

THE ICCA CONSORTIUM NEWSLETTER

Issue #3 – January 2013

EDITO

By Grazia-Borrini Feyerabend, Global Coordinator

Dear Members, Honorary Members, Partners, colleagues and friends, the ICCA Consortium is very pleased to



pass on to you this third edition of the Newsletter, from which you will have a glance at the breadth of events that occupied us in the last months of 2012. As you will notice, while some are at international or regional level, others are mostly of value for specific countries and locations. Multi-level attention is thus re-confirmed as one of the characteristics of our work, on a par with the close collaboration with our Members, highlighting and adding value to their initiatives. It was in fact a grand pleasure, during our 5th General Assembly in Pastapur, to hear how this is taking shape all over the world.

What are our highlights in 2012? On the one hand, we certainly consolidated our reputation as an international coalition dedicated to appropriate recognition and support to territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities. As you will read, CBD COP 11 was a milestone through the renewed legitimacy offered by our close collaboration with the CBD Secretariat, the CBD Technical Series volume we co-produced with them, the wording of new CBD decisions (as part of, but also beyond protected area provisions) and the opportunity offered by CBD Aichi Target 11 to highlight ICCAs as both officially recognized protected areas and “other effective area-based conservation measures”. A further important step was the approval of a clear Resolution on ICCAs by the IUCN 5th General Assembly, which opens the road towards momentous achievements at the next World Parks Congress. And yet... we are still engaged in promoting an appropriate “understanding” of ICCAs— a concept and practice that merge attention and care for bio-cultural diversity, sustainable livelihoods and human and indigenous peoples’ rights. We regularly find that some indigenous peoples are suspicious of organisations and ideas that sound even marginally “conservation oriented” as much as conservation constituencies continue to be wary of organisations and ideas that promote development and rights, despite progress made in the last decade to demonstrate that indigenous peoples and local communities can be very effective actors in conservation. The Consortium is often called to strike a difficult balance. Through publications, events, videos and the on-going interaction with existing and potential Members, as we describe in this Newsletter, the meaning of “ICCA” and our own “image” are hopefully becoming clearer, while losing nothing of their richness.



Meanwhile, some countries are already well ahead and have shifted gear from the focus on exemplary ICCA single cases to developing ICCA coalitions and federations at the national level. This is exemplified by the Philippines ([Manila declaration](#)), Madagascar ([Anja declaration](#)), Nepal ([national ICCA network](#) determined to become a federation, despite strong political resistance), Iran (Brugerd declaration) and the RDC ([Kinshasa declaration](#)). Federations and coalitions augment the voice of IPs and LCs in national situations. In Senegal we

are also seeing an NGO created by one of our Members with support from the Consortium specifically to make sure that the current wave of interest in ICCAs is not exploited and wasted by copycat operations without integrity... a risk that is all too real in many countries.

Something impossible to imagine ten years ago has thus actually happened: international conservation policy cannot ignore or bypass ICCAs. Yet, we must go beyond that for ICCAs to find a meaningful and solid place in national policies and practice. This is becoming ever more urgent as progress on acknowledging the “conservation value” of ICCAs has ushered a renewed threat of inappropriate or inadequate forms of recognition, in particular in view of CBD Aichi Target 11. In a similar vein, acknowledging the “carbon stocking value” of ICCAs has amplifies the threats of misappropriation. **Conservation by indigenous peoples and local communities should be fully respected, appropriately recognized and sufficiently supported.** The Consortium is committed to support its Members and their countries to achieve just that.

INTERNATIONAL WORK & KEY ISSUES

CBD COP11 – Hyderabad, India, 8-19 October 2012

By Aurélie Neumann, Programme Assistant, Holly Shrumm, International Policy Assistant



Possibly the most important international gathering in which the Consortium took part in 2012 was the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in India (Hyderabad) from October 8th to October 19th. Various representatives of the Consortium and its Members attended this major event to keep ICCAs firmly in the agenda. We may say, in fact, that ICCAs reached at COP 11 a new level of maturity and momentum, exemplified by the one-day Colloquium dedicated to ICCAs that we co-organised with the CBD Secretariat and by the strong support the CBD Executive Secretary, GEF SGP Global

Manager and the Director of IUCN Global Protected Areas Programme reaffirmed in the occasion. The challenge for the Consortium is to make sure the national policies that will be developed on the impulse of COP 11 are appropriate and in accordance with the needs and choices of the relevant indigenous peoples (IPs) and local communities (LCs).

In margins of the official negotiations, the Consortium delegation organized a significant number of side events to disseminate information, trigger discussion and exchanges, and influence COP decisions on a wide array of issues. These included events on legal and other ways to appropriately recognise and support ICCAs, on governance of protected areas, on national federations and networks of ICCAs, on the role of ICCAs in fostering food sovereignty, on the involvement of IPs & LCs in National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, and on the potential of ICCAs to achieve the Aichi Targets. Some recommendations to the Parties and the CBD Secretariat were formulated in all cases. Three main guidelines publications on ICCAs were launched and/or distributed at COP 11.



► [Download The Consortium Participants Report](#)

210 times: “indigenous and local communities”
 81 times: “traditional knowledge”
 51 times: “customary sustainable use”
 37 times: “full and effective participation”
 12 times: “*sui generis* systems”
 12 times: “governance”
 11 times: “rights”
 11 times: “livelihoods”
 9 times: “indigenous and community conserved areas” (or “community conservation areas”)
 9 times: “tenure”
 8 times: “community protocols”
 5 times: “traditional territories”
 4 times: “prior and informed consent”
 4 times: “customary laws”
 2 times: “ICCA Registry”

The Consortium participated actively in the official negotiation sessions and working groups, particularly the ones related to Article 8(j) and related provisions, marine and coastal biodiversity, biodiversity for poverty eradication and development, climate change, inland water ecosystems, protected areas, and sustainable use. Dedicated “point people” focused on each priority agenda item throughout the two weeks and worked hard to ensure the Consortium was well-coordinated and collaborating with other key groups such as the CBD Alliance and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity to advocate for key issues.

Amongst the 33 decisions adopted on the final day of COP11, there were hundreds of provisions of relevance to the ICCA Consortium and its members (see Box). ICCAs are directly referenced in Decisions **XI/14** on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, **XI/24** on Protected Areas, and **XI/25** on Sustainable Use of Biodiversity. Several decisions require Parties to use traditional knowledge and practices, for example, in ecosystem restoration activities (**XI/16**), the description and identification of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (**XI/17**), and addressing the impacts of climate change (**XI/21**). Many other decisions require Parties to ensure full and effective participation of

indigenous [peoples] and local communities, for example, in planning and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans (**XI/2**), the establishment, expansion, governance, and management of protected areas (**XI/14**), and multi-sectoral committees on protected areas (**XI/24**).

Decision **XI/14** on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions in its entirety is arguably the most important for ICCAs. **The Consortium should actively follow up on activities outlined in the five sections of this lengthy decision**, including:

- Under the **section on progress in implementation**, Parties to include in requests to the Global Environment Facility and Small Grants Programme and other donors support for indigenous and local communities to organise themselves, to develop community plans and protocols, to document, map and register their ICCAs, and to prepare and implement their community conservation plans; and to provide support to countries to strengthen recognition of ICCAs;
- Under the **section on participatory mechanisms for indigenous and local communities in the work of the Convention**, Parties to provide resources for and partner with indigenous and local communities to develop and implement “indigenous to indigenous” and “community to community” training projects and initiatives, and request the Executive Secretary to provide opportunities for participation of an indigenous and local community representative from each country represented at regional and sub-regional capacity building workshops;
- Under the **section on development of elements of *sui generis* systems for the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices**, Parties to support and promote the development of *sui generis* systems, including through the development of community protocols;
- Under the **section on Article 10 and 10(c) as a major component of the programme of work**, Parties decided that the three initial tasks for the new work on Article 10 and 10(c) are 1) to incorporate customary sustainable use practices or policy into national biodiversity strategies and action plans; 2)



to promote and strengthen community-based initiatives; and 3) to identify best practices a) to promote the full and effective participation of Indigenous peoples and local communities in the establishment, expansion, governance, and management of protected areas, b) to encourage the application of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use in protected areas, and c) to promote the use of community protocols to affirm and promote customary sustainable use in protected areas; and

- Under **the section on recommendations from the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**, Parties to further consider adopting the phrase "indigenous peoples and local communities" (instead of "indigenous and local communities") at the next Working Group on Article 8(j) and at COP12 in 2014.
 - ▶ The [advance unedited compilation of all Decisions](#) is available in English
 - ▶ The official Decisions should soon be on the [CBD website](#)
 - ▶ If you have any questions or would like the full text of the decisions of relevance to ICCAs, please contact Holly Shrumm (holly@naturaljustice.org)

ICCA Consortium 5th General Assembly – Pastapur, India, October 2012



Taking the opportunity of having several of its Members, Honorary Members, Steering Committee members and staff gathered in Hyderabad (India) to attend the CBD COP11, the ICCA Consortium held its fifth General Assembly in Pastapur-- an inspiring field location close to Hyderabad, on October 20-21. Our group of 30 participants from various countries was kindly hosted by the Deccan Development Society, an Indian NGO that empowers Dalit women and support their local organisation (*sangham*) to keep governing their ICCAs, conserving agro-biodiversity and water

resources, and providing sustainable livelihoods for them and their villages. During the first day in Pastapur we visited various initiatives developed by the women *sangham*. We begun with their fields where they grow multiple crops together and then moved to a local radio and film documentaries station, a seeds bank, an innovative school, etc.. The second day was fully dedicated to the Consortium General Assembly, with the reports by the president, the global coordinator, the treasurer and auditor of accounts (in absentia) followed by passionate discussions over improvement of the Consortium's current and future work. Different groups were formed to take these forward – which Members and Honorary members are most welcome to join (for that please contact (aurelie@iccaconsortium.org)).

- ▶ Read the minutes of the GA 2012 in [English](#), [French](#), or [Spanish](#)

23rd IUCN World Conservation Congress – Jeju, Korea, 6-15 September 2012

By Holly Shrumm, International Policy Assistant



The ICCA Consortium and its members actively participated in the Members' Assembly voting process. The [2013-2016 IUCN Programme](#) was adopted as the guiding framework for the next four years of work across the entire Union (including implementation of Resolutions and Recommendations). It is organised into three programme areas: valuing and conserving nature; effective and equitable governance of nature's use; and deploying nature-based solutions to climate, food,

and development.

The most relevant motion, sponsored by CENESTA and co-sponsored by several Consortium members, was adopted on the final day of the Assembly as [Resolution 94: Respecting, recognizing and supporting Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Territories and Areas](#). The Resolution focuses on three main operative paragraphs: 1) calling upon IUCN (members, Secretariat, and Council) to respect and appropriately recognize and support ICCAs by promoting, adopting and fully implementing laws, policies and programmes that recognize and uphold Indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights under international law (including to self-determination, self-governance, full and effective participation, and so on); 2) urging IUCN to strengthen support to the CBD Secretariat and collaborations with the ICCA Consortium to enhance commitment and capacity of Parties to the CBD in various areas; and 3) urging IUCN to call upon global financing mechanisms to ensure appropriate recognition of and support for ICCAs and associated rights and responsibilities in all aspects of their funding processes.

