

# Report

## FACILITATING GRASSROOTS ANALYSES AND THE PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT OF A PHOTO STORY ON THREATS TO "SANTIAGO DE COVELO NEIGHBOUR WOODLAND" ICCA AND ITS COMMUNITY RESPONSES



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**The ICCA  
Consortium**

## The ICCA Consortium



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**Frontpage photograph:** Sergio Couto

## Index

1. MVMCS and the Santiago de Covelo MVMC	3
2. First grassroot discussion and main threats to the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo	5
3. Meetings with other relevant actors	9
4. The photostory of MVMC Santiago de Covelo threats and its responses	10
5. Resilience and security of the MVMC Santiago de Covelo	10
6. Authors conclusions and recommendations	10
 Annex I: Resilience and Security Tool	 14

# Facilitating grassroots analyses and the participatory development of a photo story on threats to “Santiago de Covelo Neighbour Woodland” ICCA and its community responses

## 1. MVMCs and the Santiago de Covelo MVMC

Neighbour Woodlands -called in Galician language *Monte Veciñal en Man Común*, MVMC- is an very old land tenure figure typical from northwest Spain and original from the Germanic law -in opposition to roman origin laws, like those that are the basis for the typical “Communal Woodlands”. The MVMC are a common phenomenon in Galicia (Northwest Spain), with 2,835 MVMCs on the region, -representing 608,728 ha, 30% of the total forest surface of Galicia.

Although traditionally MVMC has been based on customary rules, with the return of the democracy to Spain in the 70s, both common property and MVMCs were full recognised



**Map 1:** Situation of the Santiago de Covelo Neighbour Woodland in Spain

at legal and administrative level. In the case of MVMC these legal and administrative recognition was due to a historical strong commoner organization and mobilization, based on the commoners will to recover their management and governance rights, alienated by the administration during Franco's dictatorship.



Covelo landscape. Photo: Sergio Couto



The Santiago de Covelo Neighbour Woodland is situated in Pontevedra province, Galicia, northwest Spain, in the municipality of Covelo -see map 1. The original main habitats of the area are mountainous atlantic forests with wet shrubs and bogs, although currently, pastures, patched crops and pinus forest plantations are also present. Its surface is 700 ha, ranging from 860 to 400 m.a.s.l. The area has several outstanding endangered habitats and species, as several kinds of bogs and wet atlantic shrub habitats, along with species as the Iberian wolf (*Canis lupus signatus*) or the Pyrenean desman (*Galemys pyrenaicus*), and several peninsular endemic amphibians, reptiles and plants.



Photo: Sergio Couto

On the cultural heritage outstands an Iron Age village archaeological site, several prehistoric megalithic monuments and petroglyphs, as well as a traditional grain waterwheel, along with several traditional irrigation structures.

Regarding the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, governance system, it has been greatly improved 8 years ago with the election of a new Steering Committee formed by

several young community members. This new Steering Committee found some kind of abandonment and lack of participation of the community on the management of the MVMC, based, among other factors, on a lack of democratic recent tradition and on the low economic incomes that the MVMC products (mainly wood) was producing.

The new Steering Committee enhanced the direct democracy system of the MVMC, and developed several transparency tools -e.g. a free-access book of minutes. On the other hand they enhanced the social, cultural and environmental values of the MVMC that had been quite neglected.

As in all MVMC, the governance system of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo is direct democracy by means of a Commoners Meeting. Currently fifty houses (families) are commoners of the MVMC, and the Steering Committee has just been reelected for the third time (third period of 4 years).

The basis of MVMCs is that any neighbour house -independently of its nationality, economic status, etc.- has the inherent right to become a commoner and share rights, responsibilities and benefits related to the management and governance of the MVMC. All neighbours share all MVMC surface, having no right to divide, inherit, sell, hire, etc. any part of it. Another important point



Reviewing of the preliminary information and preparation of the 1st grassroots discussion. Photo: Sergio Couto



1st grassroots discussion with the MVMC Steering Committee. Photo: José Eugenio Gutiérrez

of MVMC is that administration -including municipalities- has no representation or voice in the MVMC governance system, being thus all decisions made by the Commoners' Meeting independently of administration, although, of course, inside the established legal and administrative general framework.

The Commoners Meeting is called is mandatory called, at least once a year, but can be called as many times as needed, and is the governance body where all decisions are taken. The Commoners Meeting is based in a direct democracy system, where no intermediaries exist, and where all votes are equal. The representation unit in the Commoners Meeting is the house, meaning a group of relatives living in the same house. The decisions adopted by the Commoners Meeting are implemented by the Steering Committee, elected by and among the commoners.



