



The World Bank's Common Property Resource Management Network

The World Bank's CPRNet Newsletter

Number 11, May 2001

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From the editor

In this issue, read about: The new CPRNet web site, the future for CPRNet and networking activities on CPRs, and new literature.

Lars T Soefftestad, Editor – lars@cbnrm.net

Organizational issues

Background. *CPRNet is dead!* This is a fitting introduction to this Newsletter. For, as you will be aware, the previous CPRNet Newsletter was sent out in October 1999. Thus, most of you have probably since long concluded that CPRNet had folded. To those among you that have written to inquire, I have not been able to be very concrete, other than that I expected it to return.

As to the reason for this long silence, it had to do with the fact that all efforts to establish an organizational affiliation for CPRNet – and secure funding for its continued existence – failed. While CPRNet was, from its inception, an informal network in the World Bank, it was not possible to find a home for it in this organization (several Newsletters carried updates on these efforts). Thus, CPRNet is not anymore a World Bank activity. In hindsight it is correct to ask whether CPRNet ever was a World Bank activity.

Long live CPRNet! You favorite network for news and discussions on CPR issues is alive. CPRNet appears on *CBNRM Net*, the Community-Based Natural Resource Management portal web site, in a web hosting arrangement (see URLs below).

URL (CPRNet): <http://www.cbnrm.net/webhosting/cprnet/>

URL (*CBNRM Net*): <http://www.cbnrm.net/>

Community-based natural resource management. An explanation of the connection between CBNRM and CPRs, on the one hand, and between *CBNRM Net* and CPRNet, on the other hand, is in order.

CBNRM is an approach to manage renewable natural resources. It encompasses a large amount of experimentation and regional variation, and it involves much learning by doing. CBNRM starts with communities as a foundation, and it also ends with communities as a focus. It addresses the way in which local natural resources are utilized and managed through local institutions, and how co-management arrangements – involving communities and the state – are necessary in order to achieve sustainable management of the local resources in question.

CBNRM needs to be institutionalized to be effective. While the structure of each situation will be different, involving different sets of actors and interests, there is a need for an institutional framework that builds upon the shared values of communities while providing positive incentives for individual action. Four related elements of any institutional framework include:

- Effective community-based groups, both at the local level and scaled up to the regional level,
- Effective operational linkages between the public sector, the private sector, and community-based groups in the management of natural resources,
- Effective approaches to conflict management with regard to use of natural resources, at all levels, and

- An enabling policy and institutional environment, at macro and micro levels, that fosters support of existing community-based institutions, or the emergence of new institutions, to manage natural resources locally.

Successful reform in each of these areas is also dependent on the ability to develop legitimate fora and processes for addressing these issues, processes that have the highest level of political commitment, which involves all legitimate stakeholders, and which is transparent and accountable.

Such institutional reform processes need to be supplemented by concerted efforts to build human capacity at all levels – from community-based organizations to central government agencies – both to implement the above institutional arrangements and to administer them.

For two recent key reports on CBNRM that addresses these issues, see section ‘Literature’ below.

Community-based natural resource management, CPRs and CPRNet. A fundamental aspect of CBNRM is the importance of property rights to local natural resources. In general terms, a fundamental premise for successful CBNRM activities is that local people involved in these activities have secure and long-term (if not permanent) use rights to the resources they utilize. Such rights can be individual or collective, and worldwide today one will, as a rule, find a mixture of property regimes in any given locality.

CPRNet works to increase the understanding of collective rights, or common property rights, and argues that, given the right circumstances, such collective rights are superior to achieving long-term food security as well as sustainable management of natural resources, and thus to achieve a reduction in poverty.

CPRNet’s concern with traditional property rights, the emphasis on the coexistence of different property rights’ regimes, and the importance of this insight for achieving sustainable natural resource management, to a large extent overlaps with the CBNRM agenda. In fact, the codification of traditional property rights is a fundamental premise upon which CBNRM is founded and which it – in turn – furthers. It thus makes a lot of sense for the two networks to collaborate.