Many other motions of direct relevance to ICCAs were adopted, including the following (in numerical order):

- [Resolution 47](#): Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the context of the UNESCO World Heritage Convention
- [Resolution 77](#): Promoting Locally Managed Marine Areas as a socially inclusive approach to meeting area-based conservation and Marine Protected Area targets
- [Resolution 82](#): Supporting the sustainability of Jeju *Haenyeo* as a unique marine ecology stewardship
- [Resolution 92](#): Promoting and supporting community resource management and conservation as a foundation for sustainable development
- [Resolution 95](#): Traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local peasant communities in the Andes and the Amazon Rainforest as a mechanism for adaptation to climate change
- [Resolution 96](#): Recognizing the indigenous territories as conservation areas in the Amazon Basin
- [Resolution 97](#): Implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- [Resolution 99](#): IUCN Policy on Conservation and Human Rights for Sustainable Development
- [Resolution 102](#): Human rights and access to natural resources in Mesoamerica
- [Resolution 104](#): Food security, ecosystem restoration, and climate change
- [Resolution 106](#): Safeguarding the contribution of wild living resources and ecosystems for food security
- [Resolution 115](#): Strengthening bio-cultural diversity and traditional ecological knowledge in the Asia-Pacific island region
- [Recommendation 147](#): Sacred Natural Sites: Support for custodian protocols and customary laws in the face of global threats and challenges
- [Recommendation 170](#): To enhance community procedures to improve the management of coastal fishing
- [Recommendation 175](#): Strengthening the autonomy of Colombia's black communities for sustainable natural resource management in their areas, with special emphasis on mining

The Members' Assembly also elected a new IUCN president (Zhang Xinsheng from China) and the following Chairs of the volunteer Commissions for the next four years:

- **Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy:** Aroha Te Pareake Mead (Aroha.Mead@vuw.ac.nz)
- **World Commission on Protected Areas:** Ernesto Enkerlin Hoeflich (enkerlin@itesm.mx)
- **World Commission on Environmental Law:** Antonio Herman Benjamin (planet-ben@uol.com.br)
- **Commission on Ecosystem Management:** Piet Wit (wit@syzgy.nl)
- **Species Survival Commission:** Simon Stuart (simon-stuart@btconnect.com)
- **Commission on Education and Communication:** Juliana Zeidler (cec@iucn.org)

More information about the outcomes of the Members' Assembly, including adopted Resolutions and Recommendations, the IUCN Programme 2013-2016, Committee reports, amended Statutes and Regulations,

and so on, is [available here](#). Feel free to contact Holly Shrumm (holly@naturaljustice.org) and Grazia (grazia@iccaconsortium.org) with any questions.

► [Download the Consortium Participants report](#)

Reflections from a participant in the Symposium “Protected Areas: are they safeguarding biodiversity?” – Zoological Society of London, 8-9 November 2012

By Emily Caruso, Regional Programmes Director, Global Diversity Foundation (Member)



The author, who works for an organization that is a founding Member of the ICCA Consortium, participated in the second day of this symposium. Staff of conservation NGOs, students and representatives of governmental, intergovernmental and research institutions attended the meeting. The symposium sought, amongst other goals, to “identify components of the current protected areas portfolio; how is it funded, managed and monitored, and to ask how protected areas have performed from a biodiversity conservation perspective” and “how we can most effectively manage the portfolio into the future, and identify the new tools and technologies, including governance and financing mechanisms”.

It appears that, overall, the symposium fulfilled its objectives: the presentations show that, under the right conditions and on the whole, protected areas are safeguarding biodiversity. Given the steady extension and multiplication of protected areas all over the globe over the course of the past century, this data is timely. However, given the move – acknowledged and applauded by many working in conservation – towards ever greater inclusion of social issues and perspectives in conservation, I felt there were gaps in the symposium's outcomes. This article deals with those gaps of greatest relevance to people working with or supporting Indigenous Peoples’ and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCAs).

One symposium presentation, given by Madhu Rao of Wildlife Conservation Society Asia, touched on the topic of ICCAs. She presented a desk-based review of the literature on ICCAs that assesses their ability to safeguard biodiversity. It found that ICCAs were overall not as effective as state-governed protected areas for safeguarding biodiversity, but better than open-access regimes. Ms. Rao acknowledged the paucity of data available for drawing these conclusions, while also recognising that her review had not examined the non-biodiversity (i.e. socio-economic and cultural) benefits of ICCAs. The overall conclusion was that further research was required to draw better conclusions. Given the importance of ICCAs for conservation – the recent [CBD Volume on the Recognition & Support of ICCAs](#) states that “*ICCAs may number far more than the current officially designated protected areas (which number about 130,000, and are mostly governed by government agencies) and cover as much if not more than the area covered by them (nearly 13% of the earth’s land surface)*” – it was surprising that only one out of 22 presentations addressed the role of ICCAs – which are increasingly recognised as de facto protected areas – in safeguarding biodiversity.

Given our ever-expanding knowledge on the inextricable relationships between social, cultural and biological diversity, it would have been constructive and progressive for the symposium to move beyond assessments of protected area success that isolate biological issues from social issues, that address biodiversity as though it hangs in a vacuum. Not only does such an approach threaten biodiversity – as time and again conservation efforts that focus on biodiversity without considering its embeddedness in social, political, economic and cultural life are shown to be unsuccessful – but also does not take into account the demonstrated interrelations between biological and cultural diversity, between natural life and social life. Adopting a broader scope, the symposium might have explored in greater depth the important role of ICCAs in safeguarding biodiversity, drawing on the ever-expanding body of interdisciplinary and empirical research on conservation.

Those active in the global movement for the recognition of ICCAs have been prominent, for over a decade, in popular, conservation and academic literature, and at global meetings such as the World Parks Congress, World Conservation Congresses, and Convention on Biological Diversity Conferences of the Parties. Drawing on the expertise, knowledge and case study material of these practitioners and researchers would have injected a greater diversity of voices on community conservation at the symposium, giving more comprehensive evidence of the role and importance of ICCAs in both bridging the gap between conservation and people, and in safeguarding biodiversity. Given the proliferation of academic programmes, researchers, practitioners, funders, publications and practical projects that focus on the interconnections between biodiversity, social life and conservation, it is essential that conservation now begin to embrace this inclusive perspective in *all* aspects of its work, even – or rather, *especially* – when it purports to focus specifically on biological issues.

However, despite an avowed lack of data on how protected areas function within landscapes, broader ecosystems and conservation networks, on the effectiveness of different governance systems in comparable ecological and social situations, and on the effectiveness of ICCAs in safeguarding biodiversity in general, the overwhelming discourse presented at the Symposium was that more protected areas are required, they must be larger and they must improve their effectiveness. Therefore, much more money is required to establish, expand and manage them. This discourse remained largely devoid of reference to the relationships between local people and protected areas.

The solutions to protected area financing mooted at the Symposium were (i) the green economy, i.e. financing through climate change mitigation strategies (REDD+) and payments for ecosystem services (PES), and (ii) mainstreaming protected areas into development programmes, i.e. establishing protected areas as biodiversity offsets in conjunction with mega development projects. An area in which we are *not* lacking data is the ‘double-whammy’ effect that both the green economy and biodiversity offsets can have on the well-being of local populations.

In the first case, REDD+ and PES schemes not only suffer from tenacious equity problems (McAfee 2012, Mohanty *et al.* 2012, Corbera 2012, Milne & Adams 2012), but can also exacerbate the conflicts between local populations and protected areas, resulting in loss of access and rights to lands and resources (e.g., Beymer-Farris & Basset 2012) and threats to livelihoods and food sovereignty (e.g., Ibarra *et al.* 2011). In the case of biodiversity offsets, the impacts on local populations are even more obvious: having been pushed out of their traditional lands and livelihoods by mega development projects (e.g., hydroelectric dams, oil pipelines, hydrocarbon extraction or commercial monocultures), indigenous peoples and local communities find their access to lands and resources further curtailed as a result of the establishment of protected areas as ‘offsets’. It is remarkable that such ‘solutions’ for the financing of protected areas are still part of the mainstream discourse when data on their damaging for indigenous peoples and local communities are so widely available. A recent special issue of the *Journal of Peasant Studies*, entitled [‘Green grabbing: a new appropriation of nature?’](#) edited by Fairhead, Leach and Scoones (2012), provides an excellent entry-point to the literature regarding the social, political, economic and cultural impacts of such financing mechanisms.

Recently, Kent Redford, a household name for those of us working in the field of conservation, wrote about conservation’s interactions with human rights in an online article entitled [‘The Moral Arc of Conservation’](#). In it, he claims that, at the turn of the last century, “the arc of conservation was bending with the realization that our moral argument for the value of conserving biodiversity was seriously flawed if we ourselves were acting immorally towards people.” He concludes the article with the statement: “conservation is aware of many of its previous failings and, although not achieving all it might, is on the right track”. While many of us sincerely hope this is true, the thrust of the mainstream discourse in fora like the ZSL Symposium is not encouraging.

If conservation is to succeed and expand in an ever-more peopled world, it cannot but engage people in place to do so, and ICCAs provide an unparalleled, already-existing opportunity at the interface of biodiversity and human wellbeing to begin that work. Therefore, to ICCA supporters, it is obvious that a far better and more ethical solution to the ‘biodiversity crisis’ than biodiversity offsets and the green economy is to support, enhance, and publish frank evaluations of the work being done by indigenous peoples and local communities

to protect and safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem functions in and around their ICCAs. A growing number of case studies reveal how these efforts not only safeguard biodiversity in a variety of environments but also enhance socio-ecological resilience and maintain human wellbeing.

However, the people with the power to make Big Decisions and spend Big Money on protected areas appear to have little or no awareness of the world of possibilities for safeguarding biodiversity, or rather *biocultural* diversity, present in ICCAs. Moreover, the discourse among conventional protected areas policy-makers and practitioners is that the lack of data on the effectiveness of ICCAs in safeguarding biodiversity indicates that money is best directed the usual way: towards strict protection in State-governed protected areas.



Fortunately, many communities, organisations and research institutions around the world are working to demonstrate that ICCAs are effective in safeguarding biodiversity and enhancing human wellbeing. We might not yet have all the answers, nor, certainly, do we have enough data. But then, neither, apparently, do those operating within the conventional protected areas paradigm, as mentioned above. However, we clearly are making significant advances in providing empirical evidence of the success of ICCAs. For example, at COP XI in Hyderabad, the CBD report on Recognising and Supporting ICCAs (Kothari *et al* 2012), available [here](#), was launched. This report, which covers a wide variety of ICCAs from all over the

world and collates much evidence of their success, builds upon an array of examples and analyses that have been accumulating since the beginning of the new millennium (see also Borrini-Feyerabend *et al* 2010, and the website of the [ICCA Consortium](#), which is replete with specific and detailed examples). Others are also in the process of refining methods for assessing the effectiveness of ICCAs. For example, [Global Diversity Foundation](#) is currently working within the [COMBIOSEERVE](#) project to develop co-enquiry (collaborative) and participatory approaches for evaluating the success of community-based biocultural diversity management.

Given the increasing visibility of ICCAs in the biodiversity policy-making arena, the supposed 'paradigm shift' towards a more socially-conscious conservation, and the growing body of evidence surrounding the importance of people for the health of biodiversity, why are there still conservation meetings in which biological issues are discussed in isolation from social ones? Is there a fundamental communication problem between those of us who are speaking about ICCAs and those of us who are involved in more conventional approaches? Is the perceived lack of empirical data from grounded ICCA case studies creating a vacuum in which preconceived notions prevail? Are ICCA advocates so keen to demonstrate success that they report only what is convenient to them, and only to the converted? Or perhaps are we simply, collectively, not creating enough opportunities for frank, open and productive debates to take place?