Fully functional traditional waterwheel restored by the MVMC. Photo: Alexandre Cendón, MVMC of Santiago de Covelo.

## 2. First grassroots discussion and main threats to the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo

The study on the threats to the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo was conducted between the 6<sup>th</sup> June to the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2012. After contacting the president of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo the 20<sup>th</sup> of May, the authors moved to the MVMC on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June to recognise the area and meet the relevant agents related with the MVMC and its threats and responses.

After several days in the area, the first grassroots discussion took place in Covelo the 9<sup>th</sup> of June in a meeting organized with the Santiago de Covelo MVMC Steering Committee.

The meeting took three hours, was recorded and -all along the meeting- the Steering Committee was very participative and open when talking about the MVMC threats.

As result of the discussion the threats identified by the commoners and the solutions implemented by them were the following:

**Ageing and depopulation:** Covelo is a rural area that has been suffering depopulation for several decades. Although this is a general problem for many European rural areas, the MVMC is working to promote and attract tourism to the MVMC by developing trails and signaling its rich environmental and cultural heritage, with good results. Many rural tourists arriving at Covelo enjoy the MVMC trails and visit their cultural features. This small but clear increase in the touristic value of the area has been confirmed by the interviewed manager of a rural inn established close to the MVMC main entrance.





**Municipality interference:** Commoners complaint about the bad relation with the municipality, which used to have the power that is currently on the hands of the Commoners Meeting. The Steering Committee has been working hard to enhance community participation and transparency in the decision taking processes -e.g. by means of developing open-access written official minutes, to avoid interested critics and misinterpretations on the management and motivations of the Steering Committee. As result the Steering Committee has been re-elected for the 3<sup>rd</sup> period of 4 years in 2012.

**Wind turbine projects:** This is a common phenomenon in this mountainous area. Although initially commoners do not support that kind of impacting projects, an especial Commoners Meeting will be called to address the issue. Commoners are worried about the fact that administration has legal tools to develop the project in the MVMC, even against the will of the MVMC. So far the only decision implemented to face this serious threat has

been to call the Commoners Meeting.

**Forest fires:** Forest fires are a constant threat for Spanish forests, specially in summer. Commoners have faced this threat by means



Detail of a sign on the Iron Age village archaeological site of the MVMC. Photo: Sergio Couto



of management tools focused on prevention. These management includes elimination of allochthonous pyrophylic species (mainly *Eucalyptus*), enhancement of autochthonous wet atlantic forest, including extensive mixed reforestation with native species as the chestnut tree (*Castanea sativa*) and the diversification of the landscape in a multifunctional mosaic (development of pastures, forests, bushes, bogs, etc.) that prevent the spread of potential fires. As result there have been no fires for more than 8 years.

**Damages to the MVMC cultural heritage:** In the past, several cultural items as waterwheels, petroglyphs or megalithic monuments were damaged because of the ignorance of their value or existence, something also related with the former abandonment of these structures by the MVMC. Currently the MVMC has catalogued and signaling them



Meeting with Marcos Estévez, forest engineer.  
Photo: Carolina Porto Paderne

all, with the aim to feature their value. In some cases, restoration activities were developed, as the recovery of a waterwheel or several stone crosses and traditional stone cavities to worship the dead souls, called *petos de ánimas*.

**Damage to the MVMC natural heritage:** As in the case of cultural items, several habitat and species of the MVMC were in

Visit to the house-museum *Pazo da Cruz*, in Covelo. Maximino helped us to understand the historic strong relation of Covelo inhabitants with forest management. Photo: Carolina Porto Paderne.







Meeting with Graciano, the president of the Hunting Society "A Covelense", which commonly exploit the MVMC hunting rights. Photo: Carolina Porto Paderne

an unfavorable conservation status, due to the lack of appreciation by an important part of the local community -including the MVMC commoners- of the rarity, threatened status and ecological importance of these habitats and species. The new Steering Committee raised these problems among

the commoners focusing a conservationist approach to enhance the ecological functions of the habitats and species of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo.

