

Inauguration of the Participatory 3 Dimensional Model

“We youngsters didn’t think that elders know, but now, after participating in the construction of this Participatory 3 Dimensional Model, we are convinced that our elders have a deep knowledge about their environment”.

Kalkidan Dereje

MELCA Mahiber has built a Participatory 3 Dimensional Model of the historical Wechecha mountain complex, which is found in Oromiya Regional State, adjacent to Wolmera and Sebeta Awas Woreda. The model was inaugurated by a Representative of the President of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Over 500 people participated in the ceremony including members of the house of people representative councils, different governmental officials, international organizations, CSO representatives and local community members.

The model portrays 24km by 28km landscape. Over 40 students and youth groups constructed the empty map and local people, especially elders, were invited to populate the map with their cognitive knowledge. In this way knowledge about the mountain is shared among local communities and other stakeholders creating a chance for the stakeholders to discuss issues related to the protection of the ecosystem. The local governors were also very supportive. They almost built the model with us. This is a good sign of ownership. The purpose of building this model was to mobilize the knowledge of the local community for better natural resource management and to ensure the passage of this knowledge to the next generation. The model will also serve to create an environment where the local people, government and other stakeholders can discuss how to conserve the remaining natural resources and rehabilitate degraded areas.

Kalkidan is a 15 years old student at Holeta Primary School. She witnessed how this model created an opportunity for her and her friends to learn a lot of things from the local elders. She noted the above quotation during her presentation at the inauguration.

The elders were the main actors in the ceremony. They identified their places on the map and explained to the audience. They couldn’t hide their feeling that their area is becoming degraded and pleaded for concerned bodies to address this problem. The government representatives also endorsed the model and reiterated that it should not be just for looking at and admiring.

Dr. Tewoldebithan G/Egziabher, Director of the Federal Environmental Protection Authority and Chairman of MELCA’s General Assembly delivered the model to Holeta Town and Wolmera Woreda Administrations on behalf of MELCA. He told to the Administrations to use the model as a reference for taking measures.

On goings....

- There will be an intensive planning process and a comprehensive plan will be developed to use the model for rehabilitating the Wechecha Mountain.
- Schools around the mountain will use the model to learn about their environment, geography and cultural landscapes.
- The model can be used for scientific research, on people and environment relationships, and on the impact of land degradation on the livelihood of the local communities.

Pictures which show the process of the Modeling at Suba Area



Consultation meeting with stakeholders before starting the model



Understanding the topo map



Legend



Putting carbon papers on the cartoon



Tracing the topo map into the cartoon board



Cutting the traced cartoon board



The Model before painting



Strengthening with nails and creep papers



Communities locating their areas on the model



Local communities putting their cognitive knowledge on the model



The Final Model

Inauguration of P3DM



Participants



Government Officials cutting ribbon



Elders giving explanation about the model



Student Kalkidan presenting about the model



Presentation by Million Belay, MELCA's Director



Drama - Students



Hand over of the model – Dr. Tewolde