The current apparent paucity of communication between policy-makers, researchers and practitioners working on ICCAs and those working on conventional protected areas must be overcome. Attempts to tackle this decades-old problem have had only some degree of success. Although this lack of communication has multiple origins, we feel there is hope for a resolution. A first step towards opening more channels for communication might be to invite and encourage both groups to participate more in and speak at each other's public events. It might also be timely to organise special events that gather leaders in the ICCA movement and the more conventional conservation movement to engage in honest yet solution-oriented dialogue about their concerns over the gaps in each other's approaches, with the explicit aim of developing mutually useful tools for safeguarding not just biological diversity, but *biocultural diversity*. The ICCA Consortium and its members are planning a variety of such events to take place around the 6th World Parks Congress (Sydney, Australia, 2014). Contributions, comments and diverse perspectives on the topic would be most useful and welcome.

Survey of ICCA global extent

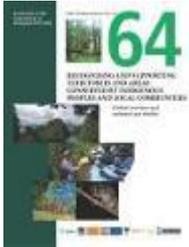
By Ashish Kothari, Kalpavriksh (Member) and ICCA Consortium Steering Committee member



One question that we are often asked is: what is the extent of ICCAs in your country, or in the world? We have no comprehensive answer to this, for several reasons: lack of documentation on ICCAs, some fuzziness about what constitutes an ICCA, the fact that many ICCAs are ‘hidden’ within official protected areas, etc. There is also the need for caution in applying this term to a wide diversity of local practices and names that indigenous peoples or local communities themselves use. ICCA must be understood to be only a convenient term denoting some essential similarities amongst various territories and areas, rather than in any way subsuming their diversity and self-definition.

Within these limitations, some of us attempted to put together available information on ICCA extent, resulting in Table 2.3 (‘Number and extent of ICCAs in select countries’) in the [new publication on ICCA Recognition and Support](#). The data here, even if from a very limited number of countries and submitted to various caveats, clearly show that ICCAs are widespread, numerous, and substantial in area coverage.

The Consortium has initiated a follow up to the above compilation, by seeking information on the *number* and *extent* (in hectares/acres/sq.km) of sites that could come under the definition of ICCAs. **Readers are encouraged to write to us if they have such information**, or know of persons/resources that could help, especially from countries not covered in the above-mentioned table. If you are sending data and information, please do mention the source, with a full reference citation as appropriate. **As a small incentive, we would be happy to send you a printed version of the above study on ICCA Recognition and Support, if you would like to get a copy.** Thanks! Please contact at ashishkothari@vsnl.com.



► [Send data](#)

From Confucius to Blackberries: telling stories through photos...

By Vanessa Reid, Communications Officer

The 5th Century (BCE) Chinese philosopher, teacher and politician Confucius allegedly proclaimed ‘*a picture tells a thousand words*’. I wonder if he realised how true his words would ring with today’s society infatuated with social media, instant picture messaging and 24/7 telecommunication. The 200 millionth smartphone was reportedly shipped in September 2012.



The use of uploading and sending photos for mass communication has rocketed exponentially in the last decade forcing the written word, particularly the printed press, to take a back seat. Twenty years ago, the prospect of some of the world’s most remote and poorest indigenous communities having easy access to mobile phones (let alone phones with in-built cameras and data storage) would have probably been laughed at. However, according to the [International Telecommunications Union](#) by the end of 2011 mobile-cellular subscriptions reached close to a staggering 6 billion. A [recent UNU study](#) in India showed people have greater access to

mobile phones than to basic toilet facilities. Such statistics attest to the devotion our planet’s population feels towards its opportunity to ‘telecommunicate’.

From Occupy movements across the world to the Arab Spring, daily we are witnessing the impact social media is having on society. ‘Ordinary’ citizens, for the first time have become reporters and mainstream media has

shifted from the grasps of the chosen few. Vast audiences have gathered, crowds rallied, and political establishments toppled all by individuals communicating in some social media platform or other their message to the world. Photographs, as instant, powerful 'messages' have played a huge role in contributing to this global shift.

Photo stories for indigenous peoples and local communities

Inspired by this new wave of alternative social and visual media, a few years ago the ICCA Consortium and UNDP GEF SGP began discussing photo stories as tools for documenting and raising awareness concerning ICCAs. Since then, a number of pilot photo stories have emerged either replacing or complementary to written reports detailing ICCAs.

A photo story is essentially a short video (normally between 4-5 minutes) consisting of photos accompanied by running script (on the screen) and/or voice/music narration. It can easily be uploaded and available to anyone with access to Internet.

The process...

The Consortium has compiled a *photo story manual* for Consultants, providing a loose set of guidelines for those facilitating communities in creating their own photo stories. The guidelines detail a loose process that can be adopted, and adapted where necessary. It involves an initial *grassroots discussion* with the community, covering a description of their ICCA (preferably using the local term) including internal and external to it. This is followed by 'community responses', detailing how and why the community has actively sought to protect, defend and/or conserve their ICCA. The final section covers perceived results including an assessment of the current environmental, social and legal status of the ICCA.

Based on the outcomes of this grassroots discussion (although possibly more than one discussion may be necessary) the community writes a script for the photo story. After a photography training session, community members can split into groups and take photos of the different sections described within their script. These photos are collected and a 'shortlist' is decided. The chosen photos are added to the script which is either voice narrated by community members or used as written script within the photo story.



In June 2012, the Consortium, Sawit Watch and AMAN helped facilitate Bunyau community – an Indigenous Dayak Limbai community – in Sintang District of West Kalimantan, Indonesia create a photo story. Bunyau community have lived within, protected and conserved their ICCA, known locally as 'Bukit Bunyau' (Bunyau Hill) for generations. They claim lineage to Bunyau from before the Dutch colonial period. It covers 5,000 hectares and affords the community to be 80% self-sufficient harvesting NTFPs like rubber (for latex), rearing cattle and selling rice and other sustainably grown cereals, grains and vegetables. The very survival and integrity of Bukit Bunyau faces severe internal and external threats. Their story is not unique. In places, it parallels the trials and tribulations of the lanky, blue 'Navi' characters of James Cameron's blockbuster movie *Avatar*. The difference with Bunyau is that there is no Hollywood Premier, no special effects and their story is real. Their highly sought-after Bukit Bunyau, rich in fertile soils and natural resources is the envy of multi-national corporations wishing to create logging and mining concessions and establish oil palm plantations. Thus far, Bunyau community have fought tooth-and-nail to protect their ICCA: to claim ancestral rights over it. They have been helped by local NGOs in West Kalimantan, in some cases facilitating group meetings and devising action plans against the encroaching companies.



They have mapped Bukit Bunyau using GIS mapping systems and have pooled resources to create a community fund as 'emergency money' in the event of staging campaigns. They have made biodiversity inventories of Bukit Bunyau and have discouraged other community members and surrounding villagers to stop illegal gold mining and invest in other NTFP collection. The list goes on and Bunyau community continue to fight.

The purpose of their photo story is simple. It is a means to tell *their story* to an audience outside of their own community. An agent for advocacy and publicity combined, photo stories are 'tools' to document the irreplaceable environmental and cultural wealth ICCAs like Bukit Bunyau hold. They can document the threats facing the ICCA itself as well as the lives and culture of the community who inhabit and depend upon it. Everyone can be involved in the photo story creating process. It is inclusive and its very nature encourages participation from the youngest to the oldest members of communities. The [Microsoft photo story programme](#) is free to download and requires very little technical expertise.

During a field trip to Bunyau, July this year, it was clear to see how many community members were connected to social media, despite their somewhat isolated geography. Located deep within a forest, three hours speed-boat ride from the nearest town, followed by a 2 hour (bumpy) motor-bike ride down a dirt track most of the teenagers were busy typing away on their Blackberries, often venturing off to 'good signal' spots to upload photos to their personal Facebook accounts. They charged their phones during the two-hours-a-day of electricity allocated to their village. It struck me that if communities such as Bunyau are to ensure the security and future of their ICCAs, social media platforms like Facebook and visual media such as photo stories really could become a powerful 'voice' for communities like Bunyau to share their stories and gain the appropriate recognition they need from the outside world. I believe this is an avenue the Consortium must investigate in whatever capacity it can.

In January 2013 the Consortium website will have a section dedicated to photo stories and other social and visual media tools appropriate for indigenous peoples, local communities and other ICCA-interested individuals and/or groups wishing to support and promote ICCAs.

'Our disenchanting youth': discussions on an ICCA Youth Network...

By Vanessa Reid, Communications Officer, and Sudeep Jana (Honorary Member)



With a global population having sped past the 7 billion mark, if biodiversity loss is to be halted, human-induced environmental catastrophes stopped and climate change mitigation realised, human beings must start working in harmony with the natural world around them. Ghandi's much used dictum 'nature provides for everyone's needs, but not for everyone's greed' has reached such acclaim for the simple reason that it is so frustratingly true, and undeniable. It forces us to stop in our tracks examining how fragile our human existence is, and how dependent we are upon an equally fragile set of interconnecting ecosystems: our natural environment, our biosphere. Throughout the world ICCAs represent this synergistic balance between man and nature that Ghandi was so oft referring to. The specific term 'ICCA' just did not exist then as it does today.

Those whose livelihoods and basic survival is dependent upon the natural environments they inhabit and sustainably conserve are often, in more cases than not, the best suited to govern and conserve them (i.e. ICCAs). The acute and subtle understanding of indigenous peoples (IP) and local communities living within and protecting their ICCAs, thanks to age-old traditional knowledge and an intricate web of understanding ranks them as some of the world's most worthy, and intelligent

'conservationists'. The term traditional however, often implies knowledge belonging to older generations: knowledge that youngsters are often accused of not being interested in, or capable of acquiring. Within IP rights movements, so oft we hear of the wisdom of IP elders, of their knowledge, of their message to the outside world. In the face of rapid globalisation however, and rapid cultural shifts where does this leave the younger members of these communities? What is their role as they watch their ancestral homes being 'awarded' to multinationals, often foreign, companies? Where is their platform to speak out about the violation of their human rights and the futures of their children?

After much heated discussion at a Consortium General Assembly in India, proceeding the CBD COP 11, the Consortium decided to explore the creation of an ICCA youth network. Inspired by stories of young people from indigenous and local communities setting up initiatives to protect their ancestral lands across the world, the Consortium is seeking to investigate if and how a youth network could be effective. We would like to know your experiences, thoughts, and insights relating to all of this! Please send your responses to Sudeep Jana (janasudeep@gmail.com) and Vanessa Reid (vanessa@iccaconsortium.org).

REGIONAL WORK: MEMBERS & COORDINATORS

CENTRAL AFRICA

Recognising ICCAs in Central Africa: DRC moves first!