As result of the Commoners Meeting decisions, several species are especially protected inside the MVMC territory. For example the Commoners Meeting decided to forbid roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) hunting inside the MVMC to help the ongoing recovery and spread of the species in the region, or invested own funds and subsidies on the recovering, wood fencing and signaling of several bogs, that are endangered and priority habitats under the European Union Habitats Directive. Although Iberian wolf (*Canis lupus signatus*) is already protected, the MVMC policy is to help the species by enhancing the compatibility among livestock management and Iberian wolf recovery.



Pazo da Cruz old photo collection. Photo: Carolina Porto Paderne

In order to develop at maximum level the multifunctional potential of the MVMC natural heritage, the MVMC has signed an agreement with the "A Covelense" Hunting Society, a local common hunting organization. The agreement set a number of restrictive rules



Roe deer (*Capreolus capreolus*) is a species recently recolonising the area, after its extinction in western and central Galicia. Roe deer hunting is forbidden in the Santiago de Covelo MVMC territory, a decision taken in the MVMC Commoners Meeting to boost its recovery. Photo: Daniel Cara, MVMC of Santiago de Covelo.



(beyond those imposed by the current legal and administrative framework) from which the Hunting Society is responsible to comply with, in order to preserve the environmental values of the MVMC, to commonly enjoy the MVMC hunting rights.

### 3. Meetings with other relevant actors

In order to complement the information provided by the documentation and the commoners of the MVMC, some other relevant actors were interviewed. These are the following persons:

**Ignacio Munilla Rumbao:** Professor of the Botany Department of the University of Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, he is specialist on plant-animal interaction. He provided valuable information and data of the natural habitats and species of the Covelo area, especially on their importance on the European Union Natura 2000 Network.

**Marcos Estévez:** Forest engineer. He has been working for several years on MVMC forest planning in the area. Marcos provided a clear, experienced and very interesting inside view of the social and economic processes related to MVMC management, its technical criteria and its relation with administrative

institutions.

**Maximino:** Maximino manage a museum-house in Covelo called *Pazo da Cruz*. In this museum he gathers and restore all kind of traditional objects and methodologies that help us to understand how our ancestors lived in the area, as well as the social and economic changes the area have been going through in the last decades.

**Graciano:** Graciano is the president of another commonly managed institution: the Hunting Society “A Covelense”. This Hunting Society exploits the hunting rights of the MVMC by means of a recent agreement based in strict conservation-oriented rules.

**Susana Costa:** She is biologist and works on a rural inn close to the Santiago de Covelo main access road. She helped us to contact some of the relevant actors of the area, as well as informed us of many useful addresses. Her information on the tourist interest on the MVMC cultural and natural values and its impact on the local economy helped us to assess the degree of success of the MVMC tourist initiatives.

To also collect old pictures that could help in the photo story, we had visited the municipal library and the photos collection of the museum-house “*Pazo da Cruz*”.



Commoners of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo celebrating the inauguration of the MVMC culture and nature trail. Photo: Alexandre Cendón, MVMC of Santiago de Covelo

#### 4. The photo story of the threats of the MVMC Santiago de Covelo and its responses

The pictures used in the photo story were taken by some of the members of the Steering Committee of the MVMC: Álex Cendón is the president of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo and Daniel Cara is member of the Steering Committee. Some other pictures were taken by the authors during the field visit to the MVMC and the old ones were kindly provided by public library of Covelo and by the museum-house *Pazo da Cruz*, also in Covelo.

#### 5. Resilience and security of the MVMC Santiago de Covelo

The 9<sup>th</sup> of June, after the first grassroots discussion, the authors asked to the Steering Committee of the MVMC about the possibility of let the evaluation of the resilience and security tool for another day, but the Steering Committee proposed to do it at the moment, in part for their immediate interest in the details of the tool as well for the possible agenda difficulties to meet all again in a

further meeting.

The result of the resilience and security tool is included in annex I of the present report. The total score index for the MVMC Santiago de Covelo is 0.68.

#### 6. Authors conclusions and recommendations

MVMC are fully recognised from the legal and administrative point of view, having their own national and regional laws, as well as their own specific statutes passed by each MVMC Commoners Meeting, so -as is the case of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo- their legal and administrative recognition is one of the basis of their survival as ICCAs.