At the same time, as many of you have observed and commented, the conceptual and analytical framework that constitutes the traditional approach to CPR work and analysis may become somewhat narrow. It is quite sufficient for a broad and very much alive research agenda, and increasingly also for dissemination of this research. When the reach expands to include the socio-economic and political realities connected with using and implementing CPR research results, however, this grasp sometimes tend to become limiting or even insufficient. For CPRNet research is very important, but it is, at the same time, a means towards the ultimate goal of achieving results in local-level, practical and sustainable management of collective resources. For this concern with practical work, and with networking towards sharing such results, the approach of CBNRM is very promising as a broad analytical and applied frame of reference.

We all share the same goals, and have common interests, and this is largely a question of differences in approaches and methods of working that serve the same purpose and in the end will converge.

CBNRM Net. *CBNRM Net* is a portal web site that serves the global CBNRM community of practice. The preliminary experiences and results with CBNRM give rise to a number of conclusions, arguments and propositions, and based on this it was possible to arrive at the rationale for establishing such a broad networking capability.

There are web sites that address specific needs for data and knowledge by the global CBNRM community of practice, including research, conflict management, common property resource management and institutions. There are no web sites, or networking capabilities more generally, however, that address CBNRM broadly in terms of overall knowledge management and knowledge sharing, that are practice-oriented, that link all CBNRM stakeholders in an adaptive framework of using, producing and managing CBNRM knowledge, and that do this based on an advanced concept of networking, user involvement and user management. *CBNRM Net* aims to deliver such broad networking capabilities in the area of CBNRM.

For further details about *CBNRM Net*, please consult the Overview document available on *CBNRM Net*, in HTML and PDF formats (see section 'Literature' below).

URL (*CBNRM Net*): <http://www.cbnrm.net/>

CPRNet Quo Vadis? Should CPRNet continue? If the answer is yes, should it continue in the same or a different form? I encourage you to think about this, and share your views.

I, for one, have arrived at a position on this. This view takes the fact of CPRNet being aligned closely with *CBNRM Net* as a point of departure. As pointed out above, there are clear connections and overlaps between CBNRM and CPRNet. Along these lines, some efforts have already been made to integrate parts of *CBNRM Net* and CPRNet, and you will thus find that CBNRM and CPRNet documents are located together. Likewise, CPRNet Newsletters and CBNRM Net Newsletters are located at the same place.

I would like to suggest that CPRNet becomes part of *CBNRM Net*. Far from a hostile takeover, this move would be beneficial to us all. For CPRNet members it would mean an easy transfer to the subject of CBNRM, and the broad, applied and analytical approach and very large knowledge base existing there. For *CBNRM Net* members it would mean that an important link is made to CPRs and CPR management, a key element of any CBNRM strategy and process.

If, within the next couple of weeks, I find that there is a clear verdict in favor of this friendly takeover, and that no alternative suggestion is forthcoming, I will proceed accordingly.

Membership in *CBNRM Net*. If CPRNet and *CBNRM Net* are to join forces, I would like to suggest that your membership be transferred to *CBNRM Net*. As a member of *CBNRM Net* you will receive a Newsletter every 1-2 months, plus have access to specialized information and know-ledge on the web site. Please contact me in case you are not interested in becoming a member of *CBNRM Net*.

CBNRM Net Newsletter. A first *CBNRM Net* Newsletter will be sent out around June 2001. If CPRNet and *CBNRM Net* will join, the *CBNRM Net* Newsletter would be a joint Newsletter for all members of *CBNRM Net*, including former CPRNet members.

Literature

CBNRM Net. 2001. "Community-based natural resource management: Knowledge management and knowledge sharing in the age of globalization." Prepared for *CBNRM Net* by Lars T Soeftestad. April 2001.

URL: <http://www.cbnrm.net/about/overview> & *CBNRM Net*

World Bank. 1999. The International Workshop on Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM). Washington DC, USA, 10-14 May 1998. Workshop Report. Prepared by Lars T Soeftestad.

URL: www.cbnrm.net/library/documents/