By Christian Chatelain, Regional Coordinator for West & Central Africa



The workshop « *Indigenous Peoples' and Community Conserved Areas and Territories (ICCAs) in Democratic Republic of Congo: towards respecting indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights for biodiversity governance* » took place in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from November 5th to November 9th. The network of indigenous peoples and local communities for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems in the DRC (REPALEF-DRC), the ICCA Consortium and the GIZ originated, organised and provided support to this five-day workshop. With the ICCA concept and practices at its core, the work of the 37 participants – many of them representing indigenous peoples and local communities from the 11 provinces of the country– focused on information, exchanges, analysis and initial planning. Two representatives of the ICCA Consortium visited Kinshasa to facilitate the workshop and provide technical reference (documents, presentations, tools, etc.) and support. All the provinces of Congo-- North Kivu, Maniema, South Kivu, Province Orientale, Kasai Occidental, Kasai Oriental, Bandundu, Equateur, Katanga province and the city of Kinshasa—were well represented.



A main objective of the workshop was to assess the **relevance and applicability of the concept and practice of ICCAs in the DRC**. This was promptly confirmed by numerous recounted experiences stressing that – indeed— ICCAs are alive and well in the minds and collective consciousness of people... In fact, they are stated as normally much more effective than official conservation practice (such as protected areas) in terms of conserving biological and cultural diversity. Another objective was to explore how to anchor the concept and practice of ICCAs in the DRC and, possibly in the future, in the overall Central African region.

The workshop took-off from presentations of **cultural practices and institutions for the governance, management and conservation of natural resource** in all provinces of the country, based on a set of questions sent in advance. Following that, some basic and historical information was provided on conservation of natural and cultural environments, but also on broad current threats to them. **ICCAs** were then introduced as a phenomenon characteristic of relations between indigenous peoples and local communities (PAs & CLs) and their environments throughout the world. One hundred and fifty copies of a [volume](#), originally published in 2010 - were reprinted especially for the workshop in Kinshasa and distributed to participants for dissemination in the field. The volume is entitled *“Bio-cultural diversity conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities – examples and analysis”* and is available in three languages from the ICCA website.

The workshop offered opportunities for the Consortium staff to interact with its member REPALEF and key national partners, such as the GEF-SGP’s representative in DRC, Mr. Célestin Kabeya, the WWF Advisor on Indigenous Peoples, Mr. Mpia Bikopo, and the Director of GIZ’s Programme on Biodiversity and Forests in RDC, Mr. Andreas Schleenbaecker. The workshop enabled to recruit a new coordinator for the Consortium: Joseph Itwonga, now Regional Coordinator for Forest Ecosystems of Central Africa. Joseph is an indigenous Walikale from North Kivu (DRC) and coordinator of the Consortium’s Member REPALEF-RDC.

An immediate result of the workshop, which was enthusiastically expressed by the workshop participants, is a very welcome **“new awareness” of the concept and practice of ICCAs in DRC** and of their value for national conservation and sustainable livelihoods policies and for more respectful approaches to the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities. This new **strategic understanding** opened the way to the establishment of a **roadmap** for a better recognition and support to ICCAs in the country, with objectives at national and provincial level.



Recommendations were issued at the end of the workshop addressing the relevant ministries, partners and civil society and REPALEF itself. The relevant ministries should support the process of recognition of ICCAs as a mode of governance and management crucial for the lives of indigenous peoples and local communities and as a strategy for environmental conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. Partners should support efforts by indigenous peoples and local communities to initiate a process of recognition of some of their territories as ICCAs. REPALEF and its collaborators should engage with strength and conviction in the process leading to the formal recognition of ICCAs in DRC (and beyond, via REPALEAC, which is the “brother network” of REPALEF for Central Africa).

The workshop closed with the proclamation of a "**Kinshasa Declaration**", marking the start of a political (in the best sense of the term) process towards such appropriate recognition and support to ICCAs in the DRC. The declaration (in French) follows.

► [Read the full report and the Kinshasa declaration](#)

SOUTH AMERICA

Segundo Encuentro de “Territorios de Conservación de Pueblos Originarios” - ¿Nace una red de ICCAs en Chile?

Lorena Arce, Coordinadora Cono Sur del Consorcio ICCA



Algo está cambiando cuando hablamos de conservación en Chile. Las formas tradicionales de entender y hacer conservación están siendo cuestionadas principalmente por quienes viven (y han habitado desde tiempos ancestrales) en lugares que hoy son ampliamente valorados por su biodiversidad y paisaje. La conservación estricta conducida inicialmente por el estado –donde toda acción humana es vista como una amenaza– ya no da cuenta de la diversidad de formas en las que realmente se ha conservado la naturaleza, el paisaje y la cultura por estas tierras. Nuevos actores se están abriendo espacio en el escenario de la conservación.

Durante el 2010 se crea la asociación de conservación privada “[Así Conserva Chile](#)”, que reúne diversos propietarios a lo largo de todo el país. Como integrante y miembro de su directorio, se encuentra la Asociación Indígena [Mapu Lahual](#) (tierra de alerces) representando a nueve comunidades huilliches (mapuches del sur). Sin embargo, a poco andar, en los debates que se van abriendo en los distintos encuentros, sus representantes plantean la necesidad de hacer distinciones entre la conservación privada y la que realizan en forma comunitaria (ahí el centro de la distinción) los pueblos indígenas.

De esta manera, en agosto de 2012, con el apoyo de SIRAP (Sistema Regional de Áreas Protegidas, proyecto financiado por GEF), convocan en la ciudad de Osorno, al “Primer Encuentro de Iniciativas de Conservación de Pueblos Originarios”, al que lo sigue, entre el 30 y 1º de diciembre del mismo año, su segundo encuentro de “Territorios de Conservación de Pueblos Originarios (TCPO)”. En ambos estuvieron reunidos representantes de distintos pueblos originarios; kawásqar, mapuches (huilliches, pehuenches, lafkenches), lican antai, aymaras y rapa nui, con un importante aumento de la convocatoria en la segunda reunión.

El principal objetivo de este último encuentro fue reflexionar y discutir sobre la conservación y su relación con los Pueblos Originarios en Chile, y avanzar en la elaboración de una propuesta de TCPO donde se reconozcan los aportes que realizan a la conservación, y que esto sea finalmente considerado por la nueva política pública ambiental que se discute actualmente en Chile.

Los resultados de las discusiones grupales y plenarias son interesantes, pero no es propósito de este texto detenernos ahí, sino por el momento tan sólo señalar –como bien destacó un participante de la isla grande de Chiloé– que “este es un proceso que recién comienza del cual queremos ser parte y estaremos siguiendo atentos”.

Por otro lado destaca la presencia y participación en este segundo encuentro de miembros de “Así Conserva Chile” invitados por los dirigentes indígenas. Lo que demuestra, señaló su Presidenta, que “aunque existan

diferencias entre la conservación privada y comunitaria, no significa que no podamos trabajar juntos, ya que compartimos objetivos comunes”.

Esta voluntad de colaboración se expresa en el diseño del próximo “X Congreso Latinoamericano de Territorios Voluntarios de Conservación”, que será realizado en Chile a fines del 2013 y organizado por “Así Conserva Chile”, y donde uno de los temas que serán tratados será la “Conservación y Pueblos Originarios”. Estamos atentos y vigilantes de cómo avanzan las comunidades indígenas y los pueblos originarios en la discusión sobre conservación en Chile, esperando que puedan abrirse paso hacia el adecuado reconocimiento de sus derechos, conocimientos y prácticas ancestrales.

SOUTH ASIA

Photo Essay: Dalit women *sanghams* – Independence through sustainable livelihoods

By Isis Alvarez, Global Forest Coalition (Member)



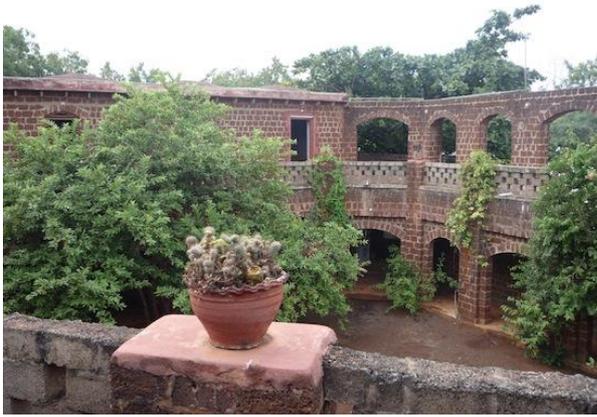
On October 20th, a group of people part of the ICCA Consortium went on a field visit to Pastapur hosted by the Deccan Development Society (DDS). Having arrived on the night before, the next day people woke up very early to go to the village where some of the rural leaders lived.



As people gathered in one of the houses of the women of the project, they gave a very detailed description of their history, work and activities. The project, which started 25 years ago, was a women’s initiative and they had to try very hard to come to what it is today: a strong development society that strives for community empowerment, food sovereignty and trade of their products, managing their own media, and maintaining a complete seed bank.



Such an initiative is quite remarkable especially when considering the social organization system in India known because of its “castes” which people are born, marry and die; there are five different levels of the system: [Brahman](#), [Kshatriya](#), [Vaishya](#), [Shudra](#). The next group describes the people known as ‘[untouchables](#)’ who are outcasts—people considered too impure, too polluted, to rank as worthy beings, who usually carry out jobs that deal with animal skins, garbage or toilet cleaning.



But the DDS in Pastapur managed to overcome all obstacles, even the huge social gap imposed on them, and after receiving some small [degraded] land from the government they organized and started to work together building a better future. The result, millets and some other hundreds of hectares of diverse crops and a very rich agrobiodiversity, not to mention the different facilities where they carry out different activities, including the 'guest house' where the participants were lodged and the headquarter office in Hyderabad.



The next stop was the community radio station facilities they have built and that broadcasts in local language; the studio is very well equipped. It is a participatory and informative radio with a gender focus that reaches quite a few villages nearby. We then visited the seed bank where a wide variety of seeds are kept; they follow a careful process in order to preserve the good quality seeds and the others are utilized right after.



Nearby, is the school complex. In different buildings or classrooms, children are taught traditional knowledge, as well as general knowledge; they teach kids wood-work, and other practical know-how. A significant part of school graduates continue their way to technical education and some pursue University degrees.



In the evening, we arrived to the rural headquarters of DDS; the women welcomed us with a song they sing during the beginning of the harvesting season. They introduced themselves and the participants did as well. They later offered an amazing local dinner based in all the food they grow and using natural materials.



The visit concluded evidencing how community empowerment and community conserved areas provide better livelihood alternatives than current proposed approaches increasing the gap between rich and poor.

SOUTH ASIA

4th ICCA Network Nepal National Gathering, 17 - 18 December, Kathmandu, Nepal

By Jailab Rai, Forest Action Nepal (Member)



The ICCA Network Nepal, Forest Action Nepal and a few ICCA Consortium members co-organised the 4th National Gathering of ICCAs in Nepal in December 2012. The gathering was used as a platform for representatives from nearly thirty ICCAs from all over the country to meet one another, share experiences, discuss concerns and issues, plan ahead for policy advocacy and lobbying and further work on a National ICCA Federation in the country. Towards the latter the participants decided to officially

register four ICCA-based organisations, as the law requires a minimum of 7 registered organisations with similar names for a National Federation to be created. In order to coordinate this process, the gathering also appointed a coordination committee of four members. Besides financial constraints, it seems clear that the ICCA Network faces some political resistance, possibly arising out of fragmentary understanding of ICCAs and/or clear resistance to devolution of power among influent groups in the country. But the Network is determined to become a legally registered National ICCA Federation in the coming year, and the ICCA Consortium will do its best to help. For any inquiries, please contact Jailab Rai: jailab@forestaction.org.