It seems clear that a part of the threats to MVMC is related with the lack of knowledge and recognition by the general society, the administration and a part of the local communities of their historical, cultural, environmental and democracy values linked to MVMC. In the case of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, the Steering Committee have been able to enhance and recover much of the community appreciation of these values by means of developing the social and



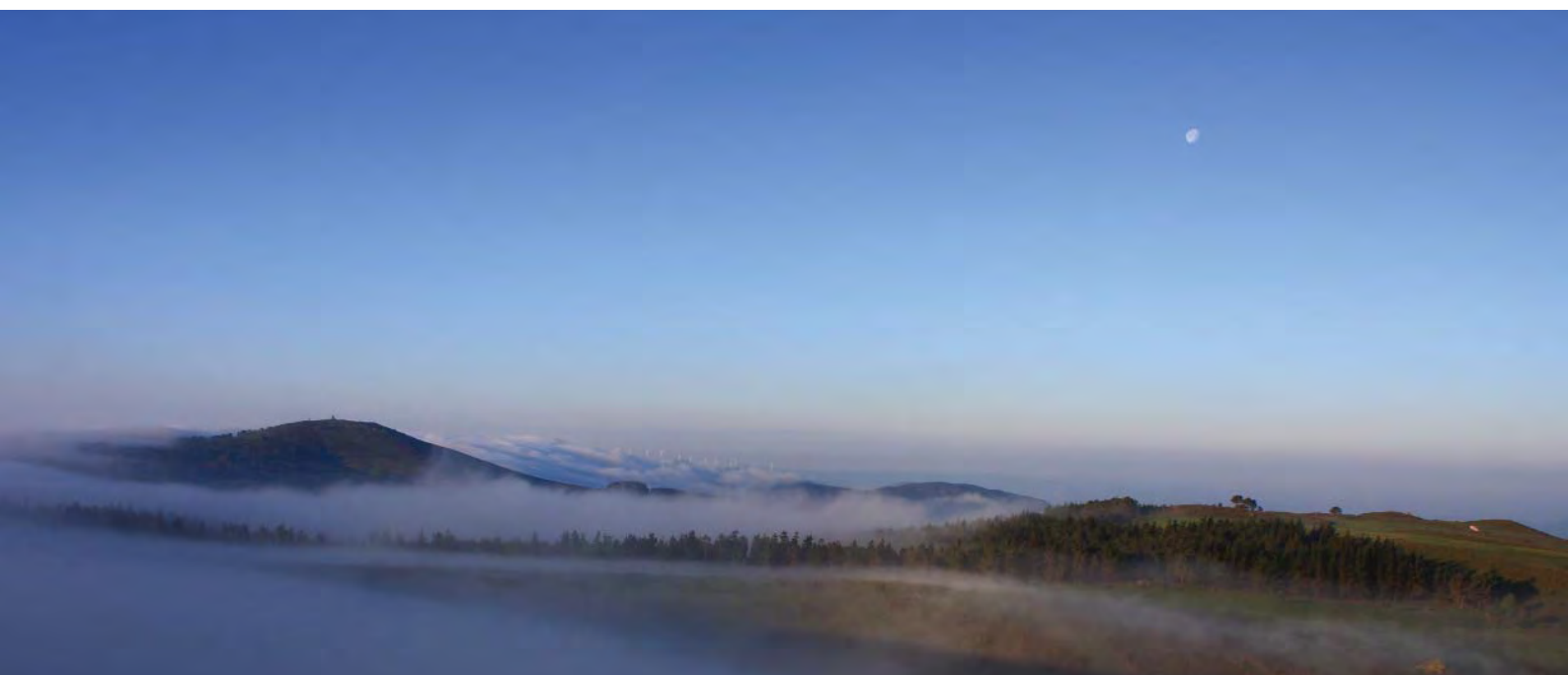
environmental functions of these commonly managed forests, without forgetting or let prevail its also important economic function.

This is such a real risk that many MVMC are currently managed by big wood pulp companies. Although the legal exploitation rights remain on the MVMC commoners, many MVMC have quit the management responsibilities of their MVMC by signing exploitation contracts with these companies. These companies usually establish Eucalyptus monocultures, critically affecting the social and environmental values of the MVMC.

Other conclusion is that an important threat to this ICCA is the attempts from local administrations to instrumentalise the MVMC. This is a common phenomenon, at least in Spain, for which some interest groups, usually political parties seize power in organizations initially developed to serve public interests -neighbour associations, public organizations, worker or farmer unions, etc.- by means of local or regional agents that use the institution to serve the interest of a given political party, independently of the genuine interests of the social group they represent, and by the way develop their own political careers and sometimes also their personal assets.

