KOOPA-3B – A local green-blue enterprise in Haiti

CASE STUDY #15: Local Green-Blue Enterprises in the Caribbean

This case study reflects findings of a process using CANARI’s Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar. This is a tool to help local community small and micro-enterprise assess how they are delivering ‘triad-bottom line’ benefits (economic, environmental and social) and good governance, and what are possible areas for improvement. A focus group session is facilitated with members of the enterprise and they are asked to assess how they think that the business is doing based on a set of indicators. Each indicator is discussed, and members agree on a ranking for each. The ranking for each indicator is placed on a spider diagram, which visually represents a snapshot of how the enterprise is delivering benefits. The rich discussion helps members of the enterprise work together to assess how they are doing and areas where they want to grow.

Introduction

The Three Bays Marine Protected Area (3Bays MPA) was established in 2014 and constitutes the second largest declared marine protected area in Haiti, covering over 75,000 hectares. It was designated to protect a complex system of valuable marine, coastal and terrestrial ecosystems along the north-eastern coast of Haiti. About 500,000 persons live in the area, with poverty and unemployment rates estimated as over 80%. Alternative livelihood initiatives are developed to support income generation for the local communities through sustainable activities that reduce fishing pressure and offer an alternative to harvesting mangrove for charcoal production.

Kowoperativ Apikol Twa Bè (KOOPA-3B) is an apiculture cooperative founded in 2016 by grassroots organisations involved in honey production and selling. The cooperative sells the honey produced by eight associations located in communities along the coast of the 3Bays MPA.

Economic Benefits of the Enterprise

Members of the cooperative have been trained in apiculture by the Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversite Marine (FoProBiM), a non-profit organisation which co-manages the 3Bays MPA. The focus now is to ensure that the hives are well maintained, and production volume is ramped up to adequately supply the market and generate additional income. The honey is tested at a national laboratory for certification, bottled with approved packaging and supplied to established customers, including hotels and local markets. The money earned from this sustainable use of natural resources helps protect mangroves in the area that might otherwise have been cut down for other income-generating activities.

Cooperative members are collectively involved in decision making, with equal sharing of the benefits. The primary concern is that while jobs are being created within the communities, the income generated is not sufficient to sustain livelihoods, thereby threatening the enterprise’s financial sustainability.

The cooperative continues to invest in increasing their honey production and is also exploring other income streams to address this concern.

Environmental Benefits of the Enterprise
KOOPA-B3 has been diligent in ensuring that their natural resources are prioritised in both planning and operations and rated themselves high on avoiding any pollution to the water, soil or air. Their operations are not reliant on fuel and as such their consumption of energy and carbon footprint is minimal. Water has to be purchased and is conserved and managed well.

Social Benefits of the Enterprise
The cooperative maintains an inclusive approach for all within their communities. Training has been made available, but members continue to acknowledge that there is need for improvement in capacity building and access to resources to effectively execute their training.

Partnerships with external bodies and agencies are not strong. KOOPA-3B has prioritised the building of these relationships as vital to their success.
Governance of the Enterprise

KOOPA-3B’s management committee encourages everyone to take part in the decision making but as the 3Bays MPA area is extensive, often members are unable to travel to the meeting destination and the information is not shared as it is meant to. Additionally, all members are viewed as stakeholders but it is not uncommon that they don’t have the same vision or opinion on how issues should be addressed. While these communication issues need to be addressed for better outcomes, knowledge sharing is strong and the relationships with farmers and within the community are secure.

A marketing strategy workshop in action with the members of KOOPA-3B. CREDIT: FoProBiM

KOOPA-3B Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar

The Radar for KOOEK 3B was developed by members based on their self-assessment in June 2019\(^2\). This identifies areas where they can strengthen their triple-bottom line and governance to continue to enhance their contribution to conservation of marine and coastal biodiversity and development of sustainable and resilient livelihoods.

Local Green-Blue Enterprise Radar of KOOEK-3B

- Demonstrates energy efficiency and use
- Conserves biodiversity
- Avoids air pollution
- Avoids soil pollution
- Avoids water pollution
- Practices sound water use
- Promotes buying and supporting local
- Ensures decent work
- Fosters partnerships and networks
- Enhances capacity and empowers
- Gives opportunities to the marginalised
- Shares knowledge of benefits
- Fosters equity in benefits
- Uses collective ownership and...
- Builds economic linkages
- Builds financial sustainability
- Creates jobs
- Builds common vision
- Uses participatory decision-making
- Shares ownership of knowledge
- Captures and shares knowledge
- Engages stakeholders
- Shares decision making

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