► [Read the proceedings of the gathering, as well as other interesting reports](#)

SOUTH ASIA

South Asian ICCAs are getting connected!

By Neema Pathak Broome, Regional Coordinator for South Asia & China



Kalpavriksh, in collaboration with the ICCA Consortium and the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES), organised a half-day workshop at COP11 (Hyderabad, India, October 8-19) on the potential to achieve the Aichi Targets through Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) in South and East Asia. Experiences were shared by participants from Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, India and Taiwan. A large number of threats and issues facing CCAs emerged during the event. It was broadly understood that these issues and threats are more or less the same for all countries and emanating from same or similar forces and processes. One common voice from all was a need for recognition of

CCAs in all countries in the manner appropriate and acceptable by the concerned communities, instead of imposed and inappropriate legal means. Towards this, many expressed a desire to better connect with each other to provide strength to each other's efforts and struggles. The meeting led to a number of suggestions including: organisations and communities could become Members of the global ICCA Consortium but also have smaller discussion groups within South Asia; they should stay connected with each other through some joint actions; and they should support each others' struggles through alerts. A publication entitled '[Community Conserved Areas in South Asia: Case studies and analyses from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka](#)' was released during this event, bringing together the efforts of a number of partners from various countries (supported by UNEP-UNDP SGP and published by Kalpavriksh).

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

A 3-day trip, 13-hour travel, 3 vehicles, 3 drivers, 3 speakers for a 3-hour ICCA Planning Workshop in the Philippines

By Giovanni Reyes, Executive Secretary, KASAPI (Member)



"A 3-day trip, 13-hour travel, 3 vehicles, 3 drivers, 3 speakers for a 3-hour Planning Workshop" an untiring Dave de Vera, Executive Director of PAFID would say about the whole activity. It summarizes the kind of work often encountered for ICCAs—harsh but exciting. The objective of the field workshop was to conduct a community consultation with three different *barangays* (villages) of Balbalan municipality on how to document, map, and conduct resource inventory of ICCAs within their ancestral domain. The three *baragays* included Pantikian, Talalang and Balbalasang. Participants were provided

with an overview of the ICCA concept and the step-by-step activities to document traditional practices, including their *Lapat* system (traditional governance). Results included the following: identification of community representatives (CPR) to conduct the ICCA documentation project; organization of CPRs' training for the project implementation; updating of the 3D map for reference in community planning and action planning; identification of timeframes for completion of the action or activity required (including the person(s) responsible).

Results included the following:

- Identification of community project representatives (CPR);
- Organization for the training of the CPR for the project implementation;
- Updating of the 3D map for reference in community planning and Action Planning;
- Identification of timeframes for completion of the action or activity required (including the person(s) responsible).

The site is Balbalasang, municipality of Balbalan, province of Kalinga, located in the Cordillera region of Northern Luzon. It is a rugged tableland rising from the Cordillera Central Range sprawling in a descending Eastward direction and in massive mountain alluvial fashion. Accessible from Manila by national road from the provincial capital City of Tabuk in the east and the capital town of Bangued, province of Abra in the West, we took the Abra route – unfortunately.

Indeed, it basically took us 2 days to reach Balbalasang from Bangued. We started from Bangued early on time, confident of reaching our field location the very same day. That was without counting with the recent heavy rains – which had made the roads extremely muddy and of course soon got our jeep stuck. After having hired an experienced local driver with a more powerful vehicle, we started again the next morning; and again we got stuck. Villagers around tried to help – in vain – and it finally took a bulldozer from the local Department of Public Works and Highways to free us. To make the experience complete, we were granted a



final stop 7km further, and had to transfer to a third vehicle. We finally reached Balbalasang in the afternoon; and everyone's excitement at our arrival erased all sensation of fatigue. Not always easy to reach communities in The Philippines!

The community consultation started with a brief presentation on the ICCA concept, highlighting the different ICCAs in the country and how they manage to protect their ancestral lands and resources. Steps and procedures in documenting ICCAs were then presented. Fortunately, the community has already

had a 3D map showing the extents of their ancestral lands. But since this was created in 2001, an updating is to be done. Apart from the 3D map, Balbalasang has an existing Ancestral Domain Management Plan, but with less emphasis on conservation, which is hence to be developed too.

Mr. De Vera (PAFID) emphasized that ICCAs are nothing new since their existence is primarily based on traditional governance of indigenous communities. Used in the context of development and conservation, it is an additional layer of protection against extractive activities like mining. ICCAs are also recognized as significant contributors to Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), requiring other means of protection and conservation. Besides, ICCAs can also contribute to biomass and carbon sequestration, which can also be a form of defense against environmental plunder.

The meeting took note of the active existence of the *Lapat* System that forms the local community's environmental management and protection practices. The different *barangays* wanted their *Lapat* system to be individually documented and treated separately. On the average, one *Lapat* is about 100 hectares. It was proposed and agreed that village leaders will meet to re-affirm traditional boundaries before the conduct of documentation of indigenous knowledge systems and practices. In addition to the *Lapat* system, the community also wanted to conduct resources inventory. PAFID shall provide technical training using transect line method and GPS reading.

There were only few issues raised during the open forum because the Banao tribe has already understood the concept and decided to consider the whole ancestral domain of Banao as ICCA. An elder, Ama Mayongdad, called everybody's attention to the fact that Balbalasang is also called by the national government 'Balbalasang National Park or BBNP'. He suggested changing the BBNP into 'Banao Lapat System Conservation'. Another suggested that the Banao community register the whole municipality of Balbalan as an ICCA and that not only the current three Banao *barangays* of Balbalasang, Pantikian and Talalang be called ICCAs (Balbalan municipality has 14 *barangays*). In addition, one elder suggested that all mountains, watersheds, rivers, creeks and sacred grounds be named under the Banao traditional names and put into the 3D map.



For its part, Mr. Reyes (KASAPI) presented procedures in starting ICCA work: formation of planning teams, participatory data gathering, community mapping, cross-sites visits, conducting of Resource Inventory (RI), community validation of research results and conservation planning. ICCA work can thus successfully begin only through participatory process. It starts with the formation of a local conservation planning team identified, nominated and appointed by elders through traditional decision-making process. The team in turn will organize workshop and orientation on procedures, put on

schedule actual training and conduct of RI including the conduct of community validation of the results of the RI. It was also mentioned that the composition and number of members of the team should be discussed among the leaders so that the members shall be permanently designated for technology transfer and future

monitoring. It was agreed that the local planning team will consist of 2 members from each *barangays* and 4 from the local NGO partner Concerned Citizens of Abra for Good Governance (CCAGG) for a total of 10 members.

It was also noted that the community agreed to treat the overlap areas or conflict areas as “gray areas” not to be touched until resolution.



It was interesting to note that the *Lapat* recognizes mining in the area; but mining as traditionally practiced by the local community members. An elder claimed that one mining area is becoming a nuisance because it has affected water quality in one of the streams. The group suggested that they should review the rules on mining in their *Lapat* and provide safety nets and penalties in cases of mine tailings and river poisoning.

Amongst the recommendations, it was decided that additional personnel will be hired from the community to augment the current staff of CCAGG; because with its current effectives, it

will be strenuous and exhausting work considering the distance to travel from office to the community. KASAPI proposed a revised budget to include one motorcycle and two hand-held radio communications equipment and one base radio.

The activity ended with a sumptuous dinner with community representatives. The rains did not deter lively Focus Group Discussions towards midnight. By 10 am the next day, the team was off to Bangued, arriving there at 2 pm and off to a 13-hour drive to Manila.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Training on ICCAs documentation, Imugan (The Philippines)

By Sam Pedragosa, Regional Coordinator for South-East Asia



27 participants attended a training on ICCA documentation held at the Dagwey Training Center of the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF) in Imugan, Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines. The indigenous communities that participated included the Balatoc and Banao peoples of Kalinga, the Aeta of Banawen, Zambales, the Dumagat of Polilio Island and Nakar, Quezon, and the Tau-Buhid of Mindoro Island. They were joined by the project staff of the NewCAPP partner organizations which include the Koalisyon ng mga Katutubong Samahan ng Pilipinas (KASAPI), Anthropology Watch (Anthrowatch) and the Concerned Citizens’ of Abra for Good Governance (CCAGGI).

The NewCAPP is implemented by the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The project seeks to expand the coverage of conservation areas through protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. The NewCAPP considers that recognizing and supporting ICCAs as effective area-based conservation measures would greatly contribute to biodiversity conservation and in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, specifically Target 11.





The participants were trained on basic community mapping and profiling, participatory resource appraisal, and natural resource inventory. The methodologies included instrumentation on Global Positioning System (GPS) and basic Geographic Information System (GIS) processing. The training was conducted by the Philippine Association for Intercultural Development (PAFID) in partnership with the Kalahan Educational Foundation (KEF). The KEF, a long time partner of PAFID, manages the first ever community forest recognized by the Philippine Government in 1974

which paved the way for the adoption of the community-based forest management scheme in the country. It is also pioneering the efforts on community-based forest carbon measurement and monitoring in the Philippines.

SOUTH-EAST ASIA

Proclamation of Mt. Kitanglad (The Philippines) as an ICCA

By Datu Migketay Victorino L. Saway, Talaandig Elder (Honorary Member)



The efforts of the Talaandig, Bukidnon, Higaonon and Manobo tribes have been focused on strengthening their Cultural Guards to secure and protect their sacred mountain, Mt. Kitanglad, as a worship area and a landmark of their cultural history and identity as peoples. The next step was to declare Mt. Kitanglad as an ICCA and enforce customary rules to govern the entire mountain.

For the first time, Native Title rights (as provisioned by the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act – IPRA of 1997) have been recognised by a big corporation, the Unifrutti Group of Companies. A “Sacred Customary Compact” was signed between the group, represented by its CEO John Perrine, and the keepers of the boundaries – who represent their genuine and authentic leadership – of the four tribes’ traditional territories in Misamis Oriental, Iligan city and Bukidnon, on December 16. This process was facilitated by the [Hineleban Foundation](#) and based on a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and partnership to protect the rainforests of Mt. Kitanglad. The proclamation and signature were attended by many officials: Nereus Acosta (Presidential Adviser for Environmental Protection), Rolando Cusio (Office of Political Affairs), Richard Dee (who represented Ambassador Howard Dee), Commissioner Cosme Lambayon (National Commission on Indigenous Peoples), and Governor Jose Ma. Zubiri Jr. (offering a final message of support mentioning the possibility of providing honoraria to the Talaandig Cultural Guards).

Previously, on November 22-25, a community gathering had taken place to build consensus on a draft compact, which resulted in the Declaration on the Coverage of the Traditional Territories of the Talaandig, Bukidnon, Higaonon and Manobo Communities by Native Titles and Proclamation of Mt. Kitanglad as a sacred area. The activity culminated with a *Bigela*, a ritual strengthening the unity of the Traditional Peace Pact Holders and Border Keepers of Iligan City, Bukidnon Province and Misamis Oriental.



You can have a glimpse at the Hineleban Foundation work with the Talaandig people in our film “Waway Saway and the Talaandig tribe band”. Please disseminate this video to support us!