It is something of additional difficulty for any governance group, as it is the case of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, to develop their activities without the support -both economic and political- or with the animosity of some of this institutions and logging companies that should be sharing, at least, some of the community goals. Nonetheless, the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo has been able to face this threat by enhancing the transparency and democracy of their governance system. This have been proved crucial to defend the MVMC Steering Committee governance system, the implementation of its decisions and the transparency of the financial statements, all against vested critics and rumours intended to undermine the confidence of the community on the MVMC, and specially against the current Steering Committee approaches on management. As result, the popular support of the commoners -by the elections to the Steering Committee and by supporting these approaches in the Commoners Meeting- have been enough to make this management approach possible.

Another important conclusion is the lack of an active commitment of most commoners on the management of the MVMC. In former times, when the family economy greatly depended on the MVMC management, this active participation was granted. Currently,



Landscape of the high lands of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo. Photo: Daniel Cara, MVMC de Santiago de Covelo

as the economic importance of the MVMC decrease in the incomes of the local families, this commitment can be perceived as a unnecessary and bothering waste of time. In this situation, it is important to enhance the social, cultural and environmental values of the MVMC to drive the focus to new interests and satisfy new needs. The MVMC has been able to do this, although this perception change process is slow among the commoners and can remain absent in most of the local community members (many local inhabitants of Covelo are not interested in being commoners). One of the threats to this, is the fact that all the changes and improvements on conservation and democracy of the MVMC is based on the friendship and personal commitment of a handful of young commoners that forms the Steering Committee.

Another strong point of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo has been their confidence on technical advising to implement and achieve their management goals. Although this kind of professional planning can be expensive and time consuming, it has been demonstrated as a key tool for the management and implementation of the general goals and criteria shared by the commoners. This is the

The free ranging Galician horse breed is a basic trophic resource for the Iberian wolf, and helps to prevent overgrown in Galician mountains. Photo: Alexandre Cendón, Santiago de Covelo MVMC.



case, for example, of the Forest Management Plan elaborated by a specialised forest planning company.

Another conclusion is that the governance processes related with the management of MVMC helps to integrate, understand and learn from the different local interests -hunt, pastoral, leisure, cultural, economic, ecologic interests- being thus a tool that, when open, transparent and democratic, help members to gain and internalise democratic community coexistence values.

From our point of view the never-ending process opened in the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo by this young group of commoners -even if not free from threats and difficulties-, is an extremely interesting experience with a demonstration value that it is difficult to overestimate. In the other hand the Santiago de Covelo MVMC represents, at least in rural Europe, an intelligent way to match current social, ecological, economic and democracy needs of current society with the ancient values that are still present -although disappearing- in many of this ICCA areas and institutions, once the former subsistence rural economy is swiftly disappearing, along with the economic dependence of the related local and rural communities from the resources MVMCs provide.



Forest Management Plan of the Santiago de Covelo MVMC





Petroglyph of the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo which is featured in the MVMC logo. Photo: Alexandre Cenón, Santiago de Covelo MVMC.



ICCA: MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, Spain		Assessment					
Table 1. <b>The <u>Santiago de Covelo MVMC, Spain</u>, “ICCA Resilience and Security Tool”</b>		Strong	Fairly strong/ improving	Medium	Fairly weak/ weakening	Weak	POWER FLAG
<b>Internal factors</b>							
<b>Connection between the indigenous people/ local community and the ICCA</b>							
1.	<b>ICCA's cultural, spiritual and other non material values appreciated by the community</b> as evidenced by the ICCA being part of their worldview and identity and/or being culturally or religiously important ( <u>strong</u> if ICCA-related values are virtually universally known and appreciated; <u>medium</u> if held by about half of the people in the community; <u>weak</u> if basically lost)	5	4	3 X	2	1	PF
2.	<b>ICCA's values for the conservation of biological diversity appreciated by the community</b> , as evidenced by endemic species & ecosystem functions being well known & appreciated/ protected ( <u>strong</u> if most people in the community are knowledgeable and active in conservation; <u>medium</u> if about half of the people are concerned and active; <u>weak</u> if most local people appear insensitive to current or potential ecological change)	5	4	3	2 X	1	PF
3.	<b>ICCA's subsistence &amp; economic values appreciated by the community</b> as evidenced by it being a well known and utilised source of food, water, income or providing protection from environmental disasters ( <u>strong</u> if basically everyone benefits from the ICCA; <u>medium</u> if by about half of people benefit from the ICCA; <u>weak</u> if most members of the community receive no direct benefit from it)	5	4	3	2	1 X	PF
4	<b>Age of relationship</b> between the ICCA and the community ( <u>strong</u> if over 100 year old; <u>medium</u> if less than 50 years old; <u>weak</u> if is less than 10 years old)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF



