an ecosystem and inherent resources). Moreover, such an approach directly ties into various intergovernmental resolutions that speak to living in harmony with nature, access to good quality health care and similar development objectives.

The seminar will dwell on the synergies and outcomes from linkages between biodiversity and community health, and highlight some approaches being taken to address issues that arise in the interface of the seemingly different goals.

**Dr Suneetha M
Subramanian**

Suneetha Subramanian is Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at the UNU-Institute of Advanced Studies. She has worked on economic and policy issues related to utilization of biological resources for over a decade. Her current research focuses on the contributions of traditional knowledge to various sectors of human life, ecosystem services valuation from a multi-stakeholder and multi-scalar perspective, and identifying how international and national policy instruments can improve the wellbeing of local communities and their ecosystems. Recently, she has been closely involved in the launch of a multi partner initiative anchored by UNU-IAS on Biodiversity and Community Health (BaCH Initiative)



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