► [See the film](#)

The history of conservation and sustainable use in many parts of the world is much older than government-managed protected areas, yet indigenous peoples' and community conserved areas and territories are often neglected or not recognised in official conservation systems. However, in the last decade or so, ICCAs, as a bio-cultural or eco-cultural conservation phenomenon, have gained significant recognition at international levels. This also builds on earlier and ongoing development in the fields of human rights, indigenous rights, cultural heritage, participatory development, decentralized governance, and so on; these socio-cultural, economic and political contexts being crucial to the emergence, sustenance, and strengthening of ICCAs.



Like many other countries, Iran has innumerable ICCAs that are increasingly being understood, recognised and supported. This is in response to both domestic demand and the realization of the importance of ICCAs and of the need to meet obligations under international instruments and commitments. Thus, Iran's natural resource managers in the government and other decision-making sectors are highly encouraged to carefully take into account, document and support ICCAs and involve indigenous peoples in decision-making, and then officially recognise and empower them by giving them a more active role in nature conservation.

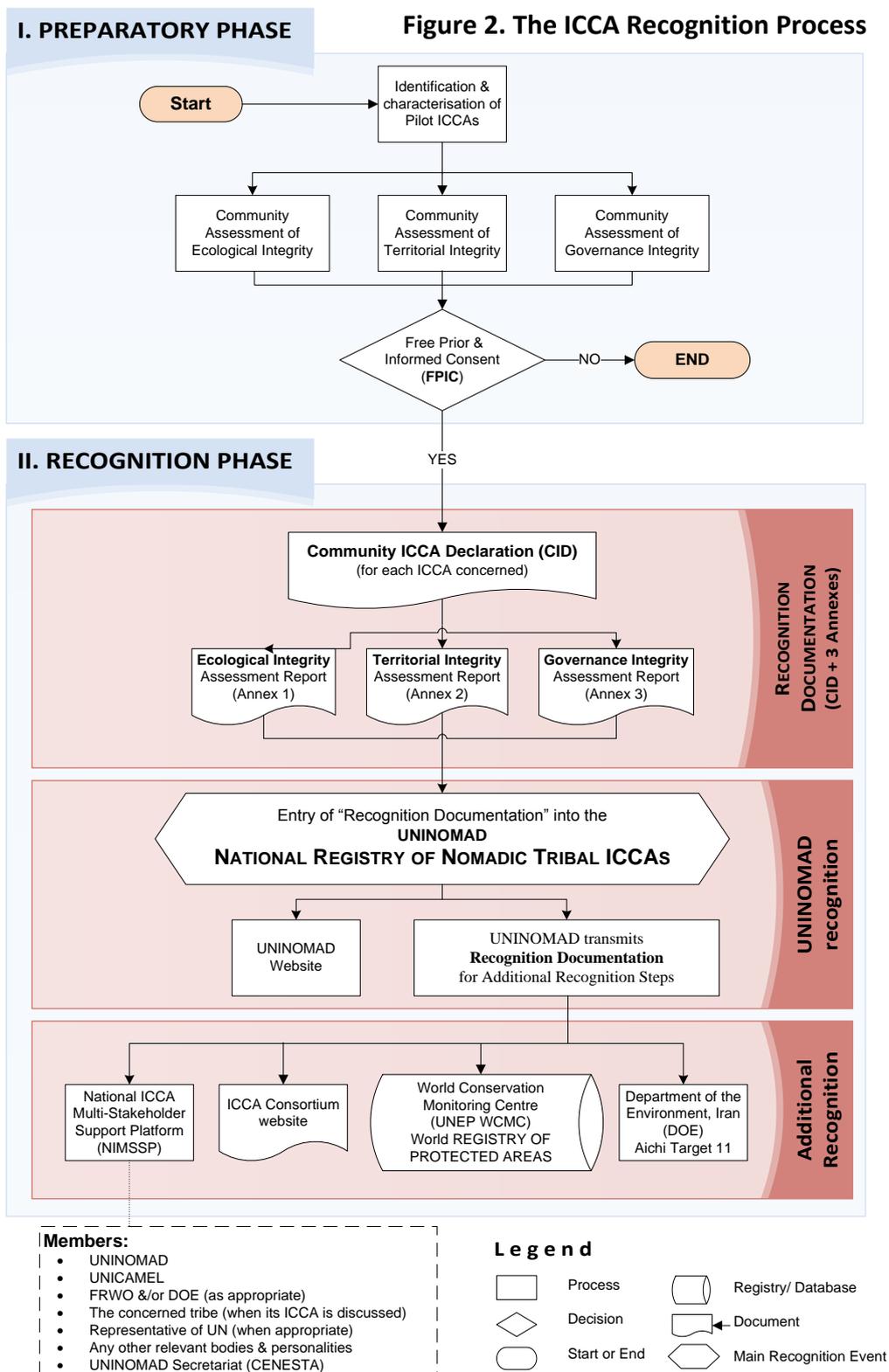
The indigenous peoples and local/traditional communities of Iran are highly organized in terms of social structure and major decisions are taken by the Elders who are appointed based on merit and communities' trust. They have their own traditional norms and customary practices (such as *qorukh*, *yurd*, *kham*) and unique spiritual beliefs regarding natural resources. These systems have sustained their way of life for thousands of years, but in the recent past, have been forced to face issues that threaten their very existence. Chief among these threats is the induced weakening of the tribal governance systems and the resultant fragmentation of their territorial ICCAs, as well as the overuse of their rangelands.



In recent years, following the national and international efforts for the recognition of ICCAs and community rights and the establishment of tribal community investment funds and indigenous peoples' federations and unions (such as UNINOMAD), such recognition has steadily gained ground. Conservation and livelihoods projects have concomitantly brought about some hopeful results. For instance, an action plan prepared jointly by civil society organisations, indigenous peoples, the Iranian Forests, Rangelands & Watershed Management Organisation (FRWMO) and the Iranian Department of Environment (DoE) led to territory-

based ICCAs to be included in the Law of the Fifth Five-Year Development Plan. This was accompanied by numerous declarations and commitments by FRWMO top administrators in support of nomadic and local communities' ICCAs and by the *de facto* acceptance of ICCAs by government through GEF-SGP projects. On the ground, which is what counts the most, we can mention that the Namdan Plain Wetland ICCA and the ICCA of the Farrokhvand tribe of Bakhtiari tribal confederacy have been recognised and legally protected by the DoE

This progress is enabled by sharing experience on effective mechanisms for stakeholder involvement, widening governance types in conservation, and combining the traditional and indigenous know-how with scientific knowledge. Also, new approaches and concepts are being used in natural resource management such as: the Territory-Based Sustainable Range Management Programme (TBSRM); Non-Equilibrium Ecosystems (NEE) science; and the IUCN protected area governance ‘type D’ (ICCAs), as well as innovative mechanisms that involve recognition by a hierarchy of structures ranging from a Community Declaration on ICCAs through UNINOMAD and relevant CSOs to a National Multi-Stakeholder ICCA Support Council to the global system including the ICCA Consortium and UNEP’s World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) (see Figure).



Another positive step forward is the cooperation of relevant government organizations such as the DOE and FRWO, as members of the ‘National Steering Committee’ of UNDP/GEF/SGP that have lent their support and approval to relevant GEF-SGP projects focusing and emphasizing on ICCAs under the GEF’s current fifth four-year cycle. This programme intends to devote a significant portion of its resources to projects that strengthen and develop a better understanding of nomadic ICCAs. In support of these projects there is a high level of collaboration amongst IPs/LCs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).

Some recent SGP-funded projects towards ICCA support and recognition include:

- Restoration and management of ICCAs through conservation of biodiversity in the territory of Taklé tribe, Shahsevan confederacy;
- Planning and implementing Community-Based Ecotourism by focusing on territorial integrity of Heybatlu sub-tribe, Shish Bayli tribe, Qashqai tribal confederacy;
- ICCA and Rangeland restoration to achieve sustainable livelihoods through traditional management of water resources and alternative forage production in the customary territory of Qurt sub-tribe, Qashqai tribal confederacy;
- Reviving ICCAs in Customary Territories of Abolhassani Mobile Pastoralists— Coping with the Effects of Climate Change and Drought through Local Initiatives and Ecological Management;
- Reviving ICCAs and Customary Management of Natural Resources in Inverted Tulips Plain— Summering Grounds of the Bakhtiari tribal confederacy.



Despite recent advances, in Iran, governance and management rules for natural resources need a significant reform to achieve full recognition and support to ICCAs. There is also a need for other forms of recognition and support including documentation and research, technical, financial, developmental, advocacy, and networking support and social and administrative recognition (such as awards, or a place in governmental planning processes). Regarding legal and policy recognition, there is a need for adequate mechanisms to respect indigenous peoples and local communities (especially with regard to territorial, collective, and tenurial rights), as many of the existing policies may actually be against their interests. So it should be kept in mind that despite the very visible progress in recognizing and supporting ICCAs in Iran, there still are huge weaknesses and gaps, varying from a complete lack of legal and policy recognition to inappropriate or inadequate recognition.

The vision for ICCAs in Iran is that they will be fully recognised as entities self-governed through their revived customary institutions and laws by their own long-time associated IPs and LCs and their re-empowered federations. Their role would be recognized for both preservation and restoration of biodiversity and natural resources, as well as for sustainable livelihoods and local and national economy. Linkages between local and national organisations governing ICCAs would be as vibrant as those between international organisations and national entities.

EUROPE

Linking ICCAs to the Italian tradition of common property and civic uses

By Marco Bassi (Honorary Member)



The concept of “ICCA” was developed by bringing together local experiences from all over the world. If it reflects a universal pattern of interaction between human groups and their natural environment, the terminology, definitions, descriptive literature and policy were mainly formulated in the context of the IUCN and the CBD, hence with attention to the global discourse specific to biodiversity conservation. In regional and national contexts, however, ICCAs relate to factors wider than the specific field of biodiversity conservation. They are linked to specific historical trajectories, cultural traditions, legislation and to various policy sectors. In some cases, the ‘global’ formulation of the notion bears elements of exoticism and a connotation of ‘otherness’ that may hamper its application at national level. This gap can be filled with an operation of ‘cultural translation’ and adaptation, not a simple translation of the terms and the literature, but rather the creation of a space where the global concepts and the national traditions meet and are independently elaborated by key actors.

In Italy this work started with two national workshops. In 2004 the CMWG of the IUCN-CEESP in collaboration with Legambiente organized the first workshop in the Aspromonte National Park, on the theme ‘Governance e Partecipazione nel Sistema delle Aree Protette in Italia’ (‘Governance and Participation in the Protected Areas System in Italy’). This was the first time the international concept of “Indigenous Peoples’ and Local Communities’ Conserved Territories and Areas” was publicly discussed in Italy. Building on the national tradition and debate, the group adopted the denomination *Patrimonio di Comunità* for ICCA, and called for another workshop to be held the following year. The second, larger workshop took place at Trino (Vercelli) on the theme [I Patrimoni di Comunità in Italia: Fra Storia e Cultura, Natura e Territorio](#) (‘ICCAs in Italy: History, Culture, Nature and Territory’). A third important workshop on [‘Understanding Community Conservation in Europe’](#) was organized in 2011 in the Aspromonte National Park (Gerace) by the ICCA Consortium, the Fondazione Mediterranea Falchi, the Aspromonte National Park, the IUCN CEESP and WCPA Commissions and the Regional Office for Europe of the IUCN Global Protected Area Programme.