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5	<b>Strength of relationship</b> between the ICCA and the community ( <u>strong</u> is both elders, youth, men and women are engaged in caring for the ICCA; <u>medium</u> if there is a strong involvement of community elders or the youth or only men or women; <u>weak</u> if only very few individuals seem to care about the ICCA)	5	4 X	3	2	1	PF
<b>Governance of the ICCA</b>							
6	ICCA decision-making valued & respected by the community, as evidenced by <b>strong ICCA-related institutions, champions and leaders</b> ( <u>strong</u> if respected by virtually everyone; <u>medium</u> if well respected but not by all; <u>weak</u> if management decisions about ICCAs go very often un-respected)	5	4 X	3	2	1	PF
7	<b>Community engagement in decision-making</b> ( <u>strong</u> if major issues are only decided by consensus by a general assembly or equivalent body; <u>medium</u> if local decisions are usually debated and taken by majority votes; <u>weak</u> if the community never has general assemblies and meetings)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF
8	<b>Community cohesion and solidarity</b> , as evidenced by a sense of common identity, mutual help and respect ( <u>strong</u> if the community is proud of its identity and demonstrates in practice its own internal solidarity and aliveness; <u>medium</u> if there are sporadic cases of local destitution and abandonment (lack of solidarity) but people still participate in common festivities and initiatives; <u>weak</u> if local destitution and abandonment are frequent and common festivities and initiatives virtually nonexistent)	5	4	3 X	2	1	PF
9	<b>Effective enforcement of rules</b> , as evidenced by local rules concerning a variety of aspects of community life (not only the ICCA) being well-known and respected ( <u>strong</u> if rules are well known and infractions by members of the community virtually absent; <u>medium</u> if they are generally known & infractions infrequent; <u>weak</u> if rules are largely unknown/disrespected)	5	4	3 X	2	1	PF

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Table 1. <b>The <u>Santiago de Covelo MVMC, Spain</u>, “ICCA Resilience and Security Tool”</b>		Strong	Fairly strong/ improving	Medium	Fairly weak/ weakening	Weak	POWER FLAG
10	<b>Transparency and accountability</b> , as evidenced by: 1. information on local decision-making readily available; 2. technical archives and financial accounting readily available; 3. evaluations regularly performed; 4. community free and competent to discuss ICCA management issues ( <u>strong</u> if there is excellent respect of agreed procedures and satisfaction of criteria such as the four just mentioned; <u>medium</u> if only some criteria are respected; <u>weak</u> if all these aspects of decision-making are unheard of)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF
<b>Conservation of nature and sustainable livelihoods</b>							
11	<b>Status of ecosystems in the ICCA</b> , as evidenced by indicators such as integrity of forest areas; status of soil; quality and quantity of freshwater in and from the ICCA; abundance and vigour of endemic biodiversity ( <u>strong</u> if the ecosystems are thriving; <u>medium</u> if the ecological balance is uncertain; <u>weak</u> if the area is severely degraded and prone to disasters)	5	4 X	3	2	1	PF
12	<b>Status of ecosystems in the surroundings of the ICCA</b> , as evidenced by indicators such as the ones noted above in areas bordering with the ICCA ( <u>strong</u> if thriving; <u>medium</u> if the ecological balance is uncertain; <u>weak</u> if the areas are severely degraded and prone to disasters)	5	4	3	2 X	1	PF
13	<b>Quality of livelihoods for the community governing the ICCA</b> , as evidenced by material indicators, e.g. food sovereignty, wealth per capita, public health, but also non-material indicators, e.g. internal solidarity and sense of satisfaction and well-being ( <u>strong</u> if the community is thriving in both aspects; <u>medium</u> if the community does well in material aspects but poorly in non-material ones, or viceversa; <u>weak</u> if the community is in miserable conditions with regard to both)	5	4	3 X	2	1	PF
<b>Resilience and security versus internal threats</b>							
14	<b>Extent of community members migrating outside the areas</b> ( <u>strong</u> if basically all the youth leaves the area to work or study and none comes back (depopulation); <u>medium</u> if many leave and some do come back; <u>weak</u> if there is hardly any permanent outside migration)	1	2 X	3	4	5	PF