The case studies presented at Trino indicated that in Italy local communities contribute to biodiversity conservation in several ways, and under a variety of legal and policy frameworks. The lands domestically classified under the heading *proprietà collettive e terre di uso civico* (common properties and civic uses lands) are very adherent to the international understandings of ICCAs. They are very significant both in term of the extension of the protected land and of impact on biodiversity conservation. Exact figures are not available, but estimations indicate a total amount up to nearly 10% of the national territory, if we include lands not officially considered as such but relevant in other ways. Many communities have an elected board that manages the common patrimony for the collective good. Many such communities have part of their lands designated as part of the Nature 2000 network established by the European Union. A couple of communities are also administering with full legal title official protected areas, a capacity granted by the 1991 national Framework Law on Protected Areas. Several national parks include civic use

lands, and all common properties and civic use lands are subject to measures of environmental conservation by national law, independently of the national system of protected areas. The legal protection clauses were progressively attached to common lands to safeguard the original uses, in line with the communities’ practices. This was to secure a sustainable use of the local resources and to transmit an intact natural patrimony to the future generations.

These outstanding results were achieved thanks to a long history of active engagement by some communities in defending their rights, in some cases under several different sovereign States that took control of their territory at different times. Public attention favored the formation of several associations and networks. Today the *Consulta Nazionale della Proprietà Collettiva* (National Advisory Body for Common Properties - CNPC) provides key advice on legislation and policy. Its federal structure along regional lines responds to the need to advocate at both national and regional (subnational) levels.

There are several academic departments active in the field of common property. Since 1995 the *Centro Studii Documentazione sugli Usi Civici e le Proprietà Collettive* (Centre for the Study and Documentation on Civic Uses and Common Properties) based at the University of Trento organizes the *Riunione scientifica*, the national yearly meeting bringing together academicians, communities' representatives, experts and decision makers. This recurrent event greatly contributed to build the basic understandings for improvement in policy and to promote research. It generated relevant scientific outputs gathered in several edited volumes, monographs and in the *Archivio Scialoja-Bolla – Annali di studi sulla proprietà collettiva*, a specialized scientific journal. The relevant literature produced in Italy and the 3 workshops held in Italy provided the background reference of the [case study on Italy](#) included in *Recognising and Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Global Overview and National Case Studies*. In this study I have tried to re-interpret the intricate Italian tradition on common properties in terms relevant to the global understandings of ICCAs. The XVIII *Riunione scientifica* held last November in Trento gave the opportunity to present the synthesis of this long work to the larger national audience concerned with common properties. This was done with the help of a power point prepared by Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend and myself. The [presentation](#) focused on the international achievements on ICCAs and their relevance to the common properties in Italy. The role of the European Union emerged as a key concern in Italy. Some Italian ICCAs could access the financial instruments of the EU, with an overall good impact both in terms of environmental management and capacity building. However, most ICCAs for various reasons were not eligible and were excluded from the EU policy. It is therefore urgent that in application of CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas and considering the CBD Aichi Targets the EU integrates ICCAs into its environmental strategy and adopts specific policy to support the European ICCAs, including recognition of the environmental function of common properties and devising appropriate procedures.

EUROPE

Governance types in Eastern Europe – is community conservation still present?

By Iris Beneš, Regional Coordinator for Northern, Central and Eastern Europe



A small island on a Baltic sea called Vilm is a place where people from around the world come to learn, teach and exchange experiences about nature conservation issues. The same Vilm was the venue of the final workshop for the project called “Governance of Protected Areas in Eastern Europe – case studies on different governance types and lessons learned”. The workshop was convened by the International Academy for Nature Conservation among experts and representatives of relevant ministries from Eastern European countries, as well as experts from NGOs, networks and organisations, including the ICCA Consortium

The project has been commissioned by Bundesamt für Naturschutz (BfN) of Germany to ProPark of Romania in order to enhance interest and improve understanding of decision and policy makers in adopting innovative systems of protected area governance, especially in countries with a traditionally centralized system of decision-making. The expectations were that improving knowledge on the existing governance types, on their importance, on the legal and administrative frameworks and resources needed for their use, will contribute to

adopting appropriate measures in the eastern European countries. The study was conducted in the 18 following countries: Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Serbia, Moldova, Bulgaria, Belarus, Croatia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Albania, Georgia, Armenia and Finland.

Compared with the rest of the Europe, Eastern Europe is a place of extremely well preserved biodiversity. Data for mammals, bird and fish species that can be found in the Red List of Threatened Species (by area) are much better in Easter than in Western Europe (EEA, 2010). ICCAs in eastern Europe are predominately connected to agriculture practices and have been so for thousands of years. Grazing, forest usage, burning vegetation and seeding the crops are the most common activities that have shaped the landscape as we know it today.

Due to unfavourable historical circumstances and the omnipresent control of the State, however, Easter Europe is also a place where “the commons” have survived by being isolated and unattractive for the majority of the population. The literature and recoded expertise on community conservation are virtually non-existent and the few remaining cases resembling ICCAs are at risk of disappearing in this and the following decade, due to economic and social pressures and disappearance of the last generation of pastoralists, traditional fishermen and even some rare transhumance practices still alive.

In many of the socialist/communist countries nationalization processes took place and all lands that in pre-war time fell under communal governance and management regulated by specific communities were proclaimed “common” in the sense of “belonging to everyone”, i.e. to the State. The nationalization was conducted in most of the countries without any compensation, and thousands of acres became state-owned land. The best land was subjected to agricultural intensification, but in some areas this was not possible so the communities continued to exercise their common rights *de facto*. These are places where most ICCAs in region do still exist – in spite of unfavourable circumstances – but with no future unless some conditions drastically change.

It is very challenging to communicate the message of ICCAs in the region, especially among the existing PA administration but also among the people on the ground who in many ways lost the sense of community and participation over years of passivity. One has to look for ICCAs carefully – they are not on web pages, in the legislation, in the topics of academic community or even in the newly started discussions on the commons as the concept. But, when one does find them, they are very precious and unique.



The ICCA Consortium was represented in the Vilm workshop and the project that called it through the Advisory Board of the Project by Grazia Borrini Feyerabend and Iris Beneš. Apart from being involved in defining the methodology, their participation in the Vilm workshop included a presentation on ICCAs in Croatia. Various examples in Spain were given by the newly recruited coordinator for southern Europe, Sergio Couto. An inspired evening presentation by Grazia on ICCAs all over the world and their place in the international conservation efforts opened the participants’ eyes and allowed them to look at the examples from their countries from a different perspective and with a newly found understanding.

The study, as the result of the project, will be published by the end of 2012 or beginning of the 2013 and will show the vast diversity of types of governance collected in different countries. In many examples these cases exist *de facto* but do not have a basis in the national legislation. The conservation results of these cases, however, should nevertheless stimulate governments to harmonize their legislation with the international conventions and to recognise ICCAs as a legitimate and legal governance type for protected areas and beyond.

PUBLICATIONS

Recognising & Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities – CBD Secretariat Technical Series 64



The ICCA Consortium released a comprehensive publication on the recognition and support of ICCAs, at the just-concluded CBD COP11 in Hyderabad, India. Entitled *Recognising and Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities: Global overview and national case studies*, and published by the CBD Secretariat as its Technical Series No. 64, this book contains a global overview, 19 country level case studies, and several background documents relevant to ICCAs.

This publication is based on a study undertaken by the ICCA Consortium, coordinated by Kalpavriksh, and sponsored by The Christensen Fund and the UNDP through the GEF Small Grants Programme/UNOPS. It also incorporates some key findings of a parallel project on ICCA Legislation, also undertaken by the ICCA Consortium, and coordinated by Natural Justice.

The publication was launched at a full-day Colloquium on the Role of ICCAs in Achieving the Aichi Targets, organised jointly by the CBD Secretariat, ICCA Consortium, and other partners, on 13th October at the CBD COP11. It was released by Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the CBD Executive Secretary. The key results were also presented at a number of side events during COP11, and the publication was presented to the media, also on 13th October.

The global overview, 19 country case studies, and annexures in this publication provide:

- a glimpse of the range, diversity, coverage, and values of ICCAs, and the socio-cultural, economic and political contexts important for them;
- an understanding of the status and processes of recognizing and supporting ICCAs, at both international and national levels, and suggestions on how appropriate recognition and support could be given to them;
- information and recommendations to help Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) implement their commitments under the Programme of Work on Protected Areas or other programmes and action plans of the CBD, and achieve relevant Aichi Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;
- information and recommendations to help Parties to the CBD and other countries implement their commitments under other relevant international agreements including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; and
- information and recommendations on how to strengthen the efforts of civil society organizations, including those of indigenous peoples and local communities, in obtaining appropriate recognition and support for ICCAs.

This publication stresses that, in order to maintain and enhance the values of ICCAs, indigenous peoples and local communities governing them need *adequate* and *appropriate* recognition, including:

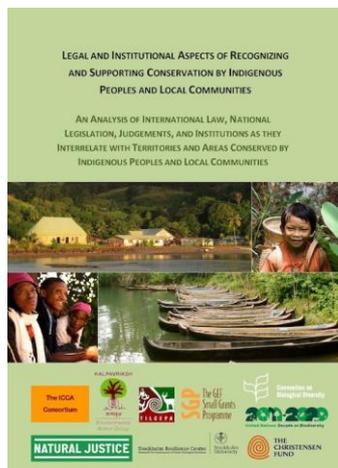
- **Clear rights to territories and natural resources, in both terrestrial and marine areas**
- **Recognition of their institutions of collective governance**
- **Rights to exclude destructive activities like mining**
- **Respect of diverse cultures, lifestyles, economic systems**
- **Recognition of ICCAs as protected areas or other effective conservation areas**

Global cooperation is needed to enable all countries achieve recognition of ICCAs, to enhance their contribution to conservation, livelihood security, and cultural sustenance. The publication provides pointers on how this can be done through legal, administrative, social, financial, advocacy, networking and other forms of recognition and support.

Citation: Kothari, Ashish with Corrigan, Colleen, Jonas, Harry, Neumann, Aurélie, and Shrumm, Holly. (eds). 2012. *Recognising and Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved By Indigenous Peoples And Local Communities: Global Overview and National Case Studies*. Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, ICCA Consortium, Kalpavriksh, and Natural Justice, Montreal, Canada. Technical Series no. 64, 160 pp.

- ▶ For further details, contact [Ashish Kothari](#)
 - ▶ Download the [overview report](#)
- ▶ Download the case studies from the following individual countries: [Australia](#); [Bolivia](#); [Canada](#); [Chile](#); [Costa Rica](#); [Croatia](#); [England](#); [Fiji](#); [India](#); [Iran](#); [Italy](#); [Kenya](#); [Namibia](#); [Panama](#); [Philippines](#); [Russia](#); [Senegal](#); [Spain](#); [Suriname](#)

Legal and Institutional Aspects of Recognizing and Supporting Conservation by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities



The ICCA Consortium Member Natural Justice coordinated a study on the effects of international and national laws, judgements, and institutional frameworks on the integrity of ICCAs. It also explored the ways in which indigenous peoples and local communities are working within international and national legal frameworks to maintain the resilience of their ICCAs. The full study comprises an analysis of international instruments, judgements, guidelines, decisions, resolutions, and recommendations that relate to ICCAs; as well as regional overviews and 15 country-level reports. This publication sets out the key findings of this body of research and proposes a number of important recommendations for state Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, among others, about how to improve their legal and non-legal recognition of and support for ICCAs.