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Table 1. <b>The <u>Santiago de Covelo MVMC, Spain</u>, “ICCA Resilience and Security Tool”</b>		Strong	Fairly strong/ improving	Medium	Fairly weak/ weakening	Weak	POWER FLAG
15	<b>Evidence of rapid cultural change</b> related to national assimilation policies, influences of globalization, education curricula disrespectful of customary values and institutions, changing ethnic composition because of extensive migration, etc. ( <u>strong</u> if even local languages and concepts are being weakened and abandoned; <u>medium</u> if some elements of local culture are lost but others remain alive; <u>weak</u> if local mores stay strong and able to interpret and incorporate all novelties and change)	1	2 X	3	4	5	PF
16	<b>Evidence of rapid changes in economic lifestyles and aspirations</b> ( <u>strong</u> if change is widespread and disruptive of culture and customary values; <u>medium</u> if new aspirations and lifestyles appear to blend with customary ones; <u>weak</u> if no change appears apparent and/or desired)	1	2 X	3	4	5	PF
17	<b>Evidence of political/ social fragmentation</b> , as revealed by political and social differences well apparent within the community ( <u>strong</u> if disrespectful behavior and violence among community members are common ; <u>medium</u> if sharp socio-political differences exist but most of them are respectfully dealt with; <u>weak</u> if the community is very united behind some common social and political objectives)	1	2	3	4 X	5	PF
18	<b>Evidence of strong internal inequities, conflicts and crimes</b> , including gender-related and age-related ( <u>strong</u> if internal inequities are widespread, and conflicts and crimes are frequent; <u>medium</u> if they exist but are uncommon; <u>weak</u> if they are unheard of)	1	2	3	4	5 X	PF
<b>External factors</b>							
<b>Tenure and recognition</b>							
19	<b>ICCA recognised and respected by neighbouring communities</b> ( <u>strong</u> if by all neighbouring communities; <u>medium</u> if only by a few; <u>weak</u> if by none)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF

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20	<b>Collective territorial, land, water and natural resource rights (ownership and/or use) recognised by civil society in general and national/ international NGOs</b> , e.g. through provision of support and public acknowledgement and respect ( <u>strong</u> if specific campaigns and support action have been taken; <u>medium</u> if there are uncertainties and relatively small disputes; <u>weak</u> if no recognition is apparent)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF
21	<b>Collective territorial, land, water and natural resource rights (ownership and/or use) <i>de facto</i>/ informally recognised by state agencies</b> e.g. through coordination of management activities, public acknowledgement and respect by government officials, etc. ( <u>strong</u> if collaboration is positive, respectful, has been happening for a long time and/or is also being recognised <i>de jure</i> ; <u>medium</u> if there are uncertainties and relatively small disputes; <u>weak</u> if collaboration instances are absent)	5 X	4	3	2	1	PF
22	<b>ICCA status formally recognised in state law and policy</b> ( <u>strong</u> if the government formally recognises the ICCA under the common property of the relevant community; <u>medium</u> if legislation is unclear but support can be argued for; <u>weak</u> if government does not recognise customary and/or local institutions, does not help to enforce customary laws and locally-agreed rules and actually does or try to impose government-managed conservation schemes)	5	4 X	3	2	1	PF
<b>Balance between demanded and received support</b>							
23	<b>Political support from outsiders</b> , e.g., advocacy by outside actors for the rights of the community. The assessment here is delicate, as it needs to take into account whether the relevant community wishes and desires the political support or prefers autonomy and no outside interference; your score may thus be assigned depending-on a <b>balance between desired and obtained support</b> , i.e., the assessment is <u>strong</u> (score=5) if no support is desired and no support is received or much support is needed and much is received; the assessment is <u>medium</u> (score=3) if only part of what is needed is received; the assessment is <u>weak</u> (score=1), if the community receives much <i>undesired</i> political attention or no attention despite a strong felt need for it.	5	4	3	2	1 X	PF



ICCA: MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, Spain		Assessment					
Table 1. <b>The <u>Santiago de Covelo MVMC, Spain</u>, “ICCA Resilience and Security Tool”</b>		Strong	Fairly strong/ improving	Medium	Fairly weak/ weakening	Weak	POWER FLAG
24	<b>Economic support from outsiders</b> , e.g., in terms of financial resources and/or in kind support provided to the community for a variety of initiatives (again, the assessment from strong to weak depends on <b>a balance between desired and obtained support</b> , as for the previous factor)	5	4	3 X	2	1	PF
25	<b>Technical support from outsiders</b> , e.g. for biodiversity inventories, legal advice, etc. (again, the assessment from strong to weak depends on <b>a balance between desired and obtained support</b> , as for the previous factor)	5	4	3	2	1 X	PF
26	<b>Cultural recognition</b> , e.g., understanding and respect of the cultural and identity values motivating the community ( <u>strong</u> if local language & other cultural expressions are openly valued & included in school curricula, are used in government meetings, and are well recognised by society in general; <u>medium</u> if they are unevenly respected by governmental agencies and others; <u>weak</u> if they are mostly ignored)	5	4	3	2	1 X	PF
<b>Resilience and security versus external threats</b>							
27	<b>Major economic forces coveting the ICCA</b> , including for extractive industries, the development of major infrastructure, mass tourism, industrial fishing and agriculture, biofuels, conservation initiatives, etc. ( <u>strong</u> if they exist in the area and operate in alliance with the national government; <u>medium</u> if such forces are there, but the government does not support them; <u>weak</u> if none exists at the moment)	1	2	3	4 X	5	PF
28	<b>Settlers, migrants and refugees coveting the ICCA’s land and resources</b> ( <u>strong</u> if they are many and with government support; <u>medium</u> if few and operating alone; <u>weak</u> if absent)	1	2	3	4	5 X	PF
29	<b>Major environmental threats</b> to the ICCA, such as pollution, widespread invasive species or current/ expected severe effects of climate change ( <u>strong</u> if clearly apparent and severe; <u>medium</u> if uncertain, unclear and unspecific; <u>weak</u> if no such threats are apparent or expected to take place)	1	2	3	4 X	5	PF

ICCA: MVMC of Santiago de Covelo, Spain		Assessment					
Table 1. <b><u>The Santiago de Covelo MVMC, Spain, “ICCA Resilience and Security Tool”</u></b>		Strong	Fairly strong/ improving	Medium	Fairly weak/ weakening	Weak	POWER FLAG
30	Threats to the ICCA related to war, violent conflicts and crime, such as because of guerrilla and counterinsurgency operations in the area ( <u>strong</u> if such threats are clearly apparent and severe; <u>medium</u> if uncertain, unclear and unspecific; <u>weak</u> if they are apparent or expected)	1	2	3	4	5 X	PF

### ■ Estimate of the ICCA Resilience and Security “Index”

As no power flags have been raised, the numerical Index can be calculated by summing up the circled scores for each component (minimum result 30; maximum 150). The Index is then calculated according to the formula:

$$\text{Resilience and Security Index} = \text{Total score}/150$$

**Taking into account the following data, the Resilience and Security Index for the MVMC of Santiago de Covelo is: 0.68.**

Before closing the meeting the facilitators posed the following questions to the Santiago de Covelo MVMC Steering Meeting:

**What did you learn from the discussion of all the issues that you have scored?**

There is so much work to do, and we have many issues to improve. Governance is not an easy task, but in the MVMC we have improved most of the issues in last years.

**What are, in your view, the key elements of strength of your ICCA?**

The mainly keys are enhance democracy and transparency on managing, promote involvement and commitment of the commoners in the managing and decision making process and have good technical guidance criterium, as those stated in the MVMC forest management plan.

**What are the key weaknesses?**

The political and institutional environment and the market oriented policies that politicians and administrations promote, and the lack of support to enhance the environmental and social functions of the forests. There are also many weaknesses related to rural areas, as ageing of the population, depopulation or the low incomes related with forest-related goods. There are other



inner weaknesses as a certain lack of commitment and active participation of commoners in managing issues.

**What could you do to build upon the elements of strength?**

The mainly keys is to go on developing and supporting the successful initiatives. These initiatives, as mentioned before, are enhance democracy and transparency on managing, promote involvement and commitment of the commoners in the managing and decision making process, and have good technical guidance criterium, as those stated in the MVMC forest management plan.

**What could you do to remedy or counteract the weaknesses?**

Those successful initiatives and approaches that has been found attractive for commoners and have helped to strengthen the ICCA should be enhanced. By developing the three forest functions of the forest (economic, ecologic and social functions) commoners will increase participation and commitment on MVMC issues. On the other hand, clear, transparent and Commoner Meeting passed managing criteria will help interested attacks and false critics from outside political or company related actors. Enhance democracy and transparency will also help supporting and implementing the decisions of the Commoner Meeting, both inside the community and in front of external agents.

Vigo, 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2012



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**The ICCA  
Consortium**