- ▶ [Download the study](#)

The Living Convention on Biocultural Diversity: A Compendium of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Rights Relevant to Maintaining the Integrity and Resilience of Territories and other Biocultural Systems



Indigenous peoples and local communities often ask what their rights are at the international level. The answer to this crucial question is complicated for several reasons, including the fact that the provisions containing the rights are spread across a wide range of international instruments, each with its own particular focus. As a result, Indigenous peoples and local communities are denied an easily accessible means of learning about the full spectrum of their rights relating to issues such as developments on their territories, lands and waters and the use of their natural resources and knowledge.

To address this deficiency, and to help answer to the question posed above, Natural Justice has developed the first edition of *The Living Convention on Biocultural Diversity: A Compendium of Indigenous Peoples' and*

Local Communities' Rights Relevant to Maintaining the Integrity and Resilience of Territories and other Biocultural Systems (the Living Convention). Using an integrated rights approach, the Living Convention provides a range of the most important provisions relating to the linkages between biological and cultural diversity. It sets them out in an ordered manner, grouping similar provisions under the same heading to help the reader to be able to quickly assess the extent of international law relating to specific issues. In this way, the Living Convention aims to democratize international law by providing a straightforward resource for Indigenous peoples, local communities, and their supporting organizations to refer to when seeking to understand their international rights.

The Living Convention is divided into three parts:

Part I contains A Compendium of Indigenous Peoples' and Local Communities' Rights Relevant to Maintaining the Integrity and Resilience of Territories and other Biocultural Systems, which bundles provisions from various international instruments under the rights headings discussed above.

Part II sets out the rationale and methodology of the research undertaken to develop the Compendium.

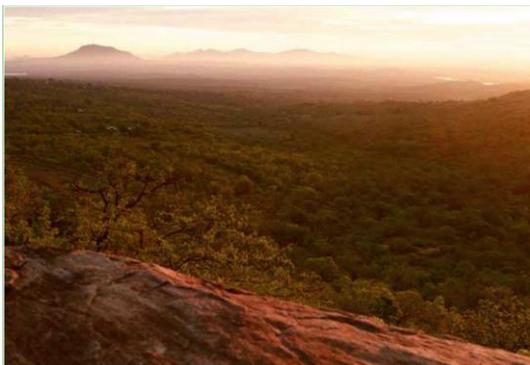
Part III sets out a number of key questions raised by the Compendium concerning, for example, the utility of integrated rights approaches, how international law can be reformed, and how national governments can better uphold their international commitments. It then suggests initial activities that could further deepen the analysis and ways to address the current weaknesses in the development and implementation of international law so as to better support the integrity and resilience of biocultural diversity.

The Living Convention also includes annexes, which (among other things): detail the instruments reviewed, included, and excluded from the Compendium; provide a list of relevant international and regional judgments; and list a number of Indigenous peoples' declarations.

This first edition of the Living Convention represents the initial step in an ongoing process of ensuring that it properly fulfills its intended purpose. We invite you to peer-review the publication and to work with us and others to improve it and to take it forward in practice.

► [Download the publication](#)

Recognising Sacred Natural Sites and Territories in Kenya



A new Report, "[Recognising Sacred Natural Sites and Territories in Kenya](#)", published in November 2012 by the Institute for Culture and Ecology, African Biodiversity Network and the Gaia Foundation calls for greater recognition of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories and their Community Governance Systems.

For millennia, indigenous and local communities around the world have upheld their responsibilities, passed down by their grandparents and ancestors, as the Custodians of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories. Sacred Natural Sites are critical places within ecosystems, such as forests, mountains and rivers, which exist as a network embedded within a territory. It is because of the communities' traditional ecological knowledge and customs that biodiversity as well as cultural identity, spiritual practices and customary governance systems have been protected.

The Report reveals, however, that many Sacred Natural Sites and communities in Kenya, such as the Kaya forests, and across the planet are under threat from mining, tourism and other development. There is inadequate recognition of communities' customary governance systems of Sacred Natural Sites and Territories - a view shared by Natural Justice's Kenya Legal Review 2012 in the context of ICCAs. Further the Report explains how legal and policy frameworks in Kenya are complex, contradictory and human-centred –

supporting short-term human interests at the expense of the larger community of life on Earth and future generations. There are however significant opportunities for change.

The Report examines in detail how the Kenyan Constitution 2010 and national and international laws can support the recognition of Sacred Natural Sites and their community governance systems. It makes a number of recommendations for communities, civil society and Government to strengthen the recognition of, and support for, community Custodians of Sacred Natural Sites and their customary governance systems, based on '[Earth Law](#)' principles. It also explores some of the issues which need to be addressed in the pending Community Land Act in Kenya.

Gathuru Mburu, Coordinator of the African Biodiversity Network based in Kenya, comments, "*This report shows the progressive development and potential of Kenya's legal system towards recognising Sacred Natural Sites and Territories. The community protection of these sacred places, in accordance with customary governance systems which respect the larger Earth Community of life, is non-negotiable if we are to ensure the health and wellbeing of present and future generations.*"

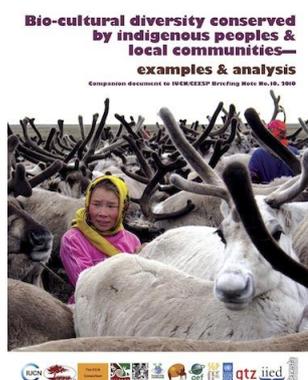
Community initiatives in Kenya and other countries, which are establishing precedents to protect and secure legal recognition of sacred lands, are also explored. For example, the [Statement of Common African Customary Laws for the Protection of Sacred Natural Sites](#) and film [Sacred Voices](#); the registration of a network of Sacred Natural Sites in Venda, South Africa including as an ICCA; the recognition of UNESCO Intangible Heritage in Pira Paraná, Colombia; and UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in Sheka forest, Ethiopia.

Liz Hosken, Director of the Gaia Foundation in the UK, comments, "*This Report urges us all to recognise and support the calls of communities to respect their Sacred Natural Sites and Territories as No-Go areas for "development", and to recognise indigenous and local communities as the Custodians who protect these sacred places, through their ecological governance systems.*"

The Report serves as a timely training and advocacy tool for all those seeking to defend these sanctuaries of bio-cultural diversity from growing threats, and to secure recognition of communities' rights and responsibilities to govern and protect Sacred Natural Sites and Territories on their own terms.

► [Download the report](#)

REPRINT - Bio-cultural diversity conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities: examples and analysis



This document provides many examples and the analysis that underlie the main policy advice provided by the ICCA Consortium addressing governments, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities engaged in collaboration, support and joint learning about ICCAs. The document describes in detail concepts concerning ICCAs and illustrates with examples eleven lessons learned in recognising and securing them all over the world. It has been reprinted in English and French in October 2012 with support from GIZ, and can be ordered free of charge – only mailing costs should be covered - from the ICCA Consortium (please contact aurelie@iccaconsortium.org).

► Download the publication in [English](#) or in [French](#)

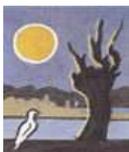
LIFE OF THE CONSORTIUM

New Members & Honorary Members

The Consortium is delighted to welcome eleven new Members:



[Anthrowatch](#), a national NGO based in the Philippines



[Brod Ecological Society](#), a local NGO based in Croatia



[Deccan Development Society](#), a local NGO based in India



Fondazione Mediterranea Falchi, a national NGO based in Italy



[Foundation for Ecological Security](#), a national NGO based in India

Kereimbas, an indigenous people organisation from Bolivia



REPALEF, a national federation of IPs&LCs in the Democratic Republic of Congo



[Savia](#), a national NGO based in Bolivia

UNICAMEL, a national federation of tribal camel herders in Iran

UNINOMAD, a national federation of tribal nomadic peoples in Iran



[Vasundhara](#), a local NGO based in India

We are also warmly welcoming three new Honorary Members:

1. Charles Besancon, Programme Officer, CBD Secretariat, based in Canada
 2. Corinne Arnould, Paroles de Nature, based in France
 3. Jeffrey Campbell, Director of Grantmaking, The Christensen Fund, based in the USA
-

Staff announcements



The Consortium is happy to welcome a new **Regional Coordinator for Forest Ecosystems in Central Africa**, Mr. **Joseph Itwonga**. Joseph is an indigenous Walikale from the North Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. He graduated in Rural Development and is currently Coordinator of the Network of indigenous peoples and local communities for the sustainable management of forest ecosystems (REPALEF) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Since March 2012, he is also a member of the technical committee of the similar network that covers the whole of Central Africa (REPALEAC). In addition to creating his own organization, Shirika La BAMBUTI, whose work he coordinates in the provinces of North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema, Joseph

has been director or coordinator of several local or provincial organisations defending human and indigenous peoples' rights. As such, he assured a number of times their representation in international meetings of the UN, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Bank. You can contact Joseph at:

itojose2000@yahoo.fr.



We are also happy to be joined by **Sergio Couto González** as the new Consortium's **Regional Coordinator for West & South Europe**. Sergio is a Spanish biologist whose original background is related to multidisciplinary, participatory and innovative approaches to the study, management and conservation of vertebrates and their ecosystems. Among other institutions, he has worked as a technician and researcher for the Pyrenean Institute of Ecology (CSIC), the European Commission and the Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO/BirdLife). He was also a consultant on wildlife management and inventory for the private sector and administration on several NPAs. Sergio's professional experience on biodiversity conservation projects focused in

developing quality tools to enhance local community participation and commitment on biodiversity conservation goals, especially in rural areas. His work led him to understand the crucial positive role of ICCA in our past and for our future, not only for their environmental, cultural and democracy rooted values, but also for their potential to help solving many of the environmental, social and economic challenges of our time. More recently Sergio has produced a national case study on ICCA recognition and support in Spain. You can contact Sergio at: sergio@iccaconsortium.org

New: The Consortium blog!



Visit the blog at: <http://iccaconsortium.wordpress.com>

An accompaniment to our website, the blog is a hub of information for ICCA and Consortium news. It is managed by the Communications Officer, Vanessa Reid and most of its content comes from Consortium Members and Staff. It lists outcomes from local to international events, press releases, ICCA-related articles and publications, the work of Consortium Members and Staff and anything else related to ICCAs

and the mission of the Consortium. If you would like something listed within the blog, write to Vanessa: vanessa@iccaconsortium.org. Please also remember to visit our Facebook page 'ICCA Consortium' and Twitter account '@iccaconsortium' to keep up to date with the Consortium's news.

The Consortium would like to warmly acknowledge the Partners and sponsors that made possible its work in 2012, including the Christensen Fund, the UNDP GEF SGP and Environment and Energy Group, Swedbio, the Equator Initiative, the SALVIA Foundation, GIZ, the CBD Secretariat, the IUCN Commission on Environmental,

Economic and Social Policy, GEF, the SWIFT Foundation, the Institute of International Education; as well as Members of the Consortium and national NGOs and government agencies from France, Germany India, Iran, Nepal, The Netherlands, the Philippines, Switzerland and Taiwan – among others.



Photos courtesy of: Centre for Humans and Nature, Aurélie Neumann, Christian Chatelain, Giovanni Reyes, Marco Bassi, Ashish Kothari, Jess Phillimore, Harry Jonas, Grazia Borrini-Feyerabend, Dario Novellino, Vanessa Jones / BWAG, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Reporting Services, Abderrahim Ouarghidi, Así Conserva Chile.

The ICCA Consortium

www.iccaconsortium